

Robert Woodruff

Good morning. I am Rev. Dr. Rob Woodruff, or Pastor Rob, and am serving in my twenty-first year as Pastor of Second Presbyterian Church in Albuquerque. I am also board President of New Mexico Voices for Children. Second Presbyterian is a bilingual congregation, with most of our parishioners from deep rooted northern New Mexican Spanish families. Most of our congregants grew up in northern towns like Chacon, Chimayo, Cimmaron, Cordova, Mora, Pecos, Raton, Truchas and Valle.

The older generations in our congregation remember catching trout and drinking out of nearby streams which now flow lower. They remember when the air was clearer and the snow pack more robust. They remember when the summer temperatures were moderate and forest fires fewer and far between. Those who still have property up north note their gardens are failing to thrive because of lack of water and too much heat. They currently use portable air conditioners in the summer which they never needed before.

Within the congregation, there is collective climate concern for New Mexico. So much so that our congregation selected "Caring for Creation and Going Green," as our 2024 stewardship theme. In the words of one member whose family goes back six generations in New Mexico, (to the 1700's), "People need to realize we are destroying our earth. Everything is about money, not about what's best for us to live."

Our Presbyterian tradition understands the human task of being good stewards of life, air, soil, and water. And we know that that responsibility holds true for all people regardless of faith perspective or worldview, as we are interdependent. Our Presbyterian traditions also place emphasis on caring for more vulnerable populations which includes those with less resources and personal agency over their lives. We are concerned that environmental degradation disproportionately affects those lacking resources. In the wonderful diversity of our majority minority state, non-anglo communities suffer the most from adverse environmental impacts. We are heartened as a community of faith and proud New Mexicans, that we can still take steps to improve the earth's wellbeing. And we know that the biggest difference will be made when the most people make the most changes especially at federal and state government levels and in private industry. Although private industry, like automobile producers, should not alone be dictating the terms.

The air we breath must improve. My family has invested in solar panels and an electric vehicle. We are experiencing relief at the gas pump because in that car, we do not use gas and thus have a buffer from volatile gas prices. Charging the vehicle at home on the inexpensive connector is so simple. Putting in a hook up for charging in a home, apartment, or condo, is affordable and accessible. The prohibitive pricing of EV's is improving aided in part by federal subsidies and hopefully, soon, state subsidies. Thank you, New Mexico Environmental Department for proposing rule changes that will further us on the journey of caring for our planet. I strongly urge the Environmental Improvement Board and Albuquerque Bernalillo Air Quality Board to Adopt them in full. Not only that, I encourage you to adopt them beyond 2032. Full adoption of ACC II standards to 100% in 2035, will give our state a clearer, more certain path forward to a clean transportation future.

Future generations are depending on us. Adoption of these standards will be one of

many essential steps to care for our state for years to come. Thank you so much for your time.💎