

**July 21, 2024**

**What's Comfort got to do with it?** (a nod to Tina Turner)

**\*Opening Hymn-** "Gathered Here"- as informal round- Gray 389

**Welcome/Land Acknowledgement - Ellen-** Abenaki arts council and 7 generations

**Chalice lighting-** Ellen by Rev. Audrey W. Vincent-

We light the chalice this morning for earth, our home. Earth abundant, source of what was before we were and will be after we are gone. As each cell proves our common destiny, may we know earth, our mother of old, as our friend; as we were bred of dust and stars, may we know her fate as ours.

**Good Morning! The Call to Worship this morning is a poem**

By Ayisha Siddiqa (a young Pakistani-American climate justice and human rights advocate)

**ON ANOTHER PANEL ABOUT CLIMATE, THEY ASK ME TO SELL THE FUTURE AND ALL I'VE GOT IS A LOVE POEM**

What if the future is soft and revolution is so kind that there is no end to us in sight.

Whole cities breathe and bad luck is bested by a promise to the leaves.

To withstand your own end is difficult.

The future frolics about, promised to no one, as is her right.

Rage against injustice makes the voice grow harsher yet.

*If the future leaves without us, the silence that will follow will be an unspeakable nothing.*

*What if we convince her to stay?*

*How rare and beautiful it is that we exist.*

*What if we stun existence one more time?*

When I wake up, get out of bed, my seven-year-old cousin with her ruptured belly tags along.

Then follows my grandmother, aunts, my other cousins and the violent shape of their drinking water.

The earth remembers everything, our bodies are the color of the earth and we are nobodies.

Been born from so many apocalypses, what's one more?

Love is still the only revenge. It grows each time the earth is set on fire.

But for what it's worth, I'd do this again. Gamble on humanity one hundred times over

Commit to life unto life, as the trees fall and take us with them.

I'd follow love into extinction.

## Intro to comfort in all forms - Jean

When Ellen asked me at coffee hour a few months ago if I would be interested in speaking this summer, I didn't think I had anything to talk about, but a few days later my friend and colleague Sam Ostrow sent me Daniel Barber's paper titled "After Comfort", which made me question whether I should still be striving for comfort in my design and energy work, or whether comfort is just a "proxy for racial inequality, a spatial and mechanical form of implicit bias". 10. How are we to address the climate crisis, improve housing affordability, and address all of the related justice and equity issues which connect them, without talking about comfort? I still have more questions than answers- but I look forward to exploring the idea of *comfort* with you this morning.

As you may have already figured out from the call to worship, I am not standing up here today with a goal of making you comfortable- "Art isn't supposed to make you comfortable." after all. One of the decisions I had to make while preparing for this service was how uncomfortable to make you! I wanted to push myself outside of my comfort zone, and you a bit out of yours.

I'm going to start by introducing you to the idea of comfort, then after the meditation and readings, explore where we are now and where we might want to start looking for comfort.

The word Comfort historically meant.... *A pleasant feeling of being relaxed and free from physical, mental, or spiritual pain.* To comfort someone means *to console, cheer, encourage, and dispel grief.* Comfort coming from our living situation rather than from our friends and family is a newer use of the word.

"In his 1948 treatise *Mechanization Takes Command*, architectural historian Sigfried Giedion reminds us that the word comfort, in its Latin origin, meant "to strengthen." It was only after the 18th century, in Western culture, that comfort became identified with "convenience," he explains. Since then, in architecture, comfort is normally related to bodily experience in terms of sensory relaxation.... where material conditions allow the body to repose. The air, the lighting, the sound, the smell, and the solid elements provide relaxation and avoid pain. In a space that is considered comfortable, activity can be pursued with the minimum effort." 5.

Witold Rybczynski, a professor of architecture and author of "The Most Beautiful House in the World, observed, "comfort means far more than physical ease; true comfort is cultural as much as physical, and has meant radically different things to different people at different times." 4

So... how can/should we balance our own desire for comfort with the discomfort of others, and with the need for a just and equitable transition away from fossil fuels- to keep the earth in some recognizable form of its current beauty? More about this a bit later.... But right now we will sing one of my favorite hymns about the blue ball we call home.

