

Statement for Environment and Public Works Committee Hearing  
National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA  
June 7, 2007

Climate change has become one of the most important issues of our time because of the severe implications it will have on the future of God's people and God's planet. Already we are seeing impacts at both a local and global level—from melting ice sheets to increased storm events. The predicted impacts of drought and increased disease will affect God's community both at home and abroad.

The National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA (NCC) in conjunction with its 35 member denominations such as the Episcopal Church, the Presbyterian Church USA, the United Church of Christ, and the United Methodist Church, has been working to address climate change with our more than 100,000 congregations for over a decade. Many of the NCC's member communions have taken action to reduce their own carbon emissions and have passed resolutions calling for action from the federal government to prevent catastrophic climate change impacts from occurring. These policies and resolutions combined with congregant and congregational action provide evidence of the overwhelming concern for global warming within the Christian community. (Various denominational resolutions are attached to this statement)

Since the early 1990s, the church has been working to educate its members about the impacts individuals and society are having on God's Earth. Many individuals of faith, communities, and congregations have been actively changing their lifestyles to reduce their carbon footprint, switching their church to renewal sources of energy and calling on their elected officials to take a leadership role on climate change. Prayerful reflection on the consequences of global warming makes it clear that we must take immediate action to stop global warming. Our concern is rooted in our call for stewardship and justice. The impacts of global warming highlight that we have failed to be good stewards of God's creation and are failing to provide justice for the most vulnerable among us.

As Christians, we are called to be good stewards of God's creation. In Genesis, humans are called to care for God's good creation (Gen 2:15; 1:31) and to enable the fruitfulness with which God has blessed creation (Gen 1:11, 22) to continue. Human dominion over creation (Gen 1:26, 28) is granted upon our acceptance of the need to function in the image of God, and as Christians we look to Christ's model as a servant leader. God made a protective covenant with all life (Gen 9:9-17) and our faith makes it known that those who destroy the earth will also be destroyed (Rev 11:18). As Christians, we remember our responsibility to "provide for the redemption of the land"(Lev 25:24) for we know as God's earthly stewards that the Earth is the Lord's (Ps 24:1). Our current actions are having devastating ecological consequences, and we are not being good stewards of that which God has put into our hands and under our feet (Ps 8; Gen 9:2-3).

Numerous studies such as the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change Working Group Report highlight that global warming impacts are already being felt around the globe. Oceans are progressively acidifying which is negatively impacting coral reefs. At least 20 percent of the world's species are at increased risk of extinction with a 1.5-2.5 degree C increase in global

temperature. Sea level rise is expected to flood coastal communities causing severe havoc for millions of individuals.

The scientific community, in addition to providing us with a better understanding of the global warming threat we are facing, has also provided us with the knowledge of how we can solve this growing concern. In order to prevent catastrophic climate change we must reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, particularly carbon dioxide, by 80 percent by the year 2050. Considering the interconnectedness of God's creation—both human and nonhuman—we must act now to protect God's planet and God's people both now and in the future.

We will need to make economy-wide reductions as well as changes in our personal lifestyles in order to curb global warming emissions. In answering our call to be good stewards of God's creation, we must also become educated and mindful consumers. We must work to conserve the energy that we use and make our systems more efficient. In addition, our vehicles must go farther on a gallon of gas, and we must take advantage of renewable sources of energy such as wind and solar power. Congress must implement measures that will prevent catastrophic impacts that have been predicted if we continue with business as usual. Our actions at both a nation, local, and individual level must ensure that we create a bountiful future for our children and grandchildren.

As watchdogs for justice, we have a duty to protect vulnerable communities around the world. We already know that global warming will have devastating implications for God's planet, but it will also severely impact God's people. As Christians, we are called to protect the vulnerable and minister to those in need (Matthew 25:40-45). Christian tradition proclaims an unmistakable priority for those living in poverty, and calls for justice for the oppressed and the marginalized. (Leviticus 26:34-35). Especially when we as a nation are contributing more than our fair share to the global warming problem, it is our responsibility to respond faithfully to the demands of God's justice. It has been shown that the effects of global warming will most greatly impact those living in poverty. This includes those living in developing countries as well as those in our own communities.

According to reports such as the IPCC, global warming has already had profound negative impacts on communities and people around the world. In 2005, more than 20 million people were affected by changes in agricultural production and an additional 90 million people who already live in poverty could be at risk of hunger and malnutrition in this century. One to two billion people will face water scarcity this century and by 2020 approximately 250 million will face water scarcity in Africa. Millions of individuals around the world will be at greater risk of contracting diseases such as malaria, dengue fever, and west Nile virus because of climactic changes. Each of these changes will have extreme impacts on those least able to adapt, those living in poverty, and vulnerable populations who are already dependent on their natural environment to ensure day to day survival.

Decreasing snow pack in the United States and around the globe will lead to decreased availability of fresh water. Rising sea levels and an increased number of extreme weather events

will threaten communities not only globally but also across the United States. Communities of color will be disproportionately impacted by the effects of climate change. The African American community, in particular, who are less responsible for climate change than other Americans as they emit less greenhouse gas, will be adversely affected by both climate change mitigation and global warming impacts. Because of predictions of higher energy costs with climate mitigation, African American households, which spend a higher fraction of their income on energy purchases than any other non African American group and are more than twice as likely to live in poverty, will be severely impacted. In addition, African Americans, who are more likely to suffer from extreme heat events, will feel the burden of global warming impacts. African Americans will be disproportionately affected by the economic instability caused by climate change. Because the burden of both global warming impacts and climate change mitigation will fall most heavily on communities of color and those living in poverty, climate legislation must include mechanisms to reduce the burden on these populations. Assistance with higher energy costs and a commitment to reducing carbon emissions will aid in the drive towards justice for all of God's people.

It is clear that we, as a nation, must act now in order to prevent the impacts of global warming from damaging communities and cultures in the U.S. and across the globe. As we have gained a better understanding of global warming it has become clear that we cannot address poverty without addressing global warming and we cannot address global warming without addressing poverty. Their interconnectedness makes it necessary to pursue the vision for a better tomorrow. Implementation of a national climate policy that would significantly reduce our emissions would be the most effective action that we could take to help those most in need combat the changes that lie ahead.

When weighing the implications of climate change on those living in poverty and vulnerable populations around the world, it becomes clear that the revenue received from climate policy should be used for the common good. Workers in carbon intensive industries who will be negatively impacted need assistance to gain usable job skills. Revenue from the sale of carbon allowances should be directed towards those affected by energy prices. Funding should be provided for weatherization and energy efficiency programs (efficient appliances, tax credits for efficient investments, renewable energy improvements) to reduce fossil fuel use at home. Financial assistance should also be provided for community development programs that improve efficiency and utilize renewable energy.

God's planet and people are already suffering from global warming and it is our duty and call to serve justice and be good stewards of God's creation by acting now to reduce carbon emissions and provide assistance to those who will be impacted by global warming and climate mitigation.

Attachment A

**Proposed Resolution for the 2006 General Assembly  
Resolution on Global Warming**

*Approved by the Justice and Advocacy Commission, the NCC Governing Board, and the NCC  
and Church World Service General Assembly*

**TITLE:** Resolution on Global Warming

**POLICY**

**BASE:** Christian Concern and Responsibility for Economic Life in a Rapidly Changing Technological Society, adopted by the General Board of the National Council of Churches USA Governing Board, February 24, 1966

The Ethical Implications of Energy Production and Use, adopted by the National Council of Churches USA Governing Board, May 11, 1979

**RATIONALE:** Prominent scientists and major, respected scientific bodies are in agreement that the Earth is warming because of human-induced carbon emissions. Global warming threatens the very fabric of God’s creation and will hit those who are least able to adapt—both human and nonhuman—the hardest. Because the Christian community is called to justice, to be good “neighbors” with our brothers and sisters across the globe, and to steward God’s creation, addressing global warming is a moral imperative and a Christian call.

**RESOLUTION:** The National Council of Churches has stated:

The rapidly expanding dimensions of (human) “dominion” over the earth and its physical resources call for new and deeper commitment to the Christian doctrine of stewardship . . . Natural resources, human techniques and institutions all together constitute an interlocking and interacting system of amazing complexity, precision and balance.<sup>1</sup>

An ecologically just society will be guided by the values of sustainability, fairness, and participation. Sustainability refers to the earth’s limited capacity to provide resources and to absorb the pollution resulting from their use. Sustainability requires that biological and social systems which nurture and support life not be depleted or poisoned. Fairness refers to . . . an equitable distribution of the total benefits and costs.<sup>2</sup>

Whereas the impacts of global warming, as currently predicted and understood by leading scientists and scientific bodies around the world including the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, the National Academy of Sciences, and the Intergovernmental

Panel on Climate Change, will dramatically and negatively alter God's gracious gift of creation and

Whereas the predicted impacts of global warming will have a disproportionate impact on those living in poverty and hunger, the elderly and infants, and those least responsible for the emissions of green house gases.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES IN CHRIST:

- 1) Expresses its deep concern for the pending environmental, economic, and social tragedies threatened by global warming to creation, human communities, and traditional sacred spaces
- 2) Urges the Federal Government to respond to global warming with greater urgency and leadership and gives support for mandatory measures that reduce the absolute amount of greenhouse gas emissions, and in particular emissions of carbon dioxide, to levels recommended by nationally and internationally recognized and respected scientific bodies.
- 3) Urges the Federal, State and Local Governments to support and invest in energy conservation and efficiency, sustainable and renewable, and affordable and sustainable transportation
- 4) Calls for business and industry to respond to global warming with increased investment in conservation and more efficient and sustainable energy technologies that are accessible, sustainable, and democratic.
- 5) Stands firmly with all of God's children by urging that adaptive measures and financial support be forthcoming from government and industry to aid those directly impacted by global warming and in particular those least able to relocate, reconstruct, or cope with the current and pending impacts of climate change
- 6) Calls on all Christians, people of faith and people of good will the world over to lead by example and seek active means whereby they may, individually and in community, quickly reduce their emissions of green house gas emissions and speak out for engagement by their elected officials on matters of global warming.

## Attachment B

### Episcopal Church **Global Warming, 2001**

Resolved, that the Salt Lake City meeting of the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church urges the President of the United States to address the issue of global warming and take the necessary steps to reduce greenhouse gas emissions in the United States.

Resolved, that the Episcopal Church urges the President of the United States and Congress to provide financial support and leadership for developing nations to control their emissions of greenhouse gases in order to reduce the vulnerability to climate change and severe weather disasters.

Resolved, that the Episcopal Church urges the President of the United States and Congress to provide funds and leadership in an effort to encourage renewable energy, energy efficiency and conservation.

## Attachment C

### GENERAL BOARD RESOLUTIONS

Church of the Brethren General Board

Resolution on Global Warming and Atmospheric Degradation (1991)

**WHEREAS** our vastly increased use of fossil fuels is substantially increasing the atmospheric concentrations of the greenhouse gases, thereby enhancing the strong possibility of catastrophic warming of the earth's surface, and

**WHEREAS** the negative consequences of the greenhouse effect are likely to intensify human suffering especially in the developing countries, and

**WHEREAS** the Annual Conference statement "Creation: Called to Care" challenges us to take seriously our role as stewards of the earth, and to work for the renewal of creation, and

**WHEREAS** the General Board is committed to study and action on issues of justice, peace, and integrity of creation

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Church of the Brethren General Board, meeting in Elgin, Illinois on October 19-22, 1991 commits itself and urges Brethren congregations, institutions and members to:

*Reaffirm our belief*

· That we are called by God to live in harmony with all of creation, and that our covenantal relationship to care for the creation requires us to be aware of present and impending threats to our environment and to take action to preserve the integrity of creation.

