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Jurovics connects religion and climate change

Author of 'Hospitable Planet' to speak, sign books

Stephen Jurovics believes that the future habitability of the planet may be in the hands of the faith community. In his book, "Hospitable Planet: Faith, Action and Climate Change," Jurovics turns to leaders and laity of the Christian and Jewish faith communities, making a religious case for why humans should take action to mitigate climate change.

Jurovics will speak about his book, including the arguments he lays out and the strategies he suggests for fighting climate change, at an upcoming visit to [location] on [date] at [time].

Faith-based teachings for climate change mitigation, in tandem with science-based ones, create a case for action that Jurovics believes is uncontestable.

"An energy company is unlikely to debate a teaching of Jesus or a verse in Deuteronomy," he said.

Jurovics believes that in our intensely capitalist society, arguments for rapidly reducing greenhouse gas emissions face continual challenges from powerful sectors of our society that have a vested interest in maintaining the status quo. The actions of the faith community, though, could bring society to the tipping point for collectively fighting to maintain the habitability of Earth.

"For people for whom Bible teachings matter, it's not difficult to demonstrate that climate change is a religious as well as an environmental problem," Jurovics said.

Jurovics, who holds a doctorate in engineering, worked many years in aerospace engineering before shifting into environmental work, which included helping architects and engineers design and operate energy efficient buildings. He was also an EPA contractor for about 15 years. His daily work kept thoughts of environmental problems in the forefront of his mind, and he contemplated how environmental issues might connect to his faith.

"I was working for a number of years on environmental issues and various aspects of climate change, and began wondering whether teachings in the Bible relate to these contemporary problems," Jurovics said.

He did research for more than two years on biblical teachings about the natural world and found that some effects of climate change are contrary to biblical teachings.

“Since humans bear responsibility for carbon emissions, we bear responsibility for their effects. That’s how climate change becomes a religious issue as well as an environmental one,” Jurovics said. He began writing “Hospitable Planet” to document this line of inquiry.

He focused his research on the first five books of the Old Testament, which are studied by both Christians and Jews, and found lessons on biodiversity, recycling, and even gas emissions. Though the books of the Old Testament were written thousands of years ago, Jurovics argues that they are still very much relevant.

“We are always challenged to pull these core teachings forward in time and apply them to contemporary issues,” Jurovics said.

While the first part of “Hospitable Planet” focuses on the religious argument for working to slow climate change, the second and third parts focus on what we can do about the problem. He lists 10 actions to take on the national level to have a positive impact on slowing climate change.

Jurovics also advocates taking to the streets as an essential part of a movement for climate change mitigation. He urges that the strategy for an “environmental rights movement” be similar to the strategy for the civil rights movement.

In addition to publishing “Hospitable Planet,” Jurovics has spoken at dozens of churches, where he’s presented the case for fighting climate change and the religious arguments for doing so. He hopes to encourage the huge faith community to take on this issue visibly and forcefully.

Don’t miss Jurovics’ upcoming visit for the opportunity to hear from the author himself and purchase a signed copy of “Hospitable Planet.” To learn more about the book or connect with Jurovics, visit hospitableplanet.com. “Hospitable Planet” is available on Amazon or through your local bookstore.

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About Stephen Jurovics: Author Stephen Jurovics, of Raleigh, NC, is an engineer-turned-author whose career in environmental engineering brought him face-to-face with the problem of climate change. As a person of faith, he wondered if there were religious arguments for fighting the problem. His research in the Old Testament led him to write *Hospitable Planet: Faith, Action and Climate Change*, in which Jurovics connects biblical lessons to the adverse effects of climate change. In addition to his work in environmental engineering, including building energy use reduction, Jurovics’ career has also consisted of aerospace engineering, including working on the Apollo moon vehicle and the Saturn rocket.