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NC LEGISLATIVE COMMISSION ON GLOBAL CLIMATE CHANGE December 11, 2006

Testimony of The Reverend Michael H. Cogsdale,
President of the North Carolina Council of Churches, and
Rector of Saint James Episcopal Church, Lenoir, North Carolina

*Text: Genesis 1...God saw how good it was...God said: Let us make
humanity in our own image...Let them have dominion over...all living
things...God looked at everything God had made, and found it very good.*

I am grateful to have this opportunity to come before you this morning. We at the North Carolina Council of Churches deeply appreciate your service to the citizens of our beloved state. We at the Council have advocated for the establishment of this Commission, we have cheered the quality of its appointments, and we have been close observers of its deliberations during its first year of study.

I am not here as an expert on the science or economics of climate change, but as one who would humbly comment on the ethical demands posed by the threat of global warming on our citizens, future generations, and by extension upon you as our governmental representatives. I speak you today as the President of the Executive Board of the North Carolina Council of Churches representing the Council's 25 denominational bodies and roughly 1.5 million people of faith here within our state.

Over the past ten years I, like a lot of other individuals in our state, have begun to intuitively and intellectually sense that there is something very wrong with our climate. The scale of such concern has grown among the people that I serve. It seems to me that the battle to address this issue is no longer among the fringe of our society. In my view, it is now firmly within the mainstream political, social, and religious agenda of our state. My children – ages 16 and 13 – know this: The snow that I enjoyed as child just doesn't seem to be a plentiful in their eyes, and I live at the base of the North Carolina mountains. Even some of the oldest members of my parish will concede that something is not right with the environment. I want to assure you that I serve both liberal and conservative folks. My parishioners are far from being wild-eyed fanatics about the environment. Even my Rotary Club, which I have

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been a member of since 1990, is coming to be more and more of one mind regarding this issue. What encourages me the most is the fact that more folks than ever before are open to conceding that the spotlight is now clearly upon humankind, and our relationship to the earth. I believe people know that we must act, and act now before we move closer to a tipping point from which the earth cannot return.

Over the past 20 years or so, mainline denominations have come to a new appreciation for the natural environment and our relationship to it. We have moved from a perspective that extolled dominion over nature and subduing the earth toward a renewed understanding of our sacred writings that call for a new commitment to the stewardship of creation.

For too many of us, for far too long, we have simply assumed upon the generosity of our Creator, while taking too little responsibility for the care of Creation. The idea that nature exists solely for the benefit of humanity, which was thought to have derived from God's command to Adam to "have dominion over" the rest of creation is no longer accepted as the dominant view within mainline Christianity. We do not worship a God who is wholly transcendent, who is separated from the world with no continuing interest or involvement in its non-human elements.

Over the past 5 or 6 years, this new awareness has expanded to include the dangers posed to God's creation by climate change—most mainstream religions in the US, along with many evangelical faiths, have spoken directly to that threat.¹

Some of the themes represented in those statements include some of the following thoughts: We are facing a global crisis like none previously known by humankind. It is time to join with our Creator in preserving and renewing Creation. Unless we act, the changes could be irreversible, and therefore our action or our inaction will affect millions in future generations. Although the effect will be felt worldwide, it is the weak and the vulnerable of the world that will suffer most. The US has a special responsibility to address this crisis because we emit so much of the world's greenhouse gases—we are 6% of the world's population and emit 25% of its green house gases. We must act because we have the technological capability to act.

In our own state, when my own children, ages 16 and 13, reach my age, I have to wonder if the beaches where we built sand castles together as a young family will have disappeared altogether because the sea level is likely to rise by 6 inches. And will places where we visit each summer, like Bogue Banks and the Outer Banks no longer exist? What will the road from the lighthouse at Cape Hatteras up to Nags Head be like if indeed the sea level is rising in ways that we have not yet begun to imagine? Some models predict that rising temperatures in the Southeast will rise by 1.8 to 3 degrees F. during the next 30 years.² In 30 years my oldest child will be younger than I am today. Such a rise in temperature will not only affect the environment, but also the economy at large and the public health my children, and my grandchildren – as it will yours. Global warming is personal—my relationship to Creation is tied to my relationship to future generations, and the life they will live.

¹ Please see handout in packet: *Excerpts from Denominational Statements on Global Climate Change. NC Council of Churches Climate Connection.*

² Munger, Amber and Shore, Michael. *Understanding Global Warming for North Carolina. Environmental Defense. 2005.*

Our religious leaders also remind us that this crisis is not only about us here in the US—but that it is also global and it's about justice, and about how the poor and the most vulnerable will be impacted. Recently the United Nations Environmental Program documented the first formal displacement of an entire population of people because of climate change. A village on a small island nation was forced to move its village 500 meters inland after trying to adapt to the effects of a warming climate for nearly two decades.³ Granted the village was small, but its story is bound to be repeated as indigenous communities around the globe are faced with similar threats to their survival.

While it is true that we in NC and in the US will not be impacted to such a degree, those of us from communities of faith know that we must work for the common good, not just our immediate communities. As we have come to realize - now more than ever - the people of the earth reside on an increasingly small globe. The commandment to love our neighbor especially includes the poor of this world who will have little resources to face the potential impact of climate change. This sense of oneness between human beings and their relationship to the earth is an important corrective, both to the idea that humankind has been placed in the world to dominate nature and take from it, rather than to conserve or protect it. One day we will be asked to give an account of how we have cared for something that is not ultimately ours - God's creation. The Hebrew psalmist tells us this: "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof." We cannot any longer afford to take and take from the earth more than we need; thereby, upsetting the delicate balance of the earth's natural environment. To do so is a spiritual problem that wrongly robs others of what is also rightfully theirs, and needed to maintain a modest level of human dignity.

As I have said there is a growing awareness in the faith community that global warming is real and that it will most certainly have devastating effects on the people of this and future generations. We are responding to the call to act, and act now.

Our NC Council of Churches Climate Connection program is affiliated with a national initiative called *The Interfaith Power and Light Campaign*. This organization now counts among its members 22 state-wide ecumenical and interfaith groups who have joined together in a national religious response to global warming—a response which includes promoting renewable energy, energy efficiency and conservation. Across the US, folks of all faiths are coming together to talk to each other, to pray and study together, and to support each other in their efforts to put their faith into action.

Recently, in an initiative sponsored by Interfaith Power and Light, more than 4000 faith congregations throughout the US, and more than 100 congregations across NC, viewed the film *An Inconvenient Truth* in fellowship halls and houses of worship, and the response conveyed to us from all quarters was this: "We must act on this knowledge!"

As I speak to you today I express the concern of these thousands and of countless other citizens who see the care of Creation as a religious duty.

³ Gardner, Gary. T. *Inspiring Progress: Religion's Contributions to Sustainable Development*. Norton & Co. 2006

We see that people of faith want to respond, and that they genuinely understand the relationship between protecting creation and their love for the Creator.

Yet in a world where the hope for restoration of our creation seems to be shriveling daily with images of disappearing ice caps and rising sea levels, solving the problems can appear beyond human capabilities.

Therefore, we see that the challenge for church leadership is to provide a voice of hope, while channeling the desire to care for creation into actions, that when combined with others of similar sentiment, will achieve the