*Join together*

- In the search for ways to live together in harmony with God's creation;
- In addressing the causes and dealing with the consequences of atmospheric destruction locally and globally; and
- In praying for the strength to reduce consumption and reject the myths of unlimited resources and economic growth.

*Work together through global, local, and personal efforts to safeguard the world's reliance on fossil fuels, and by*

- Increasing awareness of the negative ecological consequences of continuing reliance on fossil fuels, and by expanding ongoing educational efforts that lead to action;
- Encouraging the building and renovating of our homes and church facilities and camp buildings to be energy efficient and initiating new programs of energy conservation and awareness, including alternatives to fossil fuels;
- Striving to eliminate the use of products that contain ozone-depleting Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs);
- Using public transportation, carpooling, and telephone conferencing in order to reduce fossil fuel consumption;
- Becoming ecologically aware consumers by using diets and products that consume less energy in production, transportation, packaging, and use;
- Devoting maximum effort to the separation and recycling of household goods, while also reducing waste and toxic materials;
- Encouraging office energy audits and recycling programs (particularly paper and paper products).

*Pledge ourselves to address the causes and reverse the consequences of global warming by*

- advocating the passage of legislation, at all appropriate levels, that reduce carbon dioxide output and set reduction targets for other greenhouse gases;
- supporting research and development of energy alternatives to fossil fuels. And supporting the passage of mandatory higher fuel efficiency for new vehicles and the phasing out of older, less efficient vehicles;

- supporting the expansion and promotion of rail transportation and other systems of mass transit, including subsidies for public transportation;
- combating forest destruction domestically and internationally through programs of preservation and reforestation and through responsible consumption of wood and wood products;
- engaging with corporations in dialogue and shareholder resolutions on such issues as reduction of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, phasing out of CFCs increased energy efficiency and fuel conservation, environmental cost accounting and other issues affecting global warming;
- calling for the adoption to limit the production of greenhouse gases worldwide;
- working to implement fair trade and economic relationships so that forms of development that minimize global warming are available to all nations.

**FURTHER** the General Board commits itself to;

- support and participate in national and international networks of religious bodies and other non-governmental organizations addressing the greenhouse effect; and
- continue through its program staff, within the context of a theology based on caring for the earth, and educational effort to acquaint the members of the Church of the Brethren with the nature, causes, and consequences of the greenhouse effect, including suggestions for individual and collective action to help address the problem. This will include the promotion of the use of the General Board's study resource, *Creation in Crisis: Responding to God's Covenant*, in all congregations. We will elicit the cooperation of District Executive as agents within each district to work directly with pastors to reach the membership of the church.

This resolution was adopted by the Church of the Brethren General Board at its meetings in Elgin, Illinois on October 21, 1991. For further information contact Shantilal P. Bhagat, 1451 Dundee Avenue, Elgin, IL 60120, 1-800-323-8039.

## Attachment D

### **Orthodox Perspectives on Creation**

#### **Report of the WCC Inter-Orthodox Consultation, Sofia, Bulgaria, October 1987 (Extracts)**

##### Creation and Holy Trinity

1. We believe that the created world itself is a ‘mystery’ originating in the sovereign will of God accomplished by the action (*energia*) of the Holy Trinity. We confess in the Nicene Constantinopolitan creed (325/381) that the Father is the “Creator of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible”, the Son “He through whom all things were made”, and the Holy Spirit, the “Creator of life” (*zoopion*). Thus, the three persons created together the world, which is the fruit of the common action of the Holy Trinity issuing out of the one essence.
2. As St. Basil the Great said, “We should understand in the creation the original cause of the Father as a founding cause, the cause of the Son as a creative, and the cause of the Spirit as an implementing one.” Thus the Father is the “Creator of all things”, the Son is the one “through whom all things were made”, and the Holy Spirit is the one “in whom are all things”. Everything that he (God the Creator) had made ... was very good” (Gen. 1:31), because “first He conceived, and His conception was a work carried out by His Word, and perfectly by His Spirit.
3. Thus, the action of the Holy Spirit, rooted in the Father, is presented as the ‘economy’ of the Son and the Spirit: the former bringing God’s desire into existence and the latter perfecting it in goodness and beauty; the one calling the creation and leading it to the Father, and the other helping the creation to respond to His call and communicating perfection to it. Thus, the creation is the result of the communion (*koinonia*), close relationship and cooperation of the Holy Trinity. The community of three Persons participates actively in the execution of the whole of God’s plan. Creation “out of nothing”
4. “In the beginning” the Holy Trinity created the world (heaven and earth) “out of nothing” (*ex nihilo*) and not out of preexistent matter. The world is a production of God’s free will, goodness, wisdom, love and omnipotence. God did not create the world in order to satisfy some need of His. Rather he created it without compulsion and without force in order that it might enjoy His blessings and share in His goodness. God then brought all things into being out of nothing, creating both the visible and the invisible.
5. “Out of nothing” (*ex nihilo*) finds its first expression in the Bible. “Beholding the heavens and the earth, and seeing all that is there, you will understand that God has created it all from nothing” (2 Macc. 7:28). Thus, the creation springs into being or passes into being out of non-being. As St. Gregory of Nyssa affirms, “It begins to be, and the very substance of the creation owes its beginning to change”. This transition from non-existence is a change brought about by God’s creative Word “who has established the world so that it shall not be moved” (Ps.93:1).  
Creation of the cosmos- integrity of the world
6. God is the Creator of the world. The world as cosmos, i.e. a created order with its own integrity, is a positive reality. It is the good work of the good God (Gen. 1), made by God for the blessed existence of humanity. The Cappadocian Fathers teach that God first creates the world and beautifies it like a palace, and then leads humanity into it. The genesis of the cosmos, being in becoming, is a mystery (*mysterion*) for the human mind, a genesis produced by the Word of God. As such, the world is a revelation of God (Rom. 1:19-20). Thus, when its intelligent inhabitants see it as cosmos, they come to learn about the Divine wisdom and the Divine energies. The cosmos is a coherent whole, a created synthesis, because all its elements are united and interrelated in time and space. A serious study of the mystery of creation, through faith, prayer, meditation and science,

will make a positive contribution to the recognition of the integrity of creation. The daily office of the Church (vespers) begins with a psalm which exalts the beauty of this mystery (Ps. 103), while the Fathers of the Church often comment on the various biblical passages which describe the integrity of the creation.

Value of the creation  
7. The value of the creation is seen not only in the fact that it is intrinsically good, but also in the fact that it is appointed by God to be the home for living beings. The value of the natural creation is revealed in the fact that it was made for God (something which is beautifully expressed in Orthodox iconography), i.e. to be the context for God's Incarnation and humankind's deification, and as such, the beginning of the actualization of the Kingdom of God. We may say that the cosmos provides the stage upon which humankind moves from creation to deification.

Ultimately, however, the whole of the creation is destined to become a transfigured world, since the salvation of humankind necessarily involves the salvation of its natural home, the cosmos.

Human being as a microcosm

8. The fact that Adam and Eve were created by God last of all the other created beings and in a different way - not just by the utterance of a Divine Word but by the direct involvement and action of God - indicates not only the outstanding position of the human in the whole of the creation, but also its special relation to God. According to the Church Fathers, Genesis 1:26 ff, "...Let us make man ...(*poiesomen anthropon*) shows that the creation of the human being was the result of a Trinitarian act. Particularly significant in this connection is the statement that "man was made according to the image and the likeness of God". The reference to "the image of God" is to be understood in terms of Jesus Christ, since he is explicitly identified with it (2 Cor.4:4; Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:3 ff). Thus for mankind to be in the image of God means to be in, or assimilated to, Christ. This is a matter of grace and act and not a matter of nature, because only Christ is by nature God's image as God's eternal and natural offspring, his only begotten Son. The "likeness of God" is often connected with the grace of the Spirit who assimilates us to Christ.

9. In the created world only the human being combines material and spiritual elements. Human existence is thus differentiated from non-human creation in a qualitative way. In light of this fact, the Church Fathers often speak of the human being as a "little world", a "microcosm" of the whole of the creation. Using this notion, the Church Fathers teach that the human body contains in it all levels of existence of the natural world which preceded it in order of the creation, and considered the physical elements which make up the human body as in no way different from those which constitute the physical world. This means that the natural world is fully integrated with the human being and the whole of the creation.

10. At the same time, the Fathers' use of the notion of microcosm means that humanity, created in God's image and likeness, transcends the material world because it participates in God spiritually and consciously, unlike the rest of the creation. Humankind then stands on the boundary (*methorion*) between the material and the spiritual worlds as a connecting link. It is directly related to the earthly aspect of created existence as well as to the untreated existence of the Creator. As such, on the one hand, it directly influences our thinking about the integrity of creation, and on the other hand it gives to human nature a dynamic spiritual dimension.

11. St. Gregory the Theologian says that we are fully involved with the material creation by virtue of our physical existence, and that the material created reality is deeply involved with us. If we move to the direction of deification, our human nature, progressing towards God, will somehow carry the created material world with it. If, however, we move to the opposite direction, the created world will suffer with us as well (cf. Rom. 8:19-22). This means that we are called to exercise dominion over all creatures on earth (cf. Gen. 1:28), i.e. to be stewards

(*oikonomoi*) of God's material world, caring for it, maintaining it in its integrity and perfecting it by opening it up to God through our own deification.

The Incarnation as the renewal of the creation

12. God's will, wisdom and love for the creation in general and for humankind in particular are revealed in the Incarnation in an inexpressible way. The Son of God, as the one through whom the process of creation was fulfilled, came down from heaven into the world and became fully man, i.e. assumed human nature in its integrity and led it to the fulfillment of its God-given destiny, deification. The Orthodox Church teaches that the Virgin Mother of God, the Theotokos, is the model of the renewal of humankind and the creation in Christ. In her receiving of the Son of God, the whole humankind and the whole of the creation participate. In the Incarnate God the Father "made known. His will ... as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in Him (Christ), things in heaven and things on earth" (Eph. 1:10). In other words, Jesus Christ, the Son of God became man, restored and renewed humanity and the whole of the creation, uniting both of them with the Creator in and through Himself. One of the Trinity, thus, became Incarnate, became man, revealing his Lordship over the whole of the creation, and showing humanity a Lordship in stewardship and service.

