

The Laity Minute by Kelly Price

We are about to have to say goodbye to an old friend at my house. This friend has been with us for about 15 years and has served us well. It has seen about everything from my botched attempts of trying to make homemade macaroni and cheese all the way to forgotten rotted vegetables which led Andy and me to stand over it literally try to figure out what it was. This friend is the refrigerator. It started making noises about 2 months ago and with every day that passes we know the end is near.

I recently realized just how much I rely on this appliance every single day. When the power goes out, I realize it even more. And all this got me thinking about how grateful I am to even have a refrigerator. One that is not only full of food when I need it, but is powered by the energy given to us. I got slightly annoyed that I was going to have to invest in a new fridge. But, I then thought about the people who don't even have one or maybe don't possess the ability to power one. There are too many people who do not have the same opportunities as I do to warm their homes or store food. People out there are having to make difficult decisions I do not have to make.

Why is this? Why does energy become a social or income issue? That's a tough and complicated question. The number one contributor to climate change is greenhouse gas emissions from the fossil fuels used for things like electricity and heat. Historically, minorities and women are most impacted by this pollution. Therefore, the need is there to dramatically reduce and eliminate fossil fuels from our energy systems.

I recently attended a 3-part webinar, "Just Energy for all" hosted by the United Methodist Women that addressed this important topic. The UMW believes that all persons should have safe, clean, affordable, and sustainable sources of energy. Therefore, the purpose of this webinar was to discuss, as people of faith, how can the UMW can be a part of the solution. (See John Wesley's, "The Good Steward" Sermon 51 or UMC Social Principles, para. 160.)

As I found out, "Just Energy" has deep meaning. It is not only powering appliances. It is about protecting God's creation and our health, benefiting all, protecting the future, and closing the gap dividing wealth and poverty. The leaders of the webinar asked us to consider what that looks like in our own towns. In my breakout session, I was with women from North Carolina, Florida, and Iowa. Imagine how different our answers were. Yet, as we considered the Trinitarian relationship of God, one another, and all of creation, the answers among us had plenty of similarities. It's not about energy for the few, the privileged, or the lucky. It is about "Just Energy for All." For more information, see the [UMW Just Energy for All](#) web site.

Let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. ~ Amos 5:24

Faith, Hope, Love in Action,

Kelly