**\*Hymn Blue Boat Home- Teal 1064**

**For our Time for All Ages: I'm going to make an attempt to** Channel some energy from Poppy, our director of religious exploration, with a demonstration **w/ Elio's help**

*Barber writes-* "Comfort indicates that one has risen above the inconsistencies of the natural world and triumphed, not only over nature and the weather but over chance itself." "Comforts are rungs on the ladder to luxury.... These rungs are physical, spatial, architectural, and thermal. First comes sustenance,

then shelter and protection from the elements, then heat, and last, cooling, so as to remain active, healthy, and productive, especially in the soup of humidity. After these come layers of precision: filtered air, sealed membranes, sensors everywhere, all the elements of the comfort-industrial complex that aims to wrap itself around the body like a favorite shirt.” 10

“Design is thinking made visual”- so I thought we could take a closer look at those layers of comfort we wrap around our bodies (and our buildings).

If you spend any active time outside in the winter, you know that dressing for comfort is all about the layers- different layers keep us warm or dry, and give us flexibility. We do the same with buildings- designing in layers for durability in the worst weather.

Volunteer gradually puts on: Inner vapor control layer (thin long underwear, smart membrane), fluffy insulation layer (wool sweater, recycled cellulose, wool or wool fiber), air control layer (tight wool, Zip sheath or membrane), connecting tapes (neck warmer, hat, gloves), good glazing (sun glasses), rain barrier (rain coat, siding), smart watch/fit bit (to track heart rate, temperature, humidity, energy use).

Of course, comfort is not created by building materials! But the materials we choose (the more natural is better) can have a big climate impact in the long run, and thinking about the layers we wear can have an impact on our comfort and the temperature settings in our homes.

### **Offering- Spirit in Nature - Ellen**

**\*From you I receive, to you I give....**

### **Yellow cards- Ellen**

**Meditation on comfort/discomfort (w/ music)- Jean** sit comfortably, breathe deeply...

Think about a time where you felt completely comfortable- what did that look and feel like? Think about a time where you felt discomfort/were very uncomfortable- what was the situation. Hold onto those thoughts through the music

Metamorphosis 1-5- Philip Glass-1988 First heard of Philip Glass from 1982 movie Koyaanisqatsi – Hopi for Life Out of Balance

### **Readings - Ellen**

**From MLK’s April 4, 1967 speech *Beyond Vietnam*. These words feel as relevant today as when they were first spoken – were recently quoted by award winning “green” architects The Miller Hull Partnership**

“We must rapidly begin the shift from a thing-oriented society to a people-oriented society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, extreme materialism, and militarism are incapable of being conquered.” Love is somehow the key.... We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now. In this unfolding conundrum of life and history, there is such a thing as being too late. Procrastination is still the thief of time. ... We still have a choice today: nonviolent coexistence or violent coannihilation. We must move past indecision to

action.... If we do not act, we shall surely be dragged down the long, dark, and shameful corridors of time reserved for those who possess power without compassion, might without morality, and strength without sight.... Now let us rededicate ourselves to the long and bitter, but beautiful, struggle for a new world." 14 (photo of Miller Hull's Bullitt Center)

**From *After Comfort*, Daniel Barber:** "The last 100 years have been defined by manufactured comfort; the carbon released will condition the planet for centuries to come." "We are no longer protected from the elements. The elements are assailing us, determining our collective future. The experience of comfort inside is predicated on the global acceleration of the climatic instability outside. Interior comfort (now) produces unpredictability." "Comfort, like capital, is a proxy for racial inequity, a spatial and mechanical form of implicit bias. It is the structural imposition of a norm; materially, atmospherically, and globally. Comfort scarcity is the signal that development is not available to everyone and that this unevenness needs to be forced across political and geographic divides lest it proliferate along historically familiar lines." "Architecture has the opportunity, if not the obligation, to define and explore this new limit- to design to the edge of comfort." 10 p. 47,48, 49 (photo of my house)

### **Where are we now? – Comfort? - Jean**

I don't know about you, but comfort has definitely been on my mind this summer- the heat and humidity has been really uncomfortable for weeks, and this is likely to be the coolest summer of the rest of our lives. But it's not just about the heat!