## II. Disintegrated creation

### The human fall and the disintegration of creation

13. Before their fall the first human beings experienced the creation as one harmonious whole. It was like a beautiful garden (*paradeisos*, Gen. 2:8) which they tended with care and love. The human fall, however, which was essentially a sinful exercising of human freedom, introduced forces of disintegration into the body of creation. Humanity experienced a two-fold alienation. On the one hand, it was estranged from the Creator, since Adam and Eve tended to hide themselves away from the sight of God (cf. Gen. 3:8) as their communion with the source of life and light was broken. On the other hand, humanity lost its capacity to enter into a proper relation with nature and with the body of the creation. Enmity between the natural world and human beings replaced the relationship of harmony and care. Domination and exploitation of the creation for selfish ends by greedy human beings became the order of history. Thus, manifold forms of disintegration set in which converged in the fact of death and corruption. Fear of death instilled anxiety, acquisitiveness, greed, hatred and despair in human beings. Modern forms of economic exploitation, racial oppression, social inequalities, war, genocide, etc. are all consequences of the fear of death and collective signs of death.

### The environmental crisis (...)

18. Environmental issues like air and water pollution, depletion of non-renewable resources, destruction of the ozone layer, increasing nuclear radiation, deforestation and desertification of vast areas, etc. threaten the life itself on this planet. The gifts of science and technology are being misused by human beings to the extent of abusing nature and turning today's life on earth into a hell, not only for the many millions of existing people but also for the generations to come. The voice of those who call for a just development, equal distribution of resources and ecological lifestyles is being systematically suppressed. Advances in bio-technology and genetic engineering need to be seen in the light of the Holy Spirit because without adequate knowledge of the transcendent (divine) vocation and spiritual nature of humanity, these new techniques run the risk of initiating biological disruption leading to a disastrous mutations that are extremely dangerous for the true life on earth. While human creativity and freedom can be armed as supreme gifts of God, it should also be emphasized that they should be rooted in divine wisdom and in human spiritual maturity. A reintegrated environment (...)

37. The environmental crisis is a sin and a judgment upon humanity. We need to find ways, as churches, to support sound programs which seek to preserve from pollution air, water and land. To speak of the reintegration of creation today is first to speak words of repentance and to make commitments toward the formation of a new way of living for the whole of humanity. The contemporary world must repent for the abuses which we have imposed upon the natural world, seeing it in the same kind of relationship to us as we see the unity of our human nature in both body and soul. We must begin to undo the pollution we have caused, which brings death and destruction to the mineral, vegetable and animal dimensions of the world environment. We must work and lobby in every way possible to us in our different situations to

encourage the scientific community to dedicate the good potentials of science and technology to the restoration of the earth's integrity. For ourselves, this means a recommitment to the simple life which is content with necessities and - with the Church Fathers – sees unnecessary luxuriousness as the deprivation of necessities owed to the poor. In all of its aspects, concern for the reintegration of the creation calls Christians to a new affirmation of self-discipline, a renewal of the spirit of asceticism appropriate to Christians, regardless of their status, position or condition. In short, we must see the created world as our own home, and every person in it as our brother and sister whom Christ loves.

#### Conclusions

(...) 45. We confess that God is the creator of all that exists, beautifully and wonderfully made, a fitting manifestation of His glory (cf. Ps. 103). But we stand today before a wounded creation which suffers under distorted conditions which are the result of the sin of humanity. In our selfishness and greed we have used our otherwise good technological abilities to exploit God's creation, to destroy the balance of nature and to deform what God originally made to be in wholesome communion with us and with Him. Creation is no longer integrated with humanity nor is it in harmony with God. In fact, it stands in danger of conflagration, in the face of nuclear war.

46. The creation needs to be reintegrated, but this can happen only as it is brought once again into communion with the Lord, so that it may find its fullness of purpose and its transfiguration. Humanity can no longer ignore its responsibility to protect it and preserve it. In order to do this, however, humanity must learn to treat the creation as a sacred offering to God, an oblation, a vehicle of grace, an incarnation of our most noble aspirations and prayers.

47. Just as bread and wine are liked up as an offering for the sanctification of the world and all people in the

Eucharist, a sacramental approach to the creation is needed for its reintegration.

**49. The Lord God created His universe and all that is in it as an integrated whole. Today, we have brought about disintegration in what God intended to be integrated. We call upon individuals, nations and churches to give effect to a vision of the rightful harmony between the human dimension and the mineral, plant and animal dimensions of the creation. In spirit and in body, we are called to offer the whole of God's creation back to Him as a sacrament and as an offering cleansed, purified, restored for His sanctification of it.**

50. O God, "the things that are Yours, we offer them to You according to all things and for all things. Amen." May this be our prayer for the "integrity of God's creation."

Copyright: Printed by Orthdruk Orthodox Printing House, Bialystok, Poland, 1996.

Source: The Orthodoxy and Ecology Resource Book is produced by SYNDESMOS, The World Fellowship of Orthodox Youth.

Editor: Alexander Belopopsky and Dimitri Oikonomou

© 2003 Greek Orthodox Archdiocese of America

## Attachment E

### **Reformed Church in America (RCA)**

#### **General Synod 1998**

#### **Caring for Creation (Climate Change)**

In response to a Commission on Christian Action report, "Caring for Creation: The Church and Paper Use" (MGS 1997, pp. 89-93), the 1997 General Synod instructed the Office of Social Witness to continue to provide study material on lifestyles and the environment and to assist the church in exploring ways of making these environmental concerns a part of its life of witness and worship (MGS 1997, R-7, p. 93.) Through its Office of Social Witness the RCA participates in the National Religious Partnership for the Environment (NRPE), a coalition of four groups (Jewish, Roman Catholic, mainline Protestant, and Evangelical) which work together in developing resources and programs for a faith-based response to environmental issues. The minister for social witness serves as the co-chair of the National Council of Churches Eco-Justice Working Group, one of the four NRPE partners. Such ecumenical cooperation makes it possible to develop more resources and programs than would otherwise be possible. This year, for example, the Eco-Justice Working Group published a resource packet of study, worship, and action resources on human health and the environment which was sent to seventy thousand Protestant congregations, including each congregation in the RCA. Other activities of the Working Group which are helping to equip RCA members and congregations include an ecumenical training event, an annual public policy briefing, and a quarterly newsletter. In addition, a variety of study resources are available through the RCA Distribution Center and from the Office of Social Witness. The minister for social witness also led several workshops on the Christian response to environmental issues. "Caring for Creation Coordinators" were enlisted in several regions of the denomination. These people serve as resource and support persons to aid congregations in their ministries of defending and restoring creation. Through the Office of Social Witness, coordinators receive resources and training to assist congregations in three areas of ministry: learning (suggesting resources that will help churches learn about environmental issues and the biblical theology of creation); lifestyle (helping churches and families with ideas for reducing consumption, conserving energy, recycling, reducing use of toxins and pesticides, etc.); and legislation (serving as a conduit of information about important environmental issues and public policy issues so that Christians can write their legislators and make their feelings known).

Several RCA caring for creation coordinators were able to attend an ecumenical training event in Estes Park, Colorado, in May 1997. Another training event in Montreal, Noah Carolina, is scheduled for August 1998. Caring for creation coordinators were instrumental in helping congregations organize special worship services, ecumenical events, workshops, letter-writing campaigns, educational opportunities, and service projects. The advisory committee recommended:

**R-25.** To encourage each classis to identify one person to serve as a "caring for creation coordinator" and to communicate that person's name and address to the Office of Social Witness. (ADOPTED)-<

#### **Climate Change**

In 1993, in response to a report of the Commission on Christian Action on global warming (MGS 1993, pp. 98-103), 1993 General Synod voted;

To direct the minister for social witness to continue to prepare and distribute educational materials and worship resources on environmental issues, including global warming, for study by the churches (MGS 1993, p. 102). In the past few years a number of resources have been made available to RCA congregations, including, *It's God's World: Christians, the Environment, and Climate Change*. More recently, RCA caring for creation coordinators, working with colleagues in sister denominations, helped to place a public service announcement about climate change on local television stations and assisted in gathering more than twenty-five hundred postcards calling for stronger U.S. action on climate change.

The threat of climate change is of particular concern to Christians not only because of their God-given responsibility to tend the garden and to keep it (Gen. 2:15), but because climate change is an issue of justice. Industrialized nations such as the United States and Canada produce the major share of greenhouse gases, but those who live in poor and developing nations will suffer the most severe effects of climate change. Coastal flooding, more frequent and severe storms, the spread of insect-borne infectious diseases, and changes in agricultural practices would most seriously affect those least able to cope with such changes.

Climate change is also an issue of generational justice. The effects of global warming may be minimal in our lifetimes. It will nest he so for succeeding generations. Current energy-rich arid overly consumptive lifestyles may well be depleting the environmental capital on which the lives of future generations depend.

### **Climate Change Update by the Commission on Christian Action, 1998**

In its 1993 report to the General Synod the Commission on Christian Action called the church's attention to the issue of global warming and changes in climactic patterns likely to be caused by the increased atmospheric levels of heat-trapping gases in the atmosphere (*MGS 1993*, pp. 98-103). The report argued that the issue of climate change is one that calls for the church's response. We have a biblical mandate to tend and keep creation.

Moreover, since the effects of climate change will fall disproportionately on the poor and on future generations, the issue is a matter of justice. We cannot love God and love our neighbors as ourselves, and ignore the potentially disastrous consequences that human-induced climate change may have on future generations, on the poor, and on all of creation.

The 1993 report called on the church to advocate for policies that promote energy efficiency and conservation through such measures as higher energy efficiency standards and economic incentives, including imposing additional taxes (such as a carbon tax) on products that contribute to global warming. The synod also called on congregations to address the issue, to improve the energy efficiency of church buildings, and to consider other actions aimed at reducing greenhouse gas emissions.

### **SCIENTIFIC EVIDENCE FOR CLIMATE CHANGE**

Since the 1993 report there has been growing scientific evidence that climate change caused by human activity is already occurring. The decade of the 1980s was the warmest decade of record and the 1990s are well on the way to surpassing the record warmth of the '80s. The four warmest years on record were 1990, 1995, 1997, 1998. Global temperatures in 1998 were the warmest in the past 119 years, since reliable instrument records began. The previous record was set in 1997. The year 1998 was also the twentieth consecutive year with an annual global mean surface temperature that exceeded the long-term average.<sup>1</sup> The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), a body of nearly 2,500 international scientists that has been researching climate change since 1988, reported in 1995 that "the observed warming trend is unlikely to be entirely natural in origin...the balance of evidence suggests that there is discernible human influence on global climate."<sup>2</sup> If greenhouse gas emissions are not reduced, the IPCC projects future temperature increases of about 3.5 degrees Celsius (six degrees Fahrenheit) by the end of the next century, a faster rate of climate change than any experienced during the last 10,000 years. The difference in temperature from the depths of the last ice age to now is five to nine degrees Fahrenheit.

For the past thirty years climatologists have predicted that global warming would occur most rapidly at the poles. Recent evidence suggests that such warming may have already begun. While global temperatures have, on average, warmed by one degree Fahrenheit over the last century, the Antarctic Peninsula has seen a jump of more than five degrees in the last fifty years. Huge sections of the ice shelf, including some pieces as large as the state of Delaware, have begun calving off its eastern shore. The southern half of the Greenland ice sheet, the second largest expanse of land-bound ice on earth, after Antarctica, has shrunk substantially in the last five years. If big ice sheets melt even partly, sea levels will rise around the world. Melting might also disrupt the ocean currents that modulate the earth's climate by distributing heat around the globe.

