

## **Green Notes: Weekly tips for reducing your carbon footprint from First United Methodist's Green Team**

### **Governor responds to First UMC's Climate Covenant**

In a letter to First United Methodist's Green Team, Gov. Greg Gianforte said "American innovation and ingenuity" – not the elimination of carbon-burning energy sources – will solve the global climate crisis.

The governor also said his "Red Tape Relief Task Force" will help create "regulatory certainty in Montana," thereby allowing "innovation to flourish."

Gianforte's missive came in response to a recent letter from First UMC's Green Team, which included a copy of our congregation's recently approved Climate Covenant and asked what the governor is doing to "demonstrate his commitment to a just and stable climate future."

The Climate Covenant commits our congregation "to accept our moral obligation to be responsible stewards of God's creation and advocates for social justice. We will transform our despair, anger and sadness about climate change and human suffering into action that helps to heal our world and all of humanity."

"We resolve to elevate climate action, and with it social justice, as a primary focus of our ministry," the covenant states. "We will take a multi-faceted approach that includes education, communication, direct action and worship."

The governor's response arrived two weeks later, and acknowledged that the climate is changing. "Every Montanan, from our farmers and ranchers to folks who enjoy our public lands

and outdoor recreation, is experiencing it firsthand with unprecedented drought and severe wildfires.”

Gianforte did not, however, distance himself or state energy policy from the fossil-fuel-burning energy sources that are driving greenhouse gas emissions and global warming.

“I support an all-of-the-above energy policy,” the governor wrote, “and we’re contributing to addressing our changing climate with our diverse energy resources – from renewables like wind, solar and hydropower to coal and fossil fuels. With our diverse energy resources, Montana is doing our part to address the changing climate.”

The governor also ignored the overconsumption that is a foundation of the climate crisis, focusing instead on unfettered innovation.

“Some folks ask me to describe specific innovations to address climate change,” Gianforte wrote. “But you can’t box in innovation. If 25 years ago, I said you could put a phone in your pocket that would have greater computing capacity than your personal computer at home and would be connected wirelessly to the internet, you may have laughed. And that’s why it’s impractical to define what innovation will look like.”

Smartphones, of course, are a significant force in society’s overspending, overconsumption and the escalating crisis of disinformation – and its resulting heightening of discrimination and inequality worldwide.

**Green Team members are working on a response to Gov. Gianforte’s letter and would like to hear your ideas. What should our team tell the governor? How would you respond? Email your ideas to [sherrydevlin@gmail.com](mailto:sherrydevlin@gmail.com).**