Everyone needs somewhere to feel safe and comfortable- to be free from physical, mental and spiritual pain, to have a place that gives them strength. I know many of you are here today because you have found comfort here- in this beautiful space, among open-hearted people.

Physical and emotional Comfort for me (getting back to the meditation questions) is found in and around the house my husband and I built six years ago- sitting on the porch watching a summer sunset or a rainstorm moving through, cooking in our sunny kitchen with a big pantry, sitting in a warm window looking out on the landscape on a cold winter's day. These moments feed my soul.

In contrast, a discomfoting time for me was more emotional, and unsettling. A week into our cross-country trip in May of 2022, we were settling down to sleep in our rented RV in a Walmart parking lot in Grand Junction, CO (district of rep. Lauren Boebert), when we were disturbed (for hours) by oversized pickup trucks "rolling coal" up and down the main street. All I could think about was why? Why within this place of great natural beauty, did people feel the need to express power in this way? Were they bored, angry, just having fun? Or were they in part responding to uncertainty in their lives, and the discomfort of strip malls and overly wide streets?

**From the book *The Architecture of Happiness*** "If one room can alter how we feel, if our happiness can hang on the colour of the walls or the shape of the door, what will happen to us in most of the places we are forced to look at or inhabit?" "When an environment becomes uncomfortable, there is always a greater risk that people will respond abusively to it." 6

From the *Barber reading*: “The elements are assailing us, determining our collective future. Interior comfort (now) produces unpredictability.” 10

A few recent headlines:

**Over 1200 people died of the heat during this year’s Hajj in Saudi Arabia**, more than four times as many as last year.

**Parts of downtown Barre, and Waterbury, and Richmond, and Rt. 125 in Ripton- flooded again.**

**The “doomsday” glacier is melting faster than predicted**, raising sea levels, and new this week - polar ice melt is even **changing time**, by changing the speed of earth’s rotation!

**The Era of Super-Wild Weather Is Already Here, Everything’s About to Get a Hell of a Lot More Expensive Due to Climate Change-** Insurance, building materials, food....)

**The Vermont homeless count last January found 3500 people didn’t have a place to call home, including 1100 families with children (almost twice as many families as the year before).** (VPR 6-17-24)

How much of current homelessness is climate related? How many people have already lost homes to flooding, while others are moving to Vermont as a perceived “safe place”. How can we welcome these newcomers while we struggle to support the people who are already here? How can we manage our own stress, grief, and confusion in the face of all the loss we see around us?

**Where are we now? For the first time, last year, the earth’s temperature was 1.5 C (2.7 F) above historical averages for a whole year, and Vermont’s winters are warming even more.** Architecture 2030 data says that striving to hold anywhere close to the **1.5° C** climate target will require eliminating **all** CO<sub>2</sub> emissions from the built environment by **2040**”, a more aggressive timeline than the Vermont Climate Plan asks of us. We really are confronted with the fierce urgency of now! Every tenth of a degree of avoided temperature increase helps towards maintaining a livable planet. In the best-case scenario, we have 15 years to get rid of fossil fuels in all of Addison County’s over 17,000 existing homes (and all other buildings), while also building thousands of new homes (of many sizes and types) to better (and more comfortably) house ourselves and our new neighbors.

**Who will do all of this work? And where do we go from here?**

In “After-Comfort”, Barber makes the bold statement that in the face of the climate crisis, we have to collectively adjust to comfort going away. But he also writes, “The struggle for comfort is a struggle for equal opportunity, justice, and conditions amenable to growth and self-actualization” 10 I don’t know about you, but I really don’t want to give up on comfort in any of its forms, particularly when so many of us need more of it, not less. I really want more comfort to be available to everyone- to spread it around.... Creating equitable comfort will take work, but I think it’s worth the effort.

Can I have a show of hands? How many of you have installed at least one heat pump in your home? How many eat a mostly plant-based diet and try not to throw away food? How many of you have donated to organizations that support family planning or the education of girls around the world? Does anyone have idea about how are these things related? ... It’s all about the carbon!

