

Resolution to Encourage Congregations to Reduce Dependence on Fossil Fuels
Resolution Background Information
Submitted by Union Congregational UCC, St. Louis Park,
Executive Council and Social Justice Action Team

*Only the "Therefore and Furthermore" statements were voted upon by the Annual Meeting.
The Summary, Background and Whereas sections were neither voted upon nor approved.*

SUMMARY STATEMENT OF INTENT OF THE RESOLUTION

This resolution encourages all Minnesota Conference UCC churches to study the damaging effects of global warming is having on our global climate and to make measurable reductions in their use of fossil fuels.

BACKGROUND AND SUPPORTING STATEMENT

Leading climate scientists have declared that the world's climate is warming. Carbon dioxide released from burning fossil fuels is a pollutant altering this planet's climate. This dramatic climate change will alter the lives of millions of humans around the world. Projected long term droughts threaten productive land needed to grow food. Rising sea levels threaten the disappearance of vast coastal areas and islands. Plants and animals from around the world will feel the devastating effect of global climate change.

Since the beginning of the Industrial Age, the world economy has been powered by fossil fuels. This addiction to fossil fuels has spoiled the very water and air necessary for life, polluted the environment, warmed the planet, and now threatens the very existence of life. An economy based on fossil fuels is unsustainable. The United States must develop a sustainable non-polluting economy based upon renewable energy sources.

In the beginning when God created the heavens and the earth...(Genesis 1:1). The Bible's opening sentence provides the foundation for our environmental concerns. God made a world of balance and harmony, and called it good. Later in the Creation story God gave human beings stewardship of God's creation. Implicit in this role is the responsibility for protecting the environment.

We have failed to be good stewards. By burning fossil fuels, we have created excess carbon dioxide that destroys the harmony and balance of the carbon cycle so necessary to a "healthy earth". Global climate change caused by global warming makes the long-term existence of God's creation questionable.

Global climate change is about the future of God's human family. Inadequate or misguided responses to global climate change will place a tremendous burden on the already desperately poor people of the world. This is contradictory to God's commandments of justice, care and concern for the poor among us.

Protection of God's creation must move to the forefront of our responses. Inaction will endanger God's numerous creatures and continue to threaten the balance of nature.

Actions to mitigate global climate change must be built upon an understanding of the interaction between nature's systems. These actions must be built on a solid foundation of social and economic justice. God is still speaking to us by encouraging us to strive toward peace, justice and good stewardship of God's creation.

WHEREAS

Whereas God's creatures are threatened by pollutants resulting from the burning of fossil fuel; and

Whereas humans have the ability to develop a safe, clean, affordable, reliable energy source; and

Whereas God's children and all future generations have the right to pollution free health, climate, water and air; and

Whereas the reduction if not the elimination of polluting carbon dioxide is paramount to the survival of life on the planet Earth.

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Resolution Passed June 10, 2007
by the 2007 Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Conference
United Church of Christ

Therefore, the 2007 Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ urges congregations of the Conference to make measurable reductions in their use of fossil fuels and to move toward the use of clean renewable energy technologies including, but not limited to, hydrogen, biomass, wind and solar energy.

Furthermore, we urge congregations to make reductions in fossil fuel use and move toward renewable energy sources by:

- Promoting awareness that carbon dioxide released from the burning of fossil fuel is a pollutant that is changing Earth's climate.
- Purchasing and studying as a congregation An Inconvenient Truth by Al Gore
- Educating members about the possible effects of global climate change.
- Doing an inventory of their church's carbon dioxide emissions, set reduction targets and create an action plan.
- Promoting car pooling and public transit.
- Advocating for the development of renewable energy sources in their community and state.
- Investigating and consider the installation of renewable alternative energy systems in their church.
- Investigate purchasing renewable wind energy
- Encouraging all UCC members to consider global climate change as a moral issue and to vote for individuals who will take action to reduce the effects of global warming.

Furthermore, we call on the Justice and Witness Ministry to add to the Conference website appropriate resources regarding reduction of fossil fuel use.