

UUCF Resolution on Climate Change

Draft: September 3, 2013

Whereas:

The consequences of the climate change problem are catastrophic and without parallel.

Unless this problem is solved, civilization and many species risk extinction.

The time available to solve this problem, before it irreversibly damages civilization and many species, is close at hand. The scientific consensus is that it is in the range of 10-15 years.

Until this problem of climate change is solved, the poor, at home and abroad, will suffer disproportionately. Some regions of the world will suffer much more and sooner than will we in this country.

The causes of climate change are not primarily natural, but stem from the human burning of fossil fuels and disrupting the natural means for retaining and absorbing carbon and other greenhouse gasses.

Options exist that have the potential to solve the approaching climate catastrophe if implemented in time and on a large enough scale.

Despite widespread acknowledgment of the seriousness of the problem and the potential of effective means to address it, far too little is actually being done.

Global climate change is fundamentally a moral, ethical and justice crisis. We, as individual UUs, our UUCF community, and faith communities everywhere have a religious responsibility to act and bear witness, to work together to avert the potential catastrophe of climate change.

Therefore, be it resolved:

UUCF affirms that we ground our mission and our ministries to reverence for this earth and take responsible action personally, as a congregation, and as citizens to avert this catastrophe.

We demand action from our elected leaders to implement effective solutions, starting with the adoption of enforceable agreements to rapidly and significantly reduce national and, in concert with other countries, global greenhouse gas emissions,

We call for the U.S. government to undertake specific initiatives that have the greatest potential to directly counter the forces that are causing climate change, and to do so within the time we have left, namely:

- 1) Price carbon to reflect true societal costs to lower demand for fossil fuel and encourage use of non-polluting energy sources.

- 2) Work with other countries to reduce carbon emissions, and to assist peoples facing extraordinary climate-based pressures.
- 3) Dramatically reduce emissions from power plant energy sources, especially coal-fired power plants, shifting to emission-free or very low emission alternatives, as well as strong emission controls to promote carbon capture and long-term carbon storage to cut emissions from power plants that cannot economically be replaced.
- 4) Strengthen the renewable energy infrastructure, energy conservation, storage and power distribution.
- 5) Sharply reduce fossil fuel extraction activities, in particular coal, oil tar sands, oil/gas shale fracking, mountain-top removal and environmentally damaging drilling on public lands and off-shore.

We commit to take personal and congregational responsibility for reducing our own carbon footprints through our choices in transportation, in our homes and buildings, in use of renewable resources, and in eating and serving energy-efficient food that is locally produced and low on the food chain;

We pledge help and call for our leaders to assist communities who bear great burdens of global climate change, including indigenous peoples, subsistence communities, communities of color, and those whose economic security may be affected by energy policies necessary to speed the transition from fossil fuels to renewable sources of energy.

Be it further resolved: the UUCF Social Justice Council shall be charged with coordinating congregational actions to implement these resolutions, and shall report annually to the congregation on actions, progress and new initiatives needed to address climate change.