

## **RESOLUTION ON THE URGENCY FOR ACTION ON CLIMATE CHANGE**

**WHEREAS**, *Scripture reveals God's will that humans shall have dominion (stewardship or responsibility) over all the earth (Genesis 1:26); that we must provide for the future, acting as trustworthy stewards (1 Corinthians 4:2) of the earth's finite resources on God's behalf (Genesis 41:46-57); that Jesus Christ teaches the church that our actions on the earth have cosmic consequences in God's will for redemption (Matthew 16:18-20)<sup>1</sup>; and*

**WHEREAS**, *responsible stewardship of Creation is integral to Christian discipleship (General Synod resolutions 1959, 1975, 1989, 2005, 2007); and we are called to compassionate action on behalf of those who disproportionately bear the consequences of climate change and environmental degradation (General Synod resolutions 1977, 1983, 1989); and*

**WHEREAS**, *the scientific consensus concerning climate change persuades us that we must intensify our efforts beyond what has previously been adopted (General Synod resolutions 2005, 2007); and there is growing evidence that climate change is occurring at an accelerated rate and it is primarily caused by human activities; and unless the use of fossil fuels is immediately reduced, the amount of carbon dioxide and other greenhouse gases in the atmosphere will reach irreversible harmful levels within the next two decades; and*

**WHEREAS**, *the evidence that glaciers and high altitude snow packs from the Andes to the Himalayas are melting at alarming rates is incontrovertible and the effects of this unprecedented circumstance has permanent life-threatening implications for millions of people in many regions of the world; and recent satellite and observational evidence indicates an unexpected rapid increase of global warming in the North polar region, some three decades ahead of warming trends projected by most computer models; and*

**WHEREAS**, *the projected long-term consequences of current trends include sea level rise, coastal flooding, wide-scale loss of species, migration of vector-borne diseases, and more heat-related episodes among vulnerable members of urban populations; and when taken together, these trends pose the most serious threat to humanity in recorded history and demand our urgent, immediate response to significantly alter our current course; and*

**WHEREAS**, *the Collegium of the United Church of Christ, in a pastoral letter issued on April 8, 2008, reminded us that "We may not remain indifferent. We are called to face the challenges, engage deeply and with hopeful attention... to invite those who seek and those who love, those who lament and those who act on prophetic and imaginative dreams, to journey with us, build greening places and spaces for the holy and one another;"*

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** *that we, the delegates to this 141<sup>st</sup> Annual Meeting of the Connecticut Conference of the United Church of Christ, declare a profound sense of urgency about the present and potential environmental and social consequences of climate change; and*

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that we urge the entire United Church of Christ, clergy and laity, officers and members, to listen carefully and prayerfully to the scientific consensus now available, to make education on these matters a priority throughout the United Church of Christ, and to take immediate steps, both individually and collectively, to address the changes required at all levels by this unprecedented global crisis; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that we urge all United Church of Christ churches to achieve energy conservation, material-use reduction and other life-style changes as soon as possible; and that we urge all conferences of the United Church of Christ to assemble and distribute currently available resource materials to assist members and churches to increase their level of “green” activity and practice within the next two to five years, with the aim of moving toward a carbon-neutral footprint over the next five to seven years; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that we urge the United Church of Christ, at all levels, to advocate the prompt enactment of state and federal legislation that will forward these practices throughout the nation and will support the creation of new international agreements that address the fundamental causes of climate change. Those actions include, but are not limited to:

- a. passage of meaningful cap and trade legislation on carbon emissions;
- b. enactment of stringent gas mileage standards for motor vehicles;
- c. incentives for investing in renewable sources of energy;
- d. financial disincentives for fossil fuel consumption;
- e. allocation of significant public finances for research and development of alternative energy technologies;
- f. meaningful participation in international treaty negotiation, thereby improving our country’s moral standing in the community of nations; and

**BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that this resolution be forwarded to the 27<sup>th</sup> General Synod of the United Church of Christ for its adoption and be distributed to our sister conferences for their endorsement and support.

Council of First Church of Christ, Congregational Church, West Hartford

April 10, 2008

Council of Immanuel Congregational Church, Hartford

April 21, 2008

United Church of Christ of Cornwall Congregational

May 4, 2008

Asylum Hill Congregational Church, Hartford

October 5, 2008

<sup>1</sup>1989 Resolution of the Connecticut Conference, UCC – *Solid Waste and Ecologically Sound Lifestyle*.