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STATEMENT IN SUPPORT OF THE STANDING ROCK SIOUX TRIBE

Issued 27 August 2016

There is a Cree Indian prophecy which states, “When all the trees have been cut down, when all the animals have been hunted, when all the waters are polluted, when all the air is unsafe to breathe, only then will you discover you cannot eat money.”

Water is sacred. It is the basis for all life on earth. In the book of Genesis, we read that water already existed, that God did not create it. So it is with many Creation myths around the world.

In the Yoruba tradition of Africa, it is said that “water has no enemy.” At one time this was true, but sadly no more. The greatest enemy of water is man, yet man’s very existence depends on water – clean water.

All life is interdependent, and all mankind is dependent on our sacred earth, and must live harmoniously with it to ensure there is a habitable planet for generations to come. The most critically essential of all our resources is water. It is a sacred gift and a life source.

Millions of people along the Missouri River are dependent upon that River for their drinking water. As the human stewards of our fragile planet, we cannot morally engage in any enterprise that can poison the people of this planet. As human stewards of each other, we have an obligation to respect and support the ancient sacred spaces and burial grounds of our ancestors. We should no more destroy these sacred places and burial grounds of others than we would our own.

In protesting the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline, the Standing Rock Sioux recognize the gift of water to all of us, a gift given to us by our Creator. We are called to do our part to urge decision makers to recognise and honour the efforts to protect the sacred water and burial grounds threatened by the Dakota Access Pipeline. A rupture would wreak untold havoc on the Sioux and catastrophically pollute the Missouri River, a sacred tributary that the Sioux -- and millions of other people -- depend upon for their daily water.

The Progressive Episcopal Church supports the Standing Rock Sioux Nation, and joins in solidarity with hundreds of other indigenous nations and allies, in calling us anew to respect and protect this sacred gift of water, and in so doing to respect and protect the gift of human life. We stand with our Standing Rock

Sioux brothers and sisters to halt the construction of the Dakota Access Pipeline because of its degradation of sacred sites and possible catastrophic contamination of our nation's drinking water.

Creator Spirit, May be aware of the source of being that is common to us all and to all living creatures. May we be filled with the presence of the great compassion towards ourselves and towards all living beings. May we realise that we are all nourished from the same waters of life, may we so live that others be not deprived of air, food, water, shelter, or the chance to live. Amen.