Although there is now substantial scientific consensus in support of IPCC conclusions, there are those who are working to undermine its case, seizing on remaining uncertainties in data or computer modeling to argue against the need to respond to the threat of climate change. The Global Climate Coalition, a leading oil industry public relations outlet and other organizations such as the National Coal Association, the American Petroleum Institute, and the Western Fuels Association have spent millions of dollars trying to downplay the threat of climate change and cast doubt on the scientific evidence.<sup>3</sup> While there is a continuing need for further research and better computer modeling of the effects of increased greenhouse gas emissions, these uncertainties should not be used as an argument for delaying action. We do not know everything there is to know about potential climate change. We do know enough to act now. Prudence requires reducing greenhouse gas emissions without waiting for every last scientific uncertainty to be resolved. The vast scale of the environmental and social damage that would be caused by climate change, and the long time scale it will take to reverse the effects call for taking preventive action. It will be easier to achieve reductions now, and at less cost to society, than to wait until the problem has grown worse.

Meanwhile atmospheric levels of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gasses continue to rise. Atmospheric levels of carbon dioxide in 1860 were 280 parts per million (ppm); in 1993, 350 ppm; and in 1998, 363 ppm, the highest point in 160,000 years.<sup>4</sup> Not only are atmospheric levels increasing, but the rate of emissions also continues to increase at about 1 percent per year. Even maintaining current levels of carbon dioxide emissions will raise concentrations to over 700 ppm by the year 2100. In 1992 the U.S. committed itself to reducing greenhouse gas emissions to 1990 levels by the year 2000, and relied on volunteer efforts to do so. So far, such volunteer efforts have proven ineffective. A healthy economy, low fuel prices, the increasing popularity of larger, fuel-inefficient cars and sport utility vehicles, and our energy consumptive lifestyles have contributed to a 10.7 percent *increase* in emissions since 1990. The forecast is that emission levels will be at 13 percent above the 1990 level by the year 2000. The United States emits more carbon dioxide than any other nation, both in total and per capita. More than 98 percent of U.S. carbon dioxide emissions can be traced to the consumption of fossil fuels. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has conservatively estimated that the atmosphere can sustain carbon emissions of no more than two billion tons per year without serious disruption of the climate. Spreading that quota evenly among the ten billion people projected to share the planet by 2100 yields a per-person quota of a pound a day. The U.S., Japan, and other industrialized nations are emitting carbon at a pace twelve to twenty seven times this figure and the rates continue to climb.

## **EFFECTS OF CLIMATE CHANGE**

The climactic consequences of increased levels of heat-trapping gases in the atmosphere are likely to include the following:

1. Weather patterns, particularly rainfall, are likely to change significantly and have a severe impact on water resources and water availability in many regions.

2. Droughts, storms, and floods are likely to be more frequent and more severe than in the past, especially in subtropical regions where many developing countries will be particularly severely affected.
3. The geographic distribution of vegetation types would be altered, leading to changes in habitat and further exacerbating the rate of species extinction (already occurring at the alarming rate of 75 to 100 species per day!).
4. Atmospheric warming would increase the temperature of the oceans, leading to an expansion in the volume of water and a rise in sea levels. Sea level rise would be exacerbated by melting polar ice. Already the sea level has risen ten to twenty-five centimeters in the last century. The IPCC estimates that it will rise another fifty centimeters by the end of the twenty-first century. Such a rise would have severe consequences for people and ecosystems in such areas as the Pacific and Caribbean islands, countries with populations and agriculture on river deltas (Bangladesh; Egypt; Louisiana, U.S.), and many coastal regions.
5. Insect- and rodent-borne diseases such as malaria, dengue, yellow fever, and encephalitis are likely to increase and spread into new areas.

### **WHAT CAN GOVERNMENTS DO?**

In 1997 in Kyoto, Japan, the industrialized nations adopted the Kyoto Protocol, a treaty in which they agreed to make specific emissions reductions within eleven to fifteen years (2008 to 2012). The treaty calls for industrialized countries to reduce their emissions of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gas emissions by an average of about 5 percent below 1990 levels. The United States' reduction would be about 7 percent. The U.S. administration has signed the protocol, but it awaits ratification by the Senate. Prior to the Kyoto conference the U. S. Senate passed a resolution stating it would not ratify any agreement that might harm the U.S. economy or did not include participation by developing nations. Although the treaty does not call for binding limits on emissions by developing nations, these nations are not exempt from the stipulations of the agreement. All signatory nations must inventory emissions and create pilot programs to limit them. Moreover simple justice requires that the industrialized nations, and the U.S. in particular, take the first steps in reducing emissions. In seeking an appropriate balance between consumption and the equitable use of global resources, we need to make a distinction between the "luxury emissions" of the rich and the "survival emissions" of the poor. "From everyone to whom much has been given, much will be required" (Luke 12:48).

The treaty agreed to at Kyoto must be adopted by over half the industrialized nations before it takes effect. U.S. ratification is crucial. Late last summer leaders of several mainline denominations (including the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Reformed Church in America, the United Church of Christ, and the Church of the Brethren) signed letters to President Clinton and U.S. senators urging ratification of the Kyoto Protocol to the Climate Convention.

### **CLIMATE CHANGE AND CHRISTIAN WITNESS**

The threats to creation represented by global warming are a cause for concern for everyone on the planet, but for Christians the issue is more than a matter of self preservation; it is a matter of faithfulness. Global climate change is an issue of justice. The industrialized nations, representing less than 20 percent of the world's population, are responsible for 75 to 80 percent of the annual greenhouse gas emissions. Yet those who live in poor and developing nations are the ones who will be most seriously effected by global warming. The North American suburbanite can afford to turn up the air conditioner and pay a little more for groceries. The peasant living in coastal Bangladesh would become an environmental refugee. Climate change is also an issue of intergenerational justice. The effects of global warming in our lifetimes may be minimal. It will not be so for our children and our children's children. Current North American energy-rich and overly consumptive lifestyles are being subsidized by the poor and by future generations.

Christians understand the threat of global climate change in the context of covenant. God has established a covenant “with every living creature” (Genesis 9:10ff.) and with the earth itself (Genesis 9:13). Humankind has been given a special place in this covenant relation. We are not merely one species among many but a species to whom God has given a unique and important responsibility. We are placed in the garden of creation “to till it and to keep it.” God has given us dominion over creation, not to do with it as we please but, in the words of Old Testament scholar Walter Brueggemann, “for its profit, well-being, and enhancement...to see to it that the creation becomes fully the creation willed by God.”<sup>6</sup> This means, among other things, that our relationship with God, with our fellow human beings and with the rest of creation are all of a piece. A break in any one part of the covenant relationship affects the others. We cannot love God and hate our neighbor. Neither can we love God and our neighbors while we degrade creation.

Our response to the threat of global climate change is a matter of Christian witness. We confess that in Jesus Christ God entered creation in order to heal and restore the relationships broken by human sinfulness. The early Christians sang of Jesus Christ as the one in whom, through whom, and for whom all things were created and the one through whom God was pleased to reconcile to himself all things, whether on earth or in heaven (Colossians 1:15-20). This confession of a “cosmic Christ” has important implications for the church’s ministry. The church is called to bear witness to the Christ who reconciles and restores *all creation*. “The church is not an elite body, separated from a doomed world,” writes New Testament scholar, J. Christiaan Beker, “but a community placed in the midst of the cosmic community of creation. Its task is not merely to win souls but to bear the burdens of a creation, to which it not only belongs but to which it must also bear witness.”<sup>7</sup>

Dealing with the threat of climate change will require changes in technology, in public policy, and in our ways of thinking and living. We should not expect that it will be easy, and we should try to find ways in which the burdens of change are shared. But the longer we wait to deal with global warming, the more harm will occur and the greater will be the human, environmental, and economic costs for our children and grandchildren.

1. National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. “Climate of 1998: Annual Review,” available at URL [www.ncdc.noaa.gov/ol/climate/research/1998/ann/ann98.html](http://www.ncdc.noaa.gov/ol/climate/research/1998/ann/ann98.html), accessed February 12, 1999.
2. IPCC. *Second Assessment Report of the Inter-governmental Panel on Climate Change*. Geneva: IPCC, 1995, p. 22.
3. Ross Gelbspan, “The Heat Is On,” *Harper’s Magazine*, December 1995, pp. 31-37.
4. Lester R. Brown and Christopher Flavin, “A New Economy for a new Century.” *State of the World 1999*, Washington, DC: Worldwatch Institute, 1999.
5. David Malin Roodman, “Building a Sustainable Society,” *State of the World 1999*, op. cit., p. 171.
6. Walter Brueggemann, *Genesis*. Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1982, pp. 32-33.
7. J. Christiaan Beker, *Paul the Apostle: The Triumph of God in Life and Thought*. Philadelphia: Fortress Press, 1980.

**Simple Steps to Reduce Global Warming** 1. Buy energy-efficient compact fluorescent bulbs for your most used lights.

**Carbon dioxide reduction:** (by replacing one frequently used bulb) about 500 pounds a year. 2. Wrap your water heater in an insulating jacket.

**Carbon dioxide reduction:** up to 1,000 pounds a year. 3. Ask your utility company for a home energy audit to find out where your home is poorly insulated or energy-inefficient.

**Carbon dioxide reduction:** potentially, thousands of pounds a year. 4. Whenever possible, walk, bike, carpool, or use mass transit.

**Carbon dioxide reduction:** 20 pounds for every gallon of gasoline saved. 5. When you buy a car, choose one that gets good gas mileage.

**Carbon dioxide reduction:** about 2,500 pounds a year if your new car gets 10 mpg more than your old one. 6. If your car has an air conditioner, make sure its coolant is recycled whenever you have it serviced.

**Equivalent carbon dioxide reduction:** thousands of pounds. 7. If you need to replace your windows, install the best energy-saving models.

**Carbon dioxide reduction:** up to 10,000 pounds a year. 8. Plant trees next to your home and paint your home a light color if you live in a warm climate, or a dark color in a cold climate.

**Carbon dioxide reduction:** about 5,000 pounds a year. 9. As you replace home appliances, select the most energy-efficient models.

**Carbon dioxide reduction:** 3,000 pounds a year if you replace your old refrigerator with an efficient model. 10. Be informed about environmental issues. Keep track of candidates' voting records and write or call to express concerns.

**Carbon dioxide reduction:** billions of pounds if we vote to raise U.S. auto fuel efficiency.

### **2001 (?) Report of the Commission on Christian Action**

The Commission on Christian Action met November 16-17, 2000, on the campuses of Hope College and Western

Theological Seminary in Holland, Michigan; and February 9-10, 2001, at the Xavier Retreat and Conference Center in Convent Station, New Jersey.

Attachment F

8189:6/91

AMERICAN BAPTIST  
RESOLUTION ON GLOBAL WARMING

1 THE PROBLEM

2

3 The report from the Second World Climate Conference, held in Geneva from  
4 October 29 until November 8, 1990, stated: "If the increase in greenhouse  
5 gas

6 concentrations is not limited, then predicted climate change would place

7 stresses on the natural and social systems unprecedented in the past 10,000

8 years." It is believed that increased levels of gases are gradually causing

9 the earth's atmosphere and surface to become warmer. The effect is similar

10 to

11 that of the glass panels in a greenhouse that let some heat in but prevent

12 much of it from leaving. Much of the increase in levels of gases is directly

13 attributable to human industrial activity.

