



Presbyterian Church of the United States of America
217th General Assembly
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)
Commissioners' Resolution

WHEREAS, Jesus instructed Christians in the Sermon on the Mount in Matthew 7:12, "So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets"

WHEREAS, mountaintop removal is a mining technique that involves demolishing up to 700 feet of elevation of mountain to reach seams of coal and then dumping mining waste in valleys below

WHEREAS, this mining practice drastically alters the landscape in and around homes and communities in Appalachia

WHEREAS, this altered landscape has dramatically increased flooding in communities near these mining sites. For instance, the town of McRoberts, KY flooded five times in 18 months after mountaintop removal mining began operation above their town

WHEREAS, hundreds of lives have been lost and thousands of families have lost homes and property in recent floods and many of these families still live in emotional exile of their roots in temporary residence from which there seems to be no end in sight

WHEREAS, the quality of life for families near mining sites is decreased due to the threat of floods, continual blasting, dust, and falling rock and this situation has forced families to live in fear for their lives and property or to abandon their family home place and leave a lifetime of memories

WHEREAS, mountaintop removal coal mining contributes to a cycle of poverty that has created high unemployment, high illiteracy rates, record numbers of school closings and a lack of opportunity in areas where coal is produced by mountaintop removal

WHEREAS, mountaintop removal coal mining destroys both the beauty and productive capacity of the land thus eliminating future or alternative economic opportunities for the families of Appalachia

WHEREAS, God instructs us to "...not defile the land where you live and where I dwell"
(Numbers 35:34)

WHEREAS, WE ARE INSTRUCTED IN James 4:17 to turn away from sin

WHEREAS, mountaintop removal coal mining has buried 724 miles of streams and destroyed up to a million acres of forested mountains in Appalachia

WHEREAS, streams, mountains, and forests damaged by mountaintop removal coal mining can never be restored to support the community of life that God created

WHEREAS, The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the United Methodist Church, the Episcopal Church, the Catholic Conference of Eastern Kentucky and Salem Presbytery of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have passed resolutions concerning mountain top mining

ACTION:

It is resolved that the 217th General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church USA, urges state and federal agencies that regulate mining practices, as well as coal companies themselves, to abandon the practice of mountaintop removal coal mining and work to meet our nation's energy needs in a manner that is just, sustainable and consistent with Christian values.