

For Immediate Release

The Tributary Fund, 406-585-5560

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Practical Ideas for Montana Pastors on Addressing Conservation Issues through the Christian Perspective

A November 2008 workshop in Great Falls offers an opportunity for Montana clergy to discuss faith-based environmental initiatives that can transform congregations, communities and, ultimately, ecological health. Sponsored by The Tributary Fund of Bozeman, Montana, and advised by a steering committee of Montana pastors and lay leaders from many Christian denominations, the day-long and free-of-charge workshop will take place on Monday, November 10, 2008, at the Great Falls Christ United Methodist Church/First Congregational UCC at 2900 9th Ave South.

The workshop was conceived by clergy who attended a breakfast discussion following an April, 2008 lecture at Montana State University by famed wildlife conservationist, Dr. Jane Goodall. Her presentation challenged communities, schools, churches and individuals to take action on all levels, and even in ways that appear seemingly insignificant, to protect the earth and its species. Clergy discussed ways that churches and congregations can take a far more active and meaningful role in creation care.

The clergy-led November workshop is targeted to rural pastors of all denominations, but is also open to anyone interested. It will include an interactive presentation by consultant Rev. Rebekah Simon-Peter on theological approaches to conservation, and review of key environmental issues in Montana, and ample facilitated dialogue on next steps.

Faith communities throughout the country have begun to respond to modern ecological challenges. Study materials for faith communities are now available, including "green" sermons, energy savings in churches, adult education curricula, and how-to guides. Many of these basic tools will be introduced at the November workshop.

To find out more about the workshop and travel scholarships, please contact The Tributary Fund at 406-585-5560 or by email at information@thetributaryfund.org. Eight continuing education credits will be offered to participating clergy by ELCA Lutherans and other denominations. In addition, the meeting has been endorsed by the Great Falls Ministerial Association. All registrants are asked to carpool if possible to the workshop, and to bring a Bible and water bottle. A final agenda and registration information will soon be updated at thetributaryfund.org.

The Tributary Fund is a non profit organization engaging communities in conservation solutions by connecting religious, scientific and local leaders. Its offices are located in Bozeman, Montana.

Workshop Steering Committee Members: Rev. Val Colenso, United Methodist Church, Plentywood; Gary Cook, lay member, First Baptist Church, Bozeman; Mark Goetz, lay member, Lutheran Church, Great Falls; Susan Higgins, The Tributary Fund, Bozeman; Gerry Jennings, lay member, Great Falls Episcopal; Rev. Kama Hamilton Morton, Christ United Methodist Church, Great Falls; Betsy Gaines Quammen, The Tributary Fund, Bozeman; Dr. Tom Roy, EVST at UofM, Missoula; Rev. Debbie Schmidt, Methodist Church, Whitefish; Rev. Lisa Sukut, Vineyard Church, Livingston; Rev. Jennifer Wilson, Hope Lutheran, Bozeman.