Paul Hawken's book *Drawdown* shows us that properly recovering refrigerants from the exploding need for cooling around the world is the biggest single way to reduce carbon, while the combination of reducing food waste (not throwing out food) and eating a mostly plant-based diet, the combination of educating girls and improving family planning around the world (from the resulting decrease in population growth, and the combo of additional on-and-off-shore wind energy production, could all provide about equal and significant amounts of carbon reduction in the next 30 years. 11

We're actually making progress on some of these! As an architect I ask- What should the design world do to have an impact? What if creating comfort was our primary goal- particularly in the Latin meaning of strengthening?

Barber says: "Architecture has the opportunity, if not the obligation, to define and explore this new limit-to design to the edge of comfort." "Until the 1960's, most buildings were developed in some relationship to their climatic surroundings. As a discipline we have a long history of tools, of material knowledge, of attention to orientation and induced ventilation." 10

Before fossil fuels, buildings had much more regional variation- adapting to the local climate rather than depending on mechanical means. "Buildings like Igloos and Teepees were built quickly from local materials, traveled well, protected families from the harshest conditions, using the best of what was available". 13. We have a whole different level of knowledge and materials available to us now, but the lived historical knowledge of how to feel safe and comfortable- working with, yet protected from the elements, and comforted within a supportive community, still holds.

When I work with clients, and on my own home, comfort is always an important part of the discussion, and one the benefits of high-performance or passive homes. These homes take more materials to construct, but if done well, are more durable, and require less mechanical equipment and much less energy to operate. Despite 13"-20" of fluffy insulation, plenty of southern glass, and all the layers discussed earlier, my HVAC contractor thought I was crazy to put in only one mini-split heat pump (normally for a living room) for my whole 2000 sf home. We have been very comfortable, but we also accept a temperature range a few weeks per year that wouldn't meet engineering standards- including 80 deg. on some sunny days in February. Am I designing and living on the edge of comfort?

Successful architects work on many levels- from the global impact of a building material to the perfect proportions of a living space, from understanding how the sun impacts design to choosing the perfect doorknob- holding the big ideas while making decisions at the micro level. If they're good at it, the architecture becomes a rich experience because everything is connected, and even the small details contribute to a greater whole. (I think this building is a great example) This richness contributes to comfort and quality of life, but holding onto multiple levels of thinking and decision making can easily get overwhelming.

And *overwhelmed* is what I have been hearing from homeowners in my recent role on the CEAC board, helping get the Energy Navigators Program off the ground. I have heard over and over from homeowners that it's overwhelming to figure out what steps to take to remove fossil fuels from their lives. Most people really want to do the right thing, but homes are actually pretty complex systems, so it will take many conversations and individual plans to make the energy transition a reality.

Again, how can we manage our own stress, grief, and confusion in the face of all the loss we see around us? The short answer- from many sources- is to get involved- preferably in community with other people- and get started doing something constructive. What could you do personally and what could we do as a congregation? Creating equitable comfort will take work, but I think it's worth the effort.

My dream is that every home, no matter how small, has what designer George Nelson once wrote about architect FLW's houses, that they "enclose space as if it were precious not for the sake of the space itself, but for the life that goes on within it." 9.

I leave you with this message from **Dr. Ayana Elizabeth Johnson and Dr. Katharine K. Wilkinson, the women behind the book *All We Can Save: Truth, Courage, and Solutions for the Climate Crisis***, "We are at the point of imbalance where "to save" is now the imperative. This word, from the old French *saveur*- keep, protect, redeem- offers us the chance to restore and rebuild, to recommit ourselves. But saving doesn't mean holding on to or petrifying current systems- quite the opposite. It means retrieving ways of living and being that have been sidelined and suppressed. It means attending to the root causes of our enmeshed crises. it means joyously building a human society that aligns with life's principles and assists the planet's living systems. ... We don't need to wait for new technologies or new practices; we just need to get to it." 15

**\*Hymn** We Are Building a New Way- Teal 1017

**Connections/ Community Ministry Update - Tom Morgan**

**I would like to thank- Ellen, Liam, Tom, my sister Jill, and husband Todd Kincaid for helping me craft today's service, Elio for modeling, and Kai, for so beautifully contributing music.**

**Closing Words - Jean** Middle Stanzas from call to worship- Siddiqa

*"If the future leaves without us, the silence that will follow will be an unspeakable nothing.*

*What if we convince her to stay?*

*How rare and beautiful it is that we exist.*

*What if we stun existence one more time?"*

**Postlude-** Mad Rush- Philip Glass— written for the Dali Lama's first address in the US in 1979- Cathedral of St. John the Divine, NYC.

