

- CHANGES TO SNAP
- USCCB RESPONSE TO DEATH PENALTY
- EARTH OVERSHOOT DAY & WAYS TO RESPOND

SALT & LIGHT

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SHARE YOUR VOICE IN OPPOSITION TO SNAP CHANGES

In Matthew 25, we hear Jesus tell us the story of the sheep and the goats. This is one of the few times that Jesus makes it easily clear what we need to do to enter the kingdom of God. Jesus said "I was hungry and you gave me something to eat, I was thirsty and you gave me something to drink..." Jesus tells us that "Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me." This is why the new proposed legislation is so concerning.

"A nation's budget is a moral document," said Bishop Frank J. Dewane of Venice, Florida, chairman of the USCCB's Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development. The White House recently proposed changes to its Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (SNAP—also known as food stamps), which, if implemented, would take away basic food assistance from an estimated 3.1 million people, mainly working families with children, seniors, and persons with disabilities.

The current law includes a policy called broad-based categorical eligibility (BBCE). BBCE, which has historically had strong bipartisan support, allows states to strengthen SNAP's rules to encourage work and savings among low-income households by allowing some flexibility for families who face costly housing or childcare expenses that consume a sizable share of their income and those whose income is slowly raising above the poverty through wage or hourly increases. It also allows for a small savings for the elderly and those with disabilities, up to 130% of the poverty line, to provide a personal safety net in case of unforeseen circumstances, which keep them out of additional debt.

The Administration's proposed rule changes would eliminate these options for families. Children in these families who lose these benefits would also lose access to free lunches and breakfasts at school. These proposals could push families who are working their way out of poverty back further into its grips. These extreme measures are the same changes that Congress rejected in the 2018 farm bill. Luckily, there is something we can do! The USDA currently invites written comments about this rule. Go to <https://www.regulations.gov/document?D=FNS-2018-0037-0001> and let them know that you DO NOT support this rule change!

YOU CANNOT LOVE GOD AND HATE YOUR NEIGHBOR

From the USCCB materials on Racism

Scripture teaches: "If anyone says, 'I love God,' and hates his brother, he is a liar; for whoever does not love a brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen" (1 Jn 4:20). This simple, straightforward teaching constitutes the heart of Christian ethics and is the reason Pope Benedict XVI can say, "One is so closely connected to the other that to say that we love God becomes a lie if we are closed to our neighbor or hate him altogether" (Deus Caritas Est 16). To love our neighbor, fundamentally, is to respect him or her as a unique person made in the image and likeness of God. If we do not offer this respect to the creature, then we dishonor the Creator. Such a basic truth of the Christian faith must therefore be our guide when we consider the many kinds of people we encounter, people of different races, creeds, and traditions.

RESPONSE TO REIMPLIMENTING THE FEDERAL DEATH PENALTY

Speaking for the U.S. Conference of Catholic Bishops, the Most Reverend Frank J. Dewane, bishop of Venice, Fla., and chair of the Committee on Domestic Justice and Human Development, issued a statement in reaction to Mr. Barr's decision:

"In 2015 Pope Francis, echoing the views of his predecessors, called for 'the global abolition of the death penalty.' He went on to state that, '[A] just and necessary punishment must never exclude the dimension of hope and the goal of rehabilitation.'

The Catholic Bishops of the United States have echoed this call for many years, including their 2005 statement, "A Culture of Life and the Penalty of Death." In light of these long held and strongly maintained positions, I am deeply concerned by the announcement by the United States Justice Department that it will once again turn, after many years, to the death penalty as a form of punishment, and urge instead that these Federal officials be moved by God's love, which is stronger than death, and abandon the announced plans for executions."

EARTH OVERSHOOT DAY

On July 29th we have passed a troubling milestone, Earth Overshoot Day (EOD). EOD is the day that indicates our "break even point" for what the earth can naturally replenish in a year. According to the Global Footprint Network's calculations this year it took us only taking 209 days to reach. At this rate, we would need 1.75 earths in order to sustain this amount of usage. We started overusing in the 1970's during which time it has steadily grown. As you might expect, the United States leads the way in overuse. With election coverage starting already, we have a great opportunity to challenge our leaders and to come up with creative ways to address the environmental issue at all levels of government.

How many Earths do we need if the world's population lived like...



Source: Global Footprint Network National Footprint Accounts 2019



ALL HOPE IS NOT LOST!

The way we support and address the climate crisis will look different in each country. Since the end of the 19th century, Ethiopia's forests went from covering approximately 30% of their land, down to 4%. In response to this, last Monday they set a world record for **planting 224 million trees in one day!** This is the first step towards achieving their goal of planting 4 billion trees between May and October! I hope we can't help but be inspired when we see people take action like this!

FIND PROVEN WAYS TO RESPOND

The Pachamama Alliance is hosting an "Introduction to Drawdown: Reversing Global Warming." It is a 2-hour interactive presentation that invites you to see both the possibility of reversing global warming and the most effective ways that you can help that happen. You will leave with tangible solutions to start this process in your everyday life. These solutions include the food we eat, the energy we use, the ways we get around, and the ways we manage land. By the end you will see the vital part that you can play in this growing global movement to reverse global warming.

Thursday August 22, 2019 6:00 - 7:30 p.m.
Unitarian Universalist Church of Canandaigua
3024 Cooley Road, Canandaigua, NY 14424

Monday Sept. 16, 2019 6:30-8:30 p.m.
Penfield Library
1985 Baird Road, Penfield, NY 14526

RG&E RATE CASE

From Rochester People's Climate Coalition

What is a rate case?

When utility companies in New York State want to raise rates, they have to get approval from the Public Service Commission to do so.

Why are rate cases important and how can we become involved?

Over the coming years, hundreds of millions of dollars will be invested in our energy system. We can build a greener energy system by demanding that the utility use our dollars to invest in energy efficiency and clean energy technologies, instead of investing in fossil fuel infrastructure.

On Tuesday, **August 6th**, there will be 2 opportunities to give a public statement at Rochester City Hall about how RG&E's proposed rate changes. There is a 1:30 presentation with public comments at 2:30 AND a 6pm presentation with public comments at 7 pm.

Green Tip of the week: Clothes Washing Tips!

Wash your clothes in cold water, as much as 85% of the energy to machine wash your clothes goes to heating the water. To save even more energy, hang your clothes out to dry. On these beautiful summer days, they will dry quickly and smell fresh and clean! Don't forget environmentally friendly detergent!