14

15 The first part of the Second World Climate Conference included over 700

16 scientists in different fields. A Ministerial Session followed in which 137

17 governments (82% of the United Nations) participated. The scientists reached

18 substantial agreement on a wide range of issues. The conference declared:

19 "Emissions resulting from human activities are substantially increasing

20 atmospheric concentrations of the greenhouse gases. These increases will

21 enhance the natural greenhouse effect, resulting on average in an additional

22 warming of the earth's surface."

23

24 In December of 1999 the heads of the National Office of Atmospheric  
25 Administration/British Meteorological Office warned "Ignoring climate change  
26 will surely be the most costly of all possible choices... The evidence global  
27 warming "is almost controvertible...we need to act accordingly."<sup>1</sup>

28 The major greenhouse gases and their sources are:<sup>2</sup>

29

30 • Carbon dioxide (CO<sub>2</sub>) generated as a by-product of everyday energy  
31 consumption, accounts for 55% of all greenhouse gases,

32

33 • Chlorofluorocarbons (CFC's) found in solvents, air conditioning  
34 fluids,

35 refrigerants, and foam products constitute another 24% of total  
36 greenhouse gases,

37

38 • Methane (CH<sub>4</sub>) emitted from animal waste, rice and other types of  
39 cultivation, and leaked or flared during the extraction of oil, gas

40 and

41 coal, amounts to 15% of greenhouse gases,

42

43 • The remainder consisting of nitrous oxide (N<sub>2</sub>O) from nitrogen  
44 fertilization, nitrogen oxides (NO<sub>x</sub>) and tropospheric ozone from

---

<sup>1</sup> [The Churches Role in Protecting the Earth's Atmosphere](#): Report of an Ecumenical Consultation of Churches in Northern Industrialized Countries held at Gwatt, Switzerland, from January 13-18, 1991, page 5.

<sup>2</sup> Ozone Action, [WWW.ozone.org](http://WWW.ozone.org), "Scientific Consensus on Global Warming."

45 automobile exhaust, coal combustion and other sources, amounts to 6%  
46 of  
47 the total.

48

49 The particularly dangerous role of chlorofluorocarbons (CFC's) deserves  
50 special mention. These gases are the primary cause of the depletion of the  
51 ozone layer in the stratosphere and simultaneously contribute to warming.

52 The

53 ozone layer filters ultraviolet radiation. Its destruction leads to

54 increased

55 exposure and significantly increased levels of skin cancer.

56

57 Consequences of global warming include the partial melting of polar ice caps  
58 and the rise in sea levels. Such rises could inundate land that is densely  
59 populated and totally submerge island nations in the South Pacific and

60 elsewhere. Approximately 50% of the world's population lives in coastal

61 areas. Other impacts include increased storm intensity and frequency,

62 changes

63 in water condition and availability, stresses on health conditions, and

64 variations in agriculture and food production. In the words of the Second

65 World Climate Conference: "In many cases the impacts will be felt most

66 severely in regions already under stress, mainly in developing countries."

67

68 Although the initial impact of these global warming trends will

69 be felt by less industrialized nations, 75% of all carbon dioxide emissions

70 come from more industrialized nations.

71

72 THEOLOGICAL CONSIDERATIONS

73

74 As American Baptist Christians we have been growing in our awareness of the  
75 implications of our faith related to ecological concerns. Our earlier Policy  
76 Statement on Ecology reminded us of our responsibility to God for the care of  
77 creation (Genesis 1:1, 11-12) and of God's displeasure with humanity's misuse  
78 of creation. Further reflection calls us to consider more seriously the  
79 implications of God's call to "love your neighbor as yourself."

80

81 There is but one Creator. As travelers on this globe together, we are  
82 commonly dependent upon Earth for sustenance. We are interdependent with all  
83 creation. We must learn to understand what it means to respect all that God  
84 has created and to be our neighbor's keepers. We need to expand our hearing  
85 of Jesus' "new commandment" to "Love one another." We must see the whole  
86 creation as our neighbor. Certainly the implications of this command exceed  
87 one culture, race, ethnic group, or species just as it exceeds one  
88 denomination.

89

90 Further, as human beings we are surrounded by and live in an environment we  
91 call air. It is in us as well as around us. When it is poisoned and  
92 polluted

93 (Isaiah 24:5-6), all creation is harmed. The Old Testament word for air is  
94 the same as "wind" and "Spirit." When we limit our understanding of God's  
95 Spirit, we limit our understanding and care for God's creatures and creation.

96

97 Therefore, based on our faith in the Creator God who makes us a part of a  
98 unified creation, the General Board of the American Baptist Churches USA,

99 calls on national boards, regions, American Baptist institutions,  
100 congregations and individuals to:

101

102 A. Join in ways to build a culture that can live in harmony with God's  
103 creation by:

104

105 1. Deepening our biblical understanding of creation and our role in  
106 preserving the gifts God has given through such activities as use and  
107 production of educational materials, courses, special programs, and  
108 personal study.

109

110 2. Developing a spirituality that embraces the dignity of the character  
111 of creation, connecting our understanding of personal salvation with  
112 stewardship of God's creation.

113

114 3. Acting with others to build a world community of cooperation to share  
115 justly the life-giving resources of the earth.

116

117 4. Participating in multicultural bridge-building experiences.

118

119 5. Learning about the causes of global warming through self-education

120 and

121 inclusion of materials in church school and learning institutions at  
122 all levels, from nurseries to universities.

123

124

125 B. Join in global, local and personal efforts to safeguard the world's

126 atmospheric integrity and quality by:

127

128 1. Building and renovating our homes and church facilities to be energy  
129 efficient and beginning programs of energy conservation and  
130 awareness.

131

132 2. Striving to eliminate the use of products that contain CFC's.

133

134 3. Using public transportation, car pooling, and telephone conferencing.

135

136 4. Becoming ecologically aware consumers by using products, including  
137 food, that consume less energy in production, transportation,  
138 packaging, and use.

139

140 C. Address the causes and reverse the consequences of global warming by:

141

142 1. Advocating the passage of legislation at all appropriate levels to  
143 reduce carbon dioxide output and to set reduction targets for other  
144 greenhouse gases.<sup>3</sup>

145

146 2. Supporting the passage of mandatory higher fuel efficiency for new  
147 vehicles and phasing out of older, less efficient vehicles.

148

149 3. Supporting rail and other means of increased transportation

150 efficiency

151 including subsidies for public transportation.

152

153 4. Combating deforestation domestically and internationally through  
154 programs of preservation and reforestation and through responsible  
155 consumption.

156

157 5. Sponsoring and supporting shareholder resolutions to corporations on  
158 issues like reduction of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases,  
159 phasing out of CFC's, increased energy efficiency and fuel  
160 conservation, environmental cost accounting and other issues  
161 affecting  
162 global warming.

163

164 6. Calling for an international treaty such as the Kyoto Protocols on  
165 global warming with specific targets for the reduction of  
166 greenhouse gases.

167

168 7. Working to implement just intra- and inter-national trade and  
169 economic  
170 relationships (based on principles like the transfer of technical and  
171 economic resources, self-reliance, sustainable agriculture, and forms  
172 of development that do not exacerbate global warming).

173

174

175

176 <sup>3</sup> According to the "Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation" document, Seoul, Korea 1991, suggests a 3% annual  
177 reduction.

178

Adopted by the General Board of the American Baptist Churches -  
November 1991

161 For, 0 Against, 1 Abstention

Modified by the Executive Committee of the General Board - March 2001  
(General Board Reference # - 8189:6/91)

---

**Policy Base**

**American Baptist Churches Policy Statement on Ecology - June 1989**

**American Baptist Churches Policy Statement on Energy - June 1977**

**American Baptist Churches Policy Statement on Human Rights - December  
1976**

4. The right to secure and healthy environment, clean air, pure  
water,  
and an earth that can nurture and support present and future  
generations.

**American Baptist Churches Resolution on Environmental Concerns - March  
1983**

**American Baptist Churches Resolution on Nuclear Power: Seeking  
Rational**

Solutions - December 1982

## **Attachment G**

### **Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)**

#### **Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice**

This social statement was adopted by a more than two-thirds majority vote as a social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the third Churchwide Assembly on August 28, 1993, at Kansas City, Missouri.

#### **Prologue**

Christian concern for the environment is shaped by the Word of God spoken in creation, the Love of God hanging on a cross, the Breath of God daily renewing the face of the earth.

We of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America are deeply concerned about the environment, locally and globally, as members of this church and as members of society. Even as we join the political, economic, and scientific discussion, we know care for the earth to be a profoundly spiritual matter.

As Lutheran Christians, we confess that both our witness to God's goodness in creation and our acceptance of caregiving responsibility have often been weak and uncertain. This statement:

- offers a vision of God's intention for creation and for humanity as creation's caregivers;
- acknowledges humanity's separation from God and from the rest of creation as the central cause of the environmental crisis;
- recognizes the severity of the crisis; and
- expresses hope and heeds the call to justice and commitment.

This statement summons us, in particular, to a faithful return to the biblical vision.

#### **I. The Church's Vision of Creation**

##### **A. God, Earth and All Creatures**

We see the despoiling of the environment as nothing less than the degradation of God's gracious gift of creation.

Scripture witnesses to God as creator of the earth and all that dwells therein (Pss 24:1). The creeds, which guide our reading of Scripture, proclaim God the Father of Jesus Christ as "maker of heaven and earth," Jesus Christ as the one "through [whom] all things were made," and the Holy Spirit as "the Lord, the giver of life" ([Nicene Creed](#)).

God blesses the world and sees it as "good," even before humankind comes on the scene. All creation, not just humankind, is viewed as "very good" in God's eyes (Gen 1:31). God continues to bless the world: "When you send forth your spirit, they are created; and you renew the face of the ground" (Pss 104:30). By faith we understand God to be deeply, mysteriously, and unceasingly involved in what happens in all creation. God showers care upon sparrows and lilies (Mat 6:26-30), and brings "rain on a land where no one lives, on the desert, which is empty of human life" (Job 38:26).

Central to our vision of God's profound involvement with the world is the Incarnation. In Christ, the Word is made flesh, with saving significance for an entire creation that longs for fulfillment (Rom 8:18-25). The Word still comes to us in the waters of baptism, and in, with, and under the bread and wine, fruits of the earth and the work of human hands. God consistently meets us where we live, through earthy matter.

### **B. Our Place in Creation**

Humanity is intimately related to the rest of creation. We, like other creatures, are formed from the earth (Gen 2:7, 9, 19). Scripture speaks of humanity's kinship with other creatures (Job 38-39; Pss 104). God cares faithfully for us, and together we join in singing the "hymn of all creation" (*Lutheran Book of Worship*, page 61; Pss 148). We look forward to a redemption that includes all creation (Eph 1:10).

Humans, in service to God, have special roles on behalf of the whole of creation. Made in the image of God, we are called to care for the earth as God cares for the earth. God's command to have dominion and subdue the earth is not a license to dominate and exploit. Human dominion (Gen 1:28; Pss 8), a special responsibility, should reflect God's way of ruling as a shepherd king who takes the form of a servant (Phil 2:7), wearing a crown of thorns.