## Big Ideas:

Love is at the center of UU values, but what is the relationship between love and comfort? Jean will explore what ideas of physical and emotional comfort mean in architecture and for our collective future in this time of climate crisis. "Art isn't supposed to make you comfortable." - Recent NYT headline

What does it **mean** to be comfortable? What do we **need** to be comfortable? What is **enough**?

How can/should we balance our own comfort with the needs of others and for a just and equitable transition away from fossil fuels? Do we deserve to be comfortable?

Climate anxiety- how do we deal with it? Easy to get overwhelmed by the scope of the problem and feel that there is nothing an individual can do that will make a difference.

When we work to make our homes comfortable- in all senses of the word- we create a safe refuge. From that place of comfort and refuge, amazing work can happen!

"Leaving your comfort zone... is a pathway to unlocking your true potential."

Why do we build? When we do build, what/how should we build, and for whom? Affordable vs. green housing- False choice.

**Share some concepts I have been wrestling with, and some ways I have found to sort through them.**

## Comfort definitions:

Comfort *means freedom from physical, mental, or spiritual pain*. The concept soothes the weary, ushers in rest, and seems to lift the burden from our hearts and ... a feeling of safety

*OED- A person or thing that affords consolation; a source or means of comfort.* c1386

To console, cheer, encourage, dispel grief...

*A pleasant feeling of being relaxed and free from pain, providing consolation or encouragement*

## Quotes/ Sources:

**1** "Leaving your comfort zone isn't just a cliché; it's a pathway to unlocking your true potential." Parul Chauhan writing in Medium, 12/23 <https://medium.com/@Parulwrites/embrace-the-unknown-leaving-your-comfort-zone-in-2024-9d2a8d50337a>

**2** "The pursuit of ordinary comforts takes up most of our lives. We want to feel good, enjoy pleasure, shape a life of joy. We seek comfort in our bodies, our senses, our beliefs, our psychology, our relationships, and our contributions." ImagineSelf.com

## **4. From THE QUEST FOR COMFORT; Architecture Eases Into the 90's, Paul Goldberger 1989**

As Rybczynski, a professor of architecture at McGill University in Montreal, observes, comfort means far more than physical ease; true comfort is cultural as much as physical, and has meant radically different things to different people at different times.

During the 80's - a decade that has sought what it likes, not what it believes is right -the quest for comfort has not brought about wild hedonism in design as much as a wallowing in the easy, the relaxing, the quickly gratifying. The Ralph Lauren "look," which in the 80's moved beyond clothing to encompass all aspects of home design, is not new or challenging; it is a celebration of what is known and familiar - what



is comfortable. Lauren does it so well that his stage set becomes a kind of reality. He creates a perfect image of rural tranquility, or old-money gentility, which is far better than the real thing ever was, and he sells it to us as a package.

### **5. From WAKE UP CALL: Architectural Comfort in the Age of Passivity By Pol Esteve**

Comfort is a tricky concept. Commonly understood as a positive value, it is a double-edged sword. In his 1948 treatise *Mechanization Takes Command*, Sigfried Giedion reminds us that the word comfort, in its Latin origin, meant “to strengthen.” It was only after the 18th century, in Western culture, that comfort became identified with “convenience,” he explains. Since then, in architecture, comfort is normally related to bodily experience in terms of sensory relaxation. Generally presented as an objective parameter, comfort refers to a physical state rather than a psychological mode. It is differentiated from wellbeing or happiness as, initially, it does not operate at a mental level, although it might have later consequences upon the mental. Comfort is achieved in an atmosphere where material conditions allow the body to repose. The air, the lighting, the sound, the smell, and the solid elements provide relaxation and avoid pain. In a space that is considered comfortable, activity can be pursued with the minimum effort.

