

Evolution Weekend
The Clergy Letter Project

Response from Secretary Hillary Clinton

1. Do you believe science is a threat to your faith?

I had the great blessing to be raised by a family and a church that instilled in me a deep faith that was meant to be lived in service to others. As a small child, I learned the Wesleyan credo of our Methodist church: “Do all the good you can, for all the people you can, in all the ways you can, as long as ever you can.”

America’s founders had faith in reason and they also had faith in God, and one of our gifts from God is the ability to reason. So science is no threat to faith. The Epistle of James tells us we cannot just be “hearers” of the word, we must be “doers.” Science helps us be doers. Science shows us how to understand more deeply the profound mysteries of our universe and the glory of God’s earth.

2. Do you believe the best available science should guide public policy?

Absolutely. The best available science helps guide all kinds of things that are essential to government – like rules protecting the public health and the safety of workers on the job, priorities for research and development, and using new technologies and the latest science to make public programs work better. For instance, climate change is real. It is already reshaping communities across the country. So we can and should use what we can predict about the impacts of climate change—for instance, expected sea level rise over the next century—to help plan infrastructure projects and prioritize building resilience for what we know is at risk.

3. Are you in favor of evolution rather than any form of creationism including intelligent design being taught in public school science classrooms and laboratories?

As the theory that is nearly universally accepted by scientists, the result of human reason and rigorous inquiry, the teaching of evolution belongs in public school science classes and labs. I believe in the theory of evolution, an elegant theory which has unlocked incredible understanding about life on Earth. When my husband was President, he asked the Department of Education to develop a statement of principles on religious activity in schools. Those principles say that students should be free to express their beliefs about religion in school assignments, but also that public schools may not provide religious instruction or promote any particular religion.

4. Do you agree the 97-98 percent of scientists who believe that humans are impacting climate change?

Climate change is real, it is being driven by human activity, it is happening right now—and we know that its burdens will fall most heavily on the poorest and most vulnerable in our society. I will make combating climate change a top priority of my administration. It is hard to believe that in spite of the strongest possible scientific consensus about what climate change means for our environment, economy, health, and future, there are still some who deny the facts and are intent on obstructing progress.

We can't let them win this fight. We have no choice. There is no Planet B.

Scripture and our faith traditions teach us that we are all to be stewards of God's creation. I have found myself profoundly moved by Pope Francis' moral leadership on climate change. I believe we must heed his message of God's love for all creatures and fulfill our shared responsibility to our planet, our children, and our future.