According to Gen 2:15, our role within creation is to serve and to keep God's garden, the earth. "To serve," often translated "to till," invites us again to envision ourselves as servants, while "to keep" invites us to take care of the earth as God keeps and cares for us (Num 6:24-26).

We are called to name the animals (Gen 2:19-20). As God names Israel and all creation (Pss 147:4; Isa 40:26, 43:1) and as the shepherd calls by name each sheep (John 10:3), naming unites us in a caring relationship. Further, we are to live within the covenant God makes with every living thing (Gen 9:12-17; Hos 2:18), and even with the day and night (Jer 33:20). We are to love the earth as God loves us.

We are called to live according to God's wisdom in creation (Prov 8), which brings together God's truth and goodness. Wisdom, God's way of governing creation, is discerned in every culture and era in various ways. In our time, science and technology can help us to discover how to live according to God's creative wisdom.

Such caring, serving, keeping, loving, and living by wisdom sum up what is meant by acting as God's stewards of the earth. God's gift of responsibility for the earth dignifies

humanity without debasing the rest of creation. We depend upon God, who places us in a web of life with one another and with all creation.

## **II. The Urgency**

### **A. Sin and Captivity**

Not content to be made in the image of God (Gen 3:5; Ezek 28:1-10), we have rebelled and disrupted creation. As did the people of ancient Israel, we experience nature as an instrument of God's judgment (cf., Deut 11:13-17; Jer 4:23-28). A disrupted nature is a judgment on our unfaithfulness as stewards.

Alienated from God and from creation, and driven to make a name for ourselves (Gen 11:4), we become captives to demonic powers and unjust institutions (Gal 4:9; Eph 6:12; Rev 13:1-4). In our captivity, we treat the earth as a boundless warehouse and allow the powerful to exploit its bounties to their own ends (Amos 5:6-15). Our sin and captivity lie at the roots of the current crisis.

### **B. The Current Crisis**

The earth is a planet of beauty and abundance; the earth system is wonderfully intricate and incredibly complex. But today living creatures, and the air, soil, and water that support them, face unprecedented threats. Many threats are global; most stem directly from human activity. Our current practices may so alter the living world that it will be unable to sustain life in the manner we know.

Twin problems--excessive consumption by industrialized nations, and relentless growth of human population worldwide--jeopardize efforts to achieve a sustainable future. These problems spring from and intensify social injustices. Global population growth, for example, relates to the lack of access by women to family planning and health care, quality education, fulfilling employment, and equal rights.

Processes of environmental degradation feed on one another. Decisions affecting an immediate locale often affect the entire planet. The resulting damages to environmental systems are frightening:

- depletion of non-renewable resources, especially oil;
- loss of the variety of life through rapid destruction of habitats;
- erosion of topsoil through unsustainable agriculture and forestry practices;
- pollution of air by toxic emissions from industries and vehicles, and pollution of water by wastes;
- increasing volumes of wastes; and
- prevalence of acid rain, which damages forests, lakes, and streams.

Even more widespread and serious, according to the preponderance of evidence from scientists worldwide, are:

- the depletion of the protective ozone layer, resulting from the use of volatile compounds containing chlorine and bromine; and
- dangerous global warming, caused by the buildup of greenhouse gases, especially carbon dioxide.

The idea of the earth as a boundless warehouse has proven both false and dangerous. Damage to the environment eventually will affect most people through increased conflict over scarce resources, decline in food security, and greater vulnerability to disease.

Indeed, our church already ministers with and to people:

- who know firsthand the effects of environmental deterioration because they work for polluting industries or live near incinerators or waste dumps;
- who make choices between preserving the environment and damaging it further in order to live wastefully or merely to survive; and
- who can no longer make their living from forests, seas, or soils that are either depleted or protected by law.

In our ministry, we learn about the extent of the environmental crisis, its complexities, and the suffering it entails. Meeting the needs of today's generations for food, clothing, and shelter requires a sound environment. Action to counter degradation, especially within this decade, is essential to the future of our children and our children's children. Time is very short.

### **III. The Hope**

#### **A. The Gift of Hope**

Sin and captivity, manifest in threats to the environment, are not the last word. God addresses our predicament with gifts of "forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation" (Luther, *Small Catechism*). By the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God frees us from our sin and captivity, and empowers us to be loving servants to creation.

Although we remain sinners, we are freed from our old captivity to sin. We are now driven to God's promise of blessings yet to come. Only by God's promise are we no longer captives of demonic powers or unjust institutions. We are captives of hope (Zech 9:11-12). Captured by hope, we proclaim that God has made peace with all things through the blood of the cross (Col 1:15-20), and that the Spirit of God, "the giver of life," renews the face of the earth.

Captured by hope, we dream dreams and look forward to a new creation. God does not just heal this creation wounded by human sin. God will one day consummate all things in "new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home" (2Pet 3:13). Creation--now in captivity to disruption and death--will know the freedom it awaits.

#### **B. Hope in Action**

We testify to the hope that inspires and encourages us. We announce this hope to every

people, and witness to the renewing work of the Spirit of God. We are to be a herald here and now to the new creation yet to come, a living model.

Our tradition offers many glimpses of hope triumphant over despair. In ancient Israel, as Jerusalem was under siege and people were on the verge of exile, Jeremiah purchased a plot of land (Jer 32). When Martin Luther was asked what he would do if the world were to end tomorrow, he reportedly answered, "I would plant an apple tree today." When we face today's crisis, we do not despair. We act.

#### **IV. THE CALL TO JUSTICE**

Caring, serving, keeping, loving, and living by wisdom--these translate into justice in political, economic, social, and environmental relationships. Justice in these relationships means honoring the integrity of creation, and striving for fairness within the human family.

It is in hope of God's promised fulfillment that we hear the call to justice; it is in hope that we take action. When we act interdependently and in solidarity with creation, we do justice. We serve and keep the earth, trusting its bounty can be sufficient for all, and sustainable.

##### **A. Justice Through Participation**

We live within the covenant God makes with all living things, and are in relationship with them. *The principle of participation means they are entitled to be heard and to have their interests considered when decisions are made.*

Creation must be given voice, present generations and those to come. We must listen to the people who fish the sea, harvest the forest, till the soil, and mine the earth, as well as to those who advance the conservation, protection, and preservation of the environment.

We recognize numerous obstacles to participation. People often lack the political or economic power to participate fully. They are bombarded with manipulated information, and are prey to the pressures of special interests. The interests of the rest of creation are inadequately represented in human decisions.

We pray, therefore, that our church may be a place where differing groups can be brought together, tough issues considered, and a common good pursued.

##### **B. Justice Through Solidarity**

Creation depends on the Creator, and is interdependent within itself. *The principle of solidarity means that we stand together as God's creation.*

We are called to acknowledge this interdependence with other creatures and to act locally and globally on behalf of all creation. Furthermore, solidarity also asks us to stand with the victims of fire, floods, earthquakes, storms, and other natural disasters.

We recognize, however, the many ways we have broken ranks with creation. The land and its inhabitants are often disenfranchised by the rich and powerful. The degradation of the environment occurs where people have little or no voice in decisions -- because of racial, gender, or economic discrimination. This degradation aggravates their situation and swells the numbers of those trapped in urban or rural poverty.

We pray, therefore, for the humility and wisdom to stand with and for creation, and the fortitude to support advocates whose efforts are made at personal risk.

### **C. Justice Through Sufficiency**

The earth and its fullness belong to the Lord. No person or group has absolute claim to the earth or its products. *The principle of sufficiency means meeting the basic needs of all humanity and all creation.*

In a world of finite resources, for all to have enough means that those with more than enough will have to change their patterns of acquisition and consumption. Sufficiency charges us to work with each other and the environment to meet needs without causing undue burdens elsewhere.

Sufficiency also urges us to care for arable land so that sufficient food and fiber continue to be available to meet human needs. We affirm, therefore, the many stewards of the land who have been and are conserving the good earth that the Lord has given us.

We recognize many forces that run counter to sufficiency. We often seek personal fulfillment in acquisition. We anchor our political and economic structures in greed and unequal distribution of goods and services. Predictably, many are left without resources for a decent and dignified life.

We pray, therefore, for the strength to change our personal and public lives, to the end that there may be enough.

### **D. Justice Through Sustainability**

The sabbath and jubilee laws of the Hebrew tradition remind us that we may not press creation relentlessly in an effort to maximize productivity (Exod 20:8-11; Lev 25). *The principle of sustainability means providing an acceptable quality of life for present generations without compromising that of future generations.*

Protection of species and their habitats, preservation of clean land and water, reduction of wastes, care of the land--these are priorities. But production of basic goods and services, equitable distribution, accessible markets, stabilization of population, quality education, full employment--these are priorities as well.

We recognize the obstacles to sustainability. Neither economic growth that ignores environmental cost nor conservation of nature that ignores human cost is sustainable. Both will result in injustice and, eventually, environmental degradation. We know that a

healthy economy can exist only within a healthy environment, but that it is difficult to promote both in our decisions.

The principle of sustainability summons our church, in its global work with poor people, to pursue sustainable development strategies. It summons our church to support U.S. farmers who are turning to sustainable methods, and to encourage industries to produce sustainably. It summons each of us, in every aspect of our lives, to behave in ways that are consistent with the long-term sustainability of our planet.

We pray, therefore, for the creativity and dedication to live more gently with the earth.

## **V. COMMITMENTS OF THIS CHURCH**

We of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America answer the call to justice and commit ourselves to its principles--participation, solidarity, sufficiency, and sustainability. In applying the principles to specific situations, we face decisions made difficult by human limitation and sin. We act, not because we are certain of the outcome but because we are confident of our salvation in Christ.

Human behavior may change through economic incentive, guilt about the past, or fear about the future. But as people of biblical faith, who live together in trust and hope, our primary motivation is the call to be God's caregivers and to do justice.

We celebrate the vision of hope and justice for creation, and dedicate ourselves anew. We will act out of the conviction that, as the Holy Spirit renews our minds and hearts, we also must reform our habits and social structures.

### **A. As Individual Christians**

As members of this church, we commit ourselves to personal life styles that contribute to the health of the environment. Many organizations provide materials to guide us in examining possibilities and making changes appropriate to our circumstances.

We challenge ourselves, particularly the economically secure, to tithe environmentally. Tithers would reduce their burden on the earth's bounty by producing ten percent less in waste, consuming ten percent less in non-renewable resources, and contributing the savings to earthcare efforts. Environmental tithing also entails giving time to learn about environmental problems and to work with others toward solutions.

### **B. As a Worshipping and Learning Community**

**1. *The Congregation as a Creation Awareness Center*** Each congregation should see itself as a center for exploring scriptural and theological foundations for caring for creation.

Awareness can be furthered by many already in our midst, for example: Native people, who often have a special understanding of human intimacy with the earth; scientists, engineers, and technicians, who help us to live by the wisdom of God in creation; experts

in conservation and protection of the environment; and those who tend the land and sea. We also will learn from people suffering the severe impact of environmental degradation.