*Man shall order and control his intimate surroundings so that they may yield him the utmost ease. This view would have us fashion our furniture, choose our carpets, contrive our lighting, and use all the technical aids that mechanization makes available. — Sigfried Giedion, *Mechanization Takes Command* (1948)*

### **6. From *The Architecture of Happiness* by Alain de Botton**

“If one room can alter how we feel, if our happiness can hang on the colour of the walls or the shape of the door, what will happen to us in most of the places we are forced to look at or inhabit?” p. 13

“We seek two things of buildings- 1. To shelter us. 2. To speak to us of whatever we find important and need to be reminded of. -John Ruskin p. 62

Home is a “Refuge to shore up our states of mind. Rooms to align us to desirable versions of ourselves and to keep alive the important evanescent sides of us.” p. 107

“When an environment becomes uncomfortable, there is always a greater risk that people will respond abusively to it.” 6 p. 245

### **7. From *The Not So Big House*- Sarah Susanka**

“The quality of my life has improved living in a NSBH. I’m surrounded by beautiful forms, lots of daylight, natural materials, and things I love. Our house fits us perfectly and is unabashedly comfortable.... My House feeds my spirit.” P. 5

### **8. From *The New Net Zero* by William Maclay**

The people factor: “Our ultimate goal is to make buildings that are comfortable for people. Comfort covers a very broad range of well-being, including physical, emotional, psychological, spiritual, and social. Our buildings should provide comfort in all of these ways, but our main focus with net zero buildings is to provide a climate controlled interior space that enables people to perform tasks and be protected from the elements in a healthy environment. Every building layer that we have explored should account for and address how it affects the comfort zone inside the building. The comfort zone is determined by the

combination of temperature, humidity, and air movement. It, too, must be adaptable and flexible, as there is not one comfortable temperature, humidity level, or amount of ventilation that is optimal for everyone. All individuals have different comfort tolerances.” p.49

### **9. From *Architecture is Art* by Stanley Abercrombie**

“When a building becomes art, it does so only by standing on the shoulders of engineering, physics, mechanics, logistics, economics, and craft.” We do not consider a building to be a work of art because its elevators are fast or because it turns a profit for the its developer; yet, as in no other art, the esthetic criteria for architecture are entangled with such mundane matters.” “Most buildings have no intention and no hope of being art.” There is no such thing as spontaneous or accidental architecture. It comes into being only as the end product of a tedious and expensive process that requires fore-thought and effort. Even vernacular “architecture without architects” is planned. The thatched rondavels of South Africa, the stone trulli of southern Italy, mud huts of the Dogon- all these building forms have evolved through processes of trial and error, of gradual improvement and adaptation to climate and function, and in all cases, the process of their construction is begun with a clear vision of the desired result.” “Architecture is building raised to the level of art.” p 8-9

The three relations at the heart of architecture are that of a building to the earth, of a building to man, and of a building to itself. p.166 George Nelson once wrote in *Fortune*- FLW’s houses “enclose space as if it were precious not for the sake of the space itself, but for the life that goes on within it.” p.168

### **10. From *After Comfort* by Daniel A. Barber** (assistant professor of architecture at University of Pennsylvania Weitzman School of Design)

“Comfort indicates that one has risen above the inconsistencies of the natural world and triumphed, not only over nature and the weather but over chance itself.” “Comfort is tightly bound up with consumption.” “Design is part of the chain, organizing and aestheticizing the connection between comfort and carbon.” “Comforts are rungs on the ladder to luxury.... These rungs are physical, spatial, architectural, and thermal. First comes sustenance, then shelter and protection for the elements, then heat, and last, cooling, so as to remain active, healthy, and productive, especially in the soup of humidity. After these come layers of precision: filtered air, sealed membranes, sensors everywhere, all the elements of the comfort-industrial complex that aims to wrap itself around the body like a favorite shirt. To be rich means to never be uncomfortable. The life of the poor is awash in discomfort, striving for relief from hunger, from weather, from being a victim of the unexpected. The struggle for comfort is a struggle for equal opportunity, justice, and conditions amenable to growth and self-actualization.” p.1 (45)

