



## STEWARDS OF OUR EARTH All of God's Creation

Social Justice Committee, Holy Cross Parish, Mt. Airy, July 10, 2022

### The USA (United States of America) or the DSA (Divided States of America): Which Will We Choose?

*America the Beautiful* by Katharine Lee Bates was first published on July 4, 1895. “Americans then were as politically divided as Americans of this day—arguably, they were more divided—over everything from immigration to land use to racial justice to economic inequality.” (Jill Lepore, *National Geographic*, July 4, 2022)

**Today the threats to our democracy are numerous as we remain divided on these same issues and more.**

In **West Virginia v. EPA (Environmental Protection Agency)**, the Supreme Court ruled 6-3 to restrict the EPA's authority to regulate greenhouse gas emissions under the Clean Air Act.... severely limiting the ability of federal agencies to fight climate change and protect public health. (*Earthjustice*, June 30, 2022) “The ruling is out of step with settled law, scientific and medical consensus, and widely held public opinion. [Over two-thirds of Americans want stronger environmental regulations.] And they show us that we cannot take legal and federal protections for granted.” (*NRDC Action Fund*, June 30, 2022)

The case “demonstrates what happens when the Supreme Court is not loyal to the Constitution, but to coal and fossil fuel interests. This ruling will jeopardize the health and well-being of people across the country, especially the most vulnerable.

**But where there is peril, there is also hope. And hope comes from taking action that is aligned with our values.** As people of faith and conscience, we seek to align our actions in this world with our values; to care for our neighbors and to work together to protect our common home. While this moment is painful, we cannot linger in despair. We must use this moment to galvanize change and defend our democracy.

**Voting is one of the most powerful ways that we can defend our democracy....** [It is up to us] to vote and to choose elected leaders who represent our shared spiritual values. The Supreme Court may have made their decisions, but it is up to us, the people, to raise our voices, advocate for change, vote, and ensure those in our faith communities are voting. We have the power to protect our democracy.” (*Interfaith Power & Light*, July 4, 2022)

It is not too soon to start thinking of upcoming elections on November 8. **All 435 seats in the House of Representatives and 35 of the 100 seats in the Senate will be contested.** Thirty-nine states (including Pennsylvania) and territorial gubernatorial and numerous other state and local elections will also be contested. **Commit to vote and encourage others to vote as well, including in our local and state elections where we have greater power to affect our daily lives.**

“It is true enough that we could make the world more just, equal, and peaceful, but something holds us back, in all our complicated fear and human hesitation. It's sometimes just plain hard to locate the will to be in kinship even though, at the same time, it's our deepest longing. So no matter how singularly focused we may be on our worthy goals of peace, justice, and equality, they actually can't happen without an undergirding sense that we belong to each other. Seek first the kinship of God, then watch what happens.” (Gregory Boyle, *Barking to the Choir*, 2017)