**2. *Creation Emphases in the Church Year*** Congregations have various opportunities during the year to focus on creation. Among these are Thanksgiving, harvest festivals, and blessings of fields, waters, and plants and animals. Many congregations observe Earth Day or Soil and Water Stewardship Week. As a church body, we designate the Second Sunday after Pentecost as Stewardship of Creation Sunday, with appropriate readings (as a development of the traditional Rogationtide).

**3. *Education and Communication*** This church will encourage those who develop liturgical, preaching, and educational materials that celebrate God's creation. Expanded curricula, for use in the many contexts of Christian education, will draw upon existing materials. We will promote reporting on the environment by church publications, and encourage coverage of this church's environmental concerns in public media.

**4. *Programs Throughout this Church*** This church commends the environmental education taking place through synodical and regional efforts; camp and outdoor ministries; colleges, seminaries, and continuing education events; and the churchwide Hunger Program. We especially commend this church's Department for Environmental Stewardship in the Division for Church in Society, for its network of caregivers, its advice to church members and institutions on innovative caregiving, and its materials for use in environmental auditing.

### **C. As a Committed Community**

As congregations and other expressions of this church, we will seek to incorporate the principles of sufficiency and sustainability in our life. We will advocate the environmental tithe, and we will take other measures that work to limit consumption and reduce wastes. We will, in our budgeting and investment of church funds, demonstrate our care for creation. We will undertake environmental audits and follow through with checkups to ensure our continued commitment.

### **D. As a Community of Moral Deliberation**

As congregations and other expressions of this church, we will model the principle of participation. We will welcome the interaction of differing views and experiences in our discussion of environmental issues such as:

- nuclear and toxic waste dumps;
- logging in ancient growth forests;
- personal habits in food consumption;
- farming practices;
- treatment of animals in livestock production, laboratory research, and hunting;
- land-use planning; and
- global food, development, and population questions.

We will examine how environmental damage is influenced by racism, sexism, and classism, and how the environmental crisis in turn exacerbates racial, gender, and class discrimination. We will include in our deliberation people who feel and suffer with issues, whose economic security is at stake, or who have expertise in the natural and social sciences.

We will play a role in bringing together parties in conflict, not only members of this church but also members of society at large. This church's widespread presence and credibility provide us a unique opportunity to mediate, to resolve conflict, and to move toward consensus.

### **E. As an Advocate**

The principles of participation, solidarity, sufficiency, and sustainability will shape our advocacy--in neighborhoods and regions, nationally and internationally. Our advocacy will continue in partnership, ecumenically and with others who share our concern for the environment.

Advocacy on behalf of creation is most compelling when done by informed individuals or local groups. We will encourage their communication with governments and private entities, attendance at public hearings, selective buying and investing, and voting.

We will support those designated by this church to advocate at state, national, and international levels. We will stand with those among us whose personal struggles for justice put them in lonely and vulnerable positions.

**1. *Private Sector*** This church will engage in dialogue with corporations on how to promote justice for creation. We will converse with business leadership regarding the health of workers, consumers, and the environment. We will invite the insights and concerns of business leadership regarding responsible environmental actions. We will urge businesses to implement comprehensive environmental principles.

Government can use both regulations and market incentives to seek sustainability. We will foster genuine cooperation between the private and public sector in developing them.

**2. *Public Sector*** This church will favor proposals and actions that address environmental issues in a manner consistent with the principles of participation, solidarity, sufficiency, and sustainability.

These proposals and actions will address: excessive consumption and human population pressures; international development, trade, and debt; ozone depletion; and climate change. They will seek: to protect species and their habitats; to protect and assure proper use of marine species; and to protect portions of the planet that are held in common, including the oceans and the atmosphere.

This church will support proposals and actions to protect and restore, in the United States and Caribbean, the quality of:

- natural and human habitats, including seas, wetlands, forests, wilderness, and urban areas;
- air, with special concern for inhabitants of urban areas;
- water, especially drinking water, groundwater, polluted runoff, and industrial and municipal waste; and
- soil, with special attention to land use, toxic waste disposal, wind and water erosion, and preservation of farmland amid urban development.

This church will seek public policies that allow people to participate fully in decisions affecting their own health and livelihood. We will be in solidarity with people who directly face environmental hazards from toxic materials, whether in industry, agriculture, or the home. We will insist on an equitable sharing of the costs of maintaining a healthy environment.

This church will advance international acceptance of the principles of participation, solidarity, sufficiency, and sustainability, and encourage the United Nations in its caregiving role. We will collaborate with partners in the global church community, and learn from them in our commitment to care for God's creation.

### **Claiming the Promise**

Given the power of sin and evil in this world, as well as the complexity of environmental problems, we know we can find no "quick fix"--whether technological, economic, or spiritual. A sustainable environment requires a sustained effort from everyone.

The prospect of doing too little too late leads many people to despair. But as people of faith, captives of hope, and vehicles of God's promise, we face the crisis.

We claim the promise of "a new heaven and a new earth" (Rev 21:1), and join in the offertory prayer (*Lutheran Book of Worship*, page 109): "Blessed are you, O Lord our God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts. With them we offer ourselves to your service and dedicate our lives to the care and redemption of all that you have made, for the sake of him who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

## Attachment H

### **United Church of Christ Resolution on Global Warming**

Mr. Gantt reminded the delegates of the amendment to the Resolution “Global Warming” which had been proposed Monday afternoon. He stated that initially there was confusion regarding where the substitute paragraph would go, and that is why it was not considered a friendly amendment on Monday. Since then, clarification had been made, and the Committee was prepared to accept the substitute paragraph as a friendly amendment. Mr. Gantt restated the amendment to replace the sixth “WHEREAS” with the following: “WHEREAS, such gases released into the atmosphere absorb some of the out-going infrared radiation from the surface of the earth causing the atmosphere to warm.” The amendment was accepted as friendly.

Moderator Hood called for the vote:

99-GS-74 VOTED: The Twenty-second General Synod adopts the Resolution “Global Warming” as amended.

WHEREAS, General Synod has voted broad

WHEREAS, the Bible is clear in its call to us to be multiply” (Genesis 9:1);

WHEREAS, the industrialized nations are the main producers of gases that cause global warming and the United States, with only 4% of the world’s population, still emits 22% of these gases;

WHEREAS, 2,500 scientists of the United Nations Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change have concluded that these human-made gases are causing the earth’s temperature to rise and these scientists project an increase of 2-6 degrees Fahrenheit during our children's lifetimes;

WHEREAS, such gases released into the atmosphere absorb some of the out-going infrared radiation from the surface of the earth causing the atmosphere to warm;

WHEREAS, such gases released into the atmosphere block the natural reflection of the sun’s radiation from the earth back into space and thus cause a “greenhouse effect” just as our cars heat up when left in the sun with windows closed;

WHEREAS, the continued release of greenhouse gases will cause devastating effects on agriculture and natural ecosystems, the flooding of coastal regions and island nations, increased volatility of weather patterns with severe heat waves and storms, migration of tropical insects, diseases, deforestation, desertification and displacement of human populations; and

WHEREAS, 160 nations agreed to a binding treaty to reduce greenhouse gases in December 1997 in Kyoto, Japan;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Twenty- request: second General Synod of the United Church of Christ:

**recognizes** the dangers of global warming and our biblical mandate as stewards of God's creation to be diligent in our efforts to decrease the emission of greenhouse gases;

**affirms** the greater responsibility of industrial nations and especially the United States to reduce greenhouse gas emissions;

**encourages** local churches, Conferences and national agencies to engage in efforts to educate and advocate for ratification of the Kyoto Climate Change Treaty and to address their own lifestyles (institutional and personal) to assure the minimum production of wastes that threaten the environment;

**urges** all members of the United Church of Christ to contact their U.S. Senators affirming the need to ratify this treaty as a first step in meeting the threat of global warming;

**urges** governmental representatives to support legislation that regulates and reduces pollution and provides for alternatives to the burning of fossil fuels; and

**calls** on the Office for Church in Society and the United Church Board for World Ministries and its successors to keep the global warming issue as a high priority in their educational and advocacy efforts. Funding for this action will be made in accordance the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

## Attachment I

Excerpts from United Methodist Church policy on Global Warming and Energy

Resolution #5 – Energy Policy Statement, 2004 Book of Resolutions

The decisions that humans are now making will either enhance or degrade the quality of life on the planet. We have entered an era of greater energy interdependence. As the world confronts global issues such as climate change, energy inequity, and pollution, energy-related problems will require international solutions based upon the values of justice and sustainability.

The Scripture that provides the motive for our action in the present energy crisis also lays the foundation for the values that we seek to realize. These values underlying the policies we advocate are justice and sustainability.

1. Justice. Ever since the first covenant between God and Israel, and especially since the eighth-century prophets, the people of God have understood that they bear a special concern for justice.

"Let justice roll down like waters,

and righteousness like an everflowing stream" (Amos 5:24)

is a cry echoed in hundreds of contexts throughout the Old and New Testaments. Biblical righteousness includes a special concern for the least and the last: the poor, the captive, the oppressed (Luke 4:18; Isaiah 61:1-2). Energy policies that Christians can support, then, will seek to actualize the multifaceted biblical vision of justice. They will be policies that close rather than widen the gap dividing wealth and poverty, rich nations and poor. They will be measures that liberate rather than oppress. They will be programs that distribute fairly the benefits, burdens, and hazards of energy production and consumption, taking into consideration those not yet born as well as the living. They will thus be strategies that give priority to meeting basic human needs such as air, water, food, clothing, and shelter.

2. Sustainability. Only recently have we humans come to recognize that creation entails limits to the resources entrusted to us as stewards of the earth. In particular, we have come up against limits to the non-renewable fuels available for our consumption and limits to our environment's capacity to absorb poisonous wastes. These double limits mean that humans can betray their stewardship either by using up resources faster than they can be replaced or by releasing wastes in excess of the planet's capacity to absorb them. We now know that humans have the capacity to destroy human life and perhaps even life itself on this planet, and to do so in a very short period of time. Energy policy decisions, therefore, must be measured by sustainability as a criterion in addition to justice. In terms of energy policy, sustainability means energy use that will not: (a) deplete the earth's resources in such a way that our descendants will not be able to continue human society at the level that is adequate for a good quality of life, and (b) pollute the environment to such an extent that human life cannot be sustained in the

future. These guidelines for sustainability must include considerations of quality of life as well as mere biological continuance.

We enjoy a highly sophisticated, industrialized world. It is not a realistic option for us to return to a world where people read by candlelight and heat with wood. Also, we should be aware of the tragic effects that steadily increasing energy costs will have, especially upon the aged and poor members of our society. All options available to the rich nations are not open to peoples in other parts of the world; hence, we should endeavor to develop just and equitable energy policies.

We support full cooperation of all nations in efforts to ensure equitable distribution of necessary energy supplies, the control of global warming, and rapid development and deployment of appropriate technologies based on renewable energy resources such as solar, wind, and water energy generation.