“Comfort, however, is in short supply. Not because the world is running out of it but because, in the face of the climate crisis, we have to collectively adjust to its going away.... Who decides who gets to be comfortable?” “Architecture’s capacity for formal virtuosity relies, ineluctably, on the mechanical provision of comfort.” “Comfort relies on its invisibility. ...Not only is the HVAC system hidden, so is the boiler, the fuel, the network of extraction, the labor exploitation, the carbon cost of distribution, the toll of pollution and the toxification of the air.” p. 46

“We are no longer protected from the elements. The elements are assailing us, determining our collective future. The experience of comfort inside is predicated on the global acceleration of the climatic instability outside. Interior comfort (now) produces unpredictability.” “The challenge now is how not to grow, to facilitate an economy of exchange and redistribution. Discomfort is an opportunity. The imperative for

transition structures the prospect of discomfort. But if transition is not toward growth, what is the goal?"  
p. 47

"Comfort, like capital, is a proxy for racial inequity, a spatial and mechanical form of implicit bias. It is the structural imposition of a norm; materially, atmospherically, and globally. Comfort scarcity is the signal that development is not available to everyone and that this unevenness needs to be forced across political and geographic divides lest it proliferate along historically familiar lines." p. 48

"Architecture has the opportunity, if not the obligation, to define and explore this new limit- to design to the edge of comfort. The last 100 years have been defined by manufactured comfort; the carbon released will condition the planet for centuries to come." "Until the 1960's most buildings were developed in some relationship to their climatic surroundings- long history of tools, of material knowledge, of attention to orientation and induced ventilation." p. 49

"As a global society, we need to adjust the contours of our desires and our values... Discomfort is not a bad thing if it is designed, managed, and made desirable. We will be discomforted either by design or by default, as the terrors of an uninhabitable Earth make themselves increasingly felt. Why not start now?"  
p. 50

#### **11. From *Drawdown*- Paul Hawken p. 164,165**

"The largest single global carbon reduction would come from properly recovering refrigerants at the end of useful life" This has such a huge impact because current refrigerants have a very high GWP, recovery is expensive, and AC use is soaring around the world. New lower GWP refrigerants are here, coming to the US in the next few years.

This carbon reduction is however beat by 1. the combination of reducing food waste and eating a mostly plant-based diet, 2. the combo of adding on-shore and off-shore wind energy, and 3. the combination of educating girls and improving family planning around the world.

#### **12. From *A Pattern Language* by Christopher Alexander and others**

Window Place- a room which does not have a "window place" seldom allows you to feel fully comfortable or perfectly at ease. Indeed, a room without a window place may keep you in a state of perpetual unresolved conflict and tension- slight, perhaps, but definite. Torn between two forces: to sit down and be comfortable, and being drawn towards the light." P. 834

#### **13. From *Animal Architecture* by Jim Brandenburg intro**

Perfection of Igloo and Teepee- they were built quickly from local materials, travel well, protect family from harshest conditions. Form follows function....

#### **14. From MLK *Beyond Vietnam* speech- April 4, 1967 recently quoted by Miller Hull Partnership**

"We must rapidly begin the shift from a thing-oriented society to a people-oriented society. When machines and computers, profit motives and property rights are considered more important than people, the giant triplets of racism, extreme materialism, and militarism are incapable of being conquered." Love is somehow the key.... We are confronted with the fierce urgency of now. In this unfolding conundrum of life and history, there is such a thing as being too late. Procrastination is still the thief of time. ... We still have a choice today: nonviolent coexistence or violent coannihilation. We must move past indecision to action.... If we do not act, we shall surely be dragged down the long, dark, and shameful corridors of time

reserved for those who possess power without compassion, might without morality, and strength without sight.... Now let us rededicate ourselves to the long and bitter, but beautiful, struggle for a new world.”

**15. From *All We Can Save: Truth, Courage, and Solutions for the Climate Crisis, Onward*, by Dr. Ayana Elizabeth Johnson and Dr. Katharine K. Wilkinson**

“We are at the point of imbalance where “to save” is now the imperative. This word, from the old French *saveur*- keep, protect, redeem- offers us the chance to restore and rebuild, to recommit ourselves. But saving doesn’t mean holding on to or petrifying current systems- quite the opposite. It means retrieving ways of living and being that have been sidelined and suppressed. It means attending to the root causes of our enmeshed crises. It doesn’t mean a draconian assignment; it means joyously building a human society that aligns with life’s principles and assists the planet’s living systems. ... We don’t need to wait for new technologies or new practices; we just need to get to it, removing barriers to solutions, accelerating their implementation, and expanding their reach, while actively stopping sources of this crisis” p. 373.

