A Resolution to Address Climate Change through Investments in Renewable and Clean Energy Sources, Energy Conservation, and Energy Efficiency in Order to Reduce Dependence on Fossil Fuels

Submitted by the Mission Council, Maine Conference United Church of Christ.

Summary

A resolution calling for the active use of Conference energy investments to promote the development and use of sustainable clean energy sources and to improve energy conservation and efficiency, contributing to the reduction and eventual elimination of dependence on fossil fuels; and, to charge our Earthcare Resource Team with creating Conference-wide programs that will promote reduction of the human-made carbon footprint.

WHEREAS, for decades there has been an emerging consensus that economies and lifestyles based on the extraction and consumption of fossil fuels are causing global warming which has and will continue to cause disruptive regional climate changes if something is not done; and

WHEREAS, the United Church of Christ and other religious communities, as evidenced by statements such as the 2015 encyclical *Laudato Si'* by Pope Francis and the 2006 statement *Climate Change: An Evangelical Call to Action*, recognize and are in agreement that climate change is an issue of justice, peace, and integrity for God's creation and for all people; and

WHEREAS, as people of faith we have a moral and spiritual responsibility to advocate and care for those who will be most adversely effected by climate change, especially the poor, future generations who will inherit this crisis, and the ecosystem of Earth with all its diverse and interdependent living beings; and

WHEREAS, a resolution adopted by General Synod 29 of the United Church of Christ calls upon "all Members, Local Churches, Associations, Conferences…" to "[c]ommit to using a spectrum of strategies to reduce the use of fossil fuels, our carbon footprint, and our complicity with the fossil fuel industry"; and

WHEREAS, a resolution adopted by General Synod 30 of the United Church of Christ "implore[s] its pastors, conferences, and members to advocate with federal and state lawmakers to: enact or extend incentives and

renewable portfolio standards that will lead to the rapid transition to renewable energy sources, energy conservation and energy efficiency measures worldwide with a goal of total transition as soon as possible but not later than 2040; eliminate immediately all fossil fuel subsidies; enact some form of carbon tax; enact legislation that will eliminate as quickly as possible any further extraction of coal, oil and gas nationally or internationally, particularly corporations chartered in the United States;" and

WHEREAS, the delegates to the 81st Annual Meeting of the Maine Conference United Church of Christ (2012) adopted the "Resolution on Caring for the Ecology and Life on Earth as a Sacred Responsibility on Holy Ground in a Sacramental Universe" which calls for "an ongoing commitment to Earthcare as a spiritual value and an active expression of ecological and social justice;"

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that we, the delegates to this 84th Annual Meeting of the Maine Conference of the United Church of Christ, charge our Earthcare Resource Team to:

1. Work with our Trustees to review the Conference's investments in energy and propose a plan that would move our investments out of fossil fuels and into economically viable and ecologically sustainable sources of energy and energy use. A report on such a plan shall be made by the Earthcare Resource Team and Trustees to the Mission Council for its consideration and in time for updating delegates to the 2016 Annual Meeting of the Conference;
2. Communicate with our Conference entities, associations, congregations, church members about ways to responsibly invest or reinvest in economically viable and ecologically sustainable sources of energy and energy use;
3. Make energy conservation and efficiency one of its priorities with the intention of educating Conference entities, associations, congregations, church members about practical ways to reduce their carbon footprint;
4. Implement an educational program on global warming and climate change; and
5. Provide spiritual resources and worship opportunities that lift up Earth and Creation as "Holy Ground."