

Earth Day. Ocean Day. Every Day. - by Rich Delaney

- by Susan Starkey, to be published in the Chalice, UCB's Newsletter, June 2023

At the UCB Earth Day Service on April 16, 2023, Rich Delaney began his talk with a story about how a small group of people, joined together for a common cause can truly make a difference. He and others did this to form Nauset Fellowship, a UU in Eastham. And now, he said, "Fifty-three years after the initial 1970 Earth Day, I still firmly believe fundamental shifts can be made by dedicated groups of people, on a fairly large scale. Look at what was done after that initial Earth Day- there were polluted rivers, smog in the air, thousands of pounds of waste regularly dumped right into the Boston Harbor. But shortly afterward, many pieces of environmental legislation including the Clean Air Act and the Clean Water Act were passed and the EPA was formed to address these and other issues".

The same kind of community resolve has been focused on our Oceans. In the past, people did not understand our inextricable connection to it and all the related eco-systems- so, centuries of societies adopted the attitude of "too big to fail", thinking we can dump as much waste into it as we want, or take out all the fish we desire. This has led to our CO2 emissions now that cause problems for our Oceans and our atmosphere. If you take a breath right now, he said, 50% of the oxygen you are breathing is from the Ocean ...and he went on to explain its role in keeping the planet healthy. The Ocean drives our climate, and the Gulf Stream / Labrador Current cycle is a beautiful example of how nature is meant to work but is now being changed by human behavior.

We were encouraged to make every day an Earth Day, or even better, a Climate Day. Why? We're in a climate crisis, we're already at the beginning of it. It's not just coming, it's here. "Our hope is that we can stimulate enough action and see enough change across every sector of society so that we can at least slow down the warming". The Pope's encyclical, some years ago, laid this out as a moral issue and raised tough questions for us to consider:

- Is it moral to continue lifestyles that emit the vast majority of GHG?
- Each of us in the US produce about 15 tons of GHG, per person, per year, while non-developed nations produce on average less than 5 tons, at most. Is it moral for us to continue business as usual?
- Is it moral for us to take all these blessings, these gifts we have been given while not addressing the climate crisis, but handing a degraded environment off to the next generation?
- Is it moral for our government leaders to take our tax money- \$500B per year- and hand it off to the fossil fuel industry, or for us to stand by and let this happen?

Rich says all this because we need to be aware. And acknowledge our human-centric views and the impact of our activities on these ecosystems." Knowing what we now know, let's work together for change. We need change at every level in government, in business forums, in every purchase we make, and in every activity and decision we make. The changes and decisions have to be system-wide and have to be daily".

Word Count- 556 plus Side Bar (below) if there is room

Side Bar:

Top 3 Recommendations for Individual Action

- from Rich Delaney

- 1) make your next vehicle an electric vehicle, and collect the available rebates
- 2) tap the Cape Light Compact's no-cost Home Energy Assessment and new rebates to switch energy sources and increase energy efficiencies in your home (see FCEN's [Energy Cafe program](#) offered twice so far at UCB or call MassSave directly at 866-527-7283).
- 3) consume less- less of everything- meat, new clothes, food (so that you waste less).