**16. Bill McKibben letter 7-8-24**

**One of our tasks for the moment is to learn how to effectively mourn**, and this (a mock funeral outside the Financial District headquarters of Citibank) was a lesson in just that. .... And then a bagpiper appeared, and we began to follow in a long line as he very slowly processed around this giant glasswalled building. Bagpipes are loud, of course, but also solemn—often they’re used to honor noted dead, at the funerals of police or politicians. Here we were trying to bear in mind those anonymous millions who have already died from heatwave, flood, fire, and climate borne-disease, and the slow, steady skirl of the pipes led my mind drift to Bangladesh, where I watched the first big outbreak of dengue fever, and to Napa, where I saw the smoking ruins of fires that moved too fast, and to my own Vermont and the deadly floods of the summer past. When, turning the last corner on to Greenwich Street, he began to play Amazing Grace, I teared right up. .... We spent a few hours in a big holding cell, trading stories and jokes, which is part of learning to mourn effectively as well; one can’t be sad and solemn all the time, because all the time now is a little desperate, but we still have lives to live. And so we shall.

The wondrous writer Barbara Kingsolver wrote the oath for members of the new federal Climate Corps—a pledge recited by the first 9,000 young people to sign up for jobs helping with the energy transition:

I pledge to bring my skills, respect, and compassion to work every day, supporting environmental justice in all our communities.

I will honor nature’s beauty and abundance, on which we all depend, and commit to its protection from the climate crisis.

I will build a more resilient future, where every person can thrive.

I will take my place in history, working with shared purpose in the American Climate Corps on behalf of our nation and planet, its people, and all its species, for the better future we hold within our sight.

17. Tad Delay, in his new book “Future of Denial”, writes...

**18. Art isn’t supposed to make you comfortable.** NYT opinion piece by Jen Silverman. Mx. Silverman is a playwright and the author, most recently, of the novel “There’s Going to Be Trouble.”

“But what art offers us is crucial precisely because it is not a bland backdrop or a platform for simple directives. Our books, plays, films and TV shows can do the most for us when they don’t serve as moral

instruction manuals, but rather allow us to glimpse our own hidden capacities, the slippery social contracts inside which we function, and the contradictions we all contain.

We need more narratives that tell us the truth about how complex our world is. We need stories that help us name and accept paradoxes, not ones that erase or ignore them. After all, our experience of living in communities with one another is often much more fluid and changeable than it is rigidly black and white.”

### **Chalice lighting by Rev. Audrey W. Vincent**

We light the chalice this morning for earth, our home. Earth abundant, source of what was before we were and will be after we are gone. As each cell proves our common destiny, may we know earth, our mother of old, as our friend; as we were bred of dust and stars, may we know her fate as ours.

Blessed is our bondedness to earth,

Blessed is our bondedness to all of life,

Blessed is our bondedness to the Source of life itself

[https://www.buildinggreen.com/op-ed/bring-noise-it-can-help-you-listen?mc\\_cid=f31f73ddf3&mc\\_eid=797f3a277f](https://www.buildinggreen.com/op-ed/bring-noise-it-can-help-you-listen?mc_cid=f31f73ddf3&mc_eid=797f3a277f)

### **Why you should stop setting your thermostat to 72**

Micah Pollak had no idea the trouble he was getting himself into when he shared his preferred thermostat settings on social media. “I just discovered most of our friends set their AC at 68-73F during the summer,” Micah, who is an economist at Indiana University, posted on Threads in late June. Read in Vox:

[https://apple.news/A\\_cofhinERUyYVNTz\\_NQH4Q](https://apple.news/A_cofhinERUyYVNTz_NQH4Q)

### **Climate change is messing with time more than previously thought, scientists find**

The impacts of human-caused climate change are so overwhelming they’re actually messing with time, according to new research. Read in CNN: <https://apple.news/AdKVSH6uiS3uZugGedCNk0w>