

How Delmar Presbyterian Church Came to Draft a Petition on “Setting a Moral and Ethical Discount Rate for Computing the Social Cost of Carbon”

In 2019 the national Presbyterian Church, USA officially designated Delmar Presbyterian Church as an “Earth Care Congregation”. As one of our Earth Care activities, during the summer of 2020, our Environmental Task Force sponsored a seminar that read the book, ***Climate Church, Climate World: How People of Faith Must Work for Change*** by Jim Antal. This discussion was led by Rev. Larry Deyss, our former pastor who is now active in his retirement in Climate Change. At about that same time one of the members of the church’s seminar attended an online meeting sponsored by New York State’s Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC). This online meeting briefed members of the public on New York State’s recent *Climate Leadership and Community Protection Act* and the mandate that DEC had received to produce guidance to public agencies. We at Delmar Presbyterian decided to try and follow this issue with an eye to making a comment.

In the Fall of 2020, New York’s DEC issued its report, “Establishing a Value of Carbon Guidelines for Use by State Agencies” in draft form for public review and comment.

(<https://www.dec.ny.gov/energy/99223.html>) Importantly, this report contained an Appendix submitted by NYSERDA that provided some of the results of technical calculations of the value of carbon and other greenhouse gases. (https://www.dec.ny.gov/docs/administration_pdf/vocapp.pdf)

After reviewing DEC’s report and its Appendix, members of our church’s Environmental Task Force met to consider what were our reactions to this important issue facing all New Yorkers. Working as a small team, we drafted a resolution to be considered by our church’s Session (our leadership body). That resolution was ratified by Session at its meeting of November 17, 2020.

Subsequently, we shortened our full resolution and posted this shortened version as a public petition that can be found at

<http://chng.it/gsRXrhT8>