

Dear Chair Frentz and Sen. Mitchell,

As clergy in greater Mankato, we are called to bring good news to our congregations, but also to the wider communities to which we belong. “Good news” means more than proclamation; it requires action for our common good. We’re asking our state and local leaders to join with us to continue bold action on affordable housing and a clean energy future.

Easter’s promise is not just for us as individuals; it’s about our hope of being part of the divine project of “making all things new.”

The prophet Micah gives us an image of what a renewed world looks like: “they shall all sit under their own vines and under their own fig trees, and no one shall make them afraid.”

In other words: Everyone will have a safe place to live. All will share in the abundance of a well-stewarded natural world.

This vision inspires; it also shows us where good news is urgently needed. In our ministries, we have heard concerns about a lack of quality affordable housing and the threats of climate change. Right now, we have the chance to address these crises with abundant, attainable housing that uses renewable energy.

We have the technology to harness geothermal energy to heat and cool our homes, but doing so one house at a time is inefficient and expensive. We need common solutions. “Thermal energy networks” connect entire neighborhoods to provide clean heating and cooling. This legislative session, a bill is being introduced to accelerate the development of pilot projects. We applaud our state senator Nick Frentz for giving this bill a hearing in committee, and we urge its passage into law.

Signed,

Rev. Andrew Davis, Union Presbyterian Church, Saint Peter
Rev. Jacie Richmond, Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Mankato
Rev. Jenna Couch, Crossroads Lutheran Campus Ministry, MSU Mankato
Rev. Ava Adams-Morris, Zoar United Church of Christ, Waldorf
Rev. Diana McLean, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship of Mankato
Rev. John Odegard, Grace Lutheran Church, Mankato
Rev. Matthew Sipe, Hilltop United Methodist Church, Mankato
Rev. Melanie Wallschlaeger, Christ the King Lutheran Church, Mankato
Rev. Neil Ellingson, First Congregational United Church of Christ, Mankato
Rev. Roger Wolsey, Centenary United Methodist Church, Mankato