Resolution #6 – US Energy Policy and United Methodist Responsibility, 2004 Book of Resolutions

U.S. Energy Policy and United Methodist Responsibility Resolved:

1. Energy policy in the U.S. must be based on sound scientific and ethical principles of respect for and justice within the World Community, focusing not on expanding supply through large scale projects but on managing the demand and developing renewable, alternative sources of energy. Specifically, the U.S. must:

- move beyond its dependence on high carbon fossil fuels that produce emissions leading to climate change,
- ratify the Kyoto Protocol under the UN Framework Convention on Climate Change,
- concentrate on reducing carbon dioxide emissions within the U.S. and not rely on mechanisms such as emission trading with other countries to meet our targets for emission reductions under international agreements,
- reduce our reliance on nuclear power, a technology for which there are still unresolved problems such as the safe disposal or safe storage of high level waste of nuclear reactors,
- manage demand through a high priority on conservation and energy efficiency,
- increase significantly research and development into such renewable energy sources as solar, wind, biomass, etc.,
- support development and utilization of appropriate technologies for small-scale, decentralized energy systems,
- support expansion of the infrastructure needed for public transportation and carpooling, and
- provide necessary support for individuals, families, and communities adversely affected by a transition away from fossil fuels, nuclear power, and large-scale hydro in order to allow for alternative economic development, retraining, relocation, etc.

2. Members of local United Methodist churches are urged to show leadership as stewards of God's creation and take concrete actions to:

- educate our congregants on energy production and usage in relation to global warming,
- conduct an energy audit of our homes, church facilities, and camp structures to identify sources of energy waste and the potential financial savings of energy-related improvements,
- make energy improvements to our homes, church facilities, and camp structures,
- replace light bulbs with compact fluorescent bulbs,
- expand our use of public transportation, carpooling, and teleconferencing to reduce fossil fuel consumption,
- choose a cleaner vehicle that is the least polluting and most efficient,
- keep our vehicle's engine tuned and tires properly inflated,
- study the consequences of our consumer choices and take action to lessen our impact on the environment, and use our votes by telling our elected officials that we need laws that support the most important solutions to climate change: cleaner cars and cleaner power plants.

Resolution #7- Environmental Justice for a Sustainable Future, 2004 Book of Resolutions

The United Methodist Church will strive for a global sense of community to help achieve social, economic, and ecological justice for all of creation.

We will focus on the conversion to sustainable practices in the following areas:

Atmosphere

- Support measures calling for the reduction of carbon dioxide, methane, nitrogen oxides, and sulfur dioxide, which contribute to acid rain and global climate change.
- Enforce agreements banning the use of chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) to stop the depletion of the ozone layer.
- Support ratification and enforcement of international frameworks, such as Kyoto Protocol, that seek to reduce global greenhouse gas emissions.
- Support the cleanup of environmental problems through economic incentive, appropriate enforcement measures, and sanctions against those causing pollution.

Resolution #10 – Environmental Stewardship, 2004 Book of Resolutions

We believe clean air is a basic right and necessity for all life. We must clean up and prevent air pollution, which threatens the health of our families and the survival of all life on the planet.

To ensure that we protect future generations and our natural environment from the harmful effects of air pollution and leave a legacy of clean air:

We advocate the adoption and strict enforcement of adequate standards (health-based air quality standards to protect vulnerable populations such as children, the elderly, and people with asthma) to control outdoor air pollutants such as vehicle and industrial smokestack emissions.

We urge all United Methodists to car pool, use mass transit, drive fuel efficient cars, and find other ways of reducing vehicle and industrial emissions.

We must give special attention to the long-term effects of air pollution, such as the depletion of the ozone layer, global warming, and acid rain; we support international and bilateral efforts to eliminate the cause of these problems.

We advocate that all large polluters, specifically power plants, refineries and chemical manufacturers, irrespective of age or fuel use, meet standards based on the least polluting process in each industrial sector.

We advocate the adoption and strict enforcement of adequate standards to control indoor air pollutants, such as chemical fumes from gas stoves and furnaces, pesticides, cleaning materials, formaldehyde, candles, paint, photocopy machines, radon and carpets, as well as particulates such as dust, mold, and asbestos fibers.

We advocate prohibiting smoking and providing adequate fresh air ventilation in all indoor facilities.

## Attachment J

Excerpts from the Presbyterian Church USA

### **Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice, 1990**

#### Call to Restore the Creation

Creation cries out in this time of ecological crisis.

- Abuse of nature and injustice to people place the future in grave jeopardy.
- Population triples in this century.
- Biological systems suffer diminished capacity to renew themselves.
- Finite minerals are mined and pumped as if inexhaustible.
- Peasants are forced onto marginal lands, and soil erodes.
- The rich-poor gap grows wider.
- Wastes and poisons exceed nature's capacity to absorb them.
- Greenhouse gases pose threat of global warming.

The church has powerful reason for engagement in restoring God's creation:

- God's works in creation are too wonderful, too ancient, too beautiful, too good to be desecrated.
- Restoring creation is God's own work in our time, in which God comes both to judge and to restore.
- Human life and well-being depend upon the flourishing of other life and the integrity of the life-supporting processes that God has ordained.
- The love of neighbor, particularly "the least" of Christ's brothers and sisters, requires action to stop the poisoning, the erosion, the wastefulness that are causing suffering and death.
- The future of our children and their children and all who come after is at stake.
- In this critical time of transition of a new era, God's new doing may be discerned as a call to earth-keeping, to justice, and to community.

Therefore, the 202nd General Assembly affirms that:

- Response to God's call requires a new faithfulness, for which guidance may be found in norms that illuminate the contemporary meaning of God's steadfast love for the world.
- Earth-keeping today means insisting on sustainability--the ongoing capacity of natural and social systems to thrive together--which requires human beings to practice wise, humble, responsible stewardship, after the model of servanthood that we have in Jesus.
- Justice today requires participation, the inclusion of all members of the human family in obtaining and enjoying the Creator's gifts for sustenance.
- Justice also means sufficiency, a standard upholding the claim of all to have enough--to be met through equitable sharing and organized efforts to achieve that end.
- Community in our time requires the nurture of solidarity, leading to steadfastness in standing with companions, victims, and allies, and to the realization of the church's potential as a community of support for adventurous faithfulness.

#### 5. Area Five: Overcoming Atmospheric Instability -- Global Warming and Ozone Depletion

##### A. Ecumenical Participation and International Participation

1. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) declares its serious concern, in concert with ecumenical partners, that the global atmospheric warming trend (the greenhouse effect) represents one of the most serious global environmental challenges to the health, security, and stability of human life and natural ecosystems . . .

## B. Policies on Global Warming

1. The United States, as consumer of nearly a quarter of the world's energy, must take the lead in reducing its own combustion of fossil fuels and shifting to renewable sources of energy which do not contribute to the atmospheric buildup of carbon dioxide.

3. The United States should work through the United Nations and appropriate diplomatic channels to reach firm international agreements for steady and substantial reduction of the gases causing climate change, and for halting deforestation and promoting reforestation. . . .

8. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency should act promptly to strengthen fuel economy and emission standards for automobiles, buses, and trucks by mandating and consistently enforcing a schedule of energy efficiency improvements, leading to a substantially higher standard of efficiency with a few years. . . .

9. Comparable standard-setting and incentive-generating measures should be advanced by the U.S. Bureau of Standards with respect to efficiency improvements in lighting, heating, air-conditioning, appliances, building construction, the weatherization of existing buildings, and the cogeneration of heat and electricity (with legislation as necessary where the bureau's powers do not apply). . . .

10. Public Policy should encourage alternatives to private automobiles. Alternatives include municipal mass transit, railroads, bicycles, and walking.

## Attachment K

### GENERAL BOARD RESOLUTIONS

Church of the Brethren General Board

Resolution on Global Warming and Atmospheric Degradation (1991)

**WHEREAS** our vastly increased use of fossil fuels is substantially increasing the atmospheric concentrations of the greenhouse gases, thereby enhancing the strong possibility of catastrophic warming of the earth's surface, and

**WHEREAS** the negative consequences of the greenhouse effect are likely to intensify human suffering especially in the developing countries, and

**WHEREAS** the Annual Conference statement "Creation: Called to Care" challenges us to take seriously our role as stewards of the earth, and to work for the renewal of creation, and

**WHEREAS** the General Board is committed to study and action on issues of justice, peace, and integrity of creation

**THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED** that the Church of the Brethren General Board, meeting in Elgin, Illinois on October 19-22, 1991 commits itself and urges Brethren congregations, institutions and members to:

*Reaffirm our belief*

· That we are called by God to live in harmony with all of creation, and that our covenantal relationship to care for the creation requires us to be aware of present and impending threats to our environment and to take action to preserve the integrity of creation.

*Join together*

· In the search for ways to live together in harmony with God's creation;

· In addressing the causes and dealing with the consequences of atmospheric destruction locally and globally; and

· In praying for the strength to reduce consumption and reject the myths of unlimited resources and economic growth.

*Work together through global, local, and personal efforts to safeguard the world's reliance on fossil fuels, and by*

· Increasing awareness of the negative ecological consequences of continuing reliance on fossil fuels, and by expanding ongoing educational efforts that lead to action;

- Encouraging the building and renovating of our homes and church facilities and camp buildings to be energy efficient and initiating new programs of energy conservation and awareness, including alternatives to fossil fuels;
- Striving to eliminate the use of products that contain ozone-depleting Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs);
- Using public transportation, carpooling, and telephone conferencing in order to reduce fossil fuel consumption;
- Becoming ecologically aware consumers by using diets and products that consume less energy in production, transportation, packaging, and use;
- Devoting maximum effort to the separation and recycling of household goods, while also reducing waste and toxic materials;
- Encouraging office energy audits and recycling programs (particularly paper and paper products).

*Pledge ourselves to address the causes and reverse the consequences of global warming by*

- advocating the passage of legislation, at all appropriate levels, that reduce carbon dioxide output and set reduction targets for other greenhouse gases;
- supporting research and development of energy alternatives to fossil fuels. And supporting the passage of mandatory higher fuel efficiency for new vehicles and the phasing out of older, less efficient vehicles;
- supporting the expansion and promotion of rail transportation and other systems of mass transit, including subsidies for public transportation;
- combating forest destruction domestically and internationally through programs of preservation and reforestation and through responsible consumption of wood and wood products;
- engaging with corporations in dialogue and shareholder resolutions on such issues as reduction of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases, phasing out of CFCs increased energy efficiency and fuel conservation, environmental cost accounting and other issues affecting global warming;
- calling for the adoption to limit the production of greenhouse gases worldwide;
- working to implement fair trade and economic relationships so that forms of development that minimize global warming are available to all nations.

**FURTHER** the General Board commits itself to;

- support and participate in national and international networks of religious bodies and other non-governmental organizations addressing the greenhouse effect; and

· continue through its program staff, within the context of a theology based on caring for the earth, and educational effort to acquaint the members of the Church of the Brethren with the nature, causes, and consequences of the greenhouse effect, including suggestions for individual and collective action to help address the problem. This will include the promotion of the use of the General Board's study resource, *Creation in Crisis: Responding to God's Covenant*, in all congregations. We will elicit the cooperation of District Executive as agents within each district to work directly with pastors to reach the membership of the church.

This resolution was adopted by the Church of the Brethren General Board at its meetings in Elgin, Illinois on October 21, 1991. For further information contact Shantilal P. Bhagat, 1451 Dundee Avenue, Elgin, IL 60120, 1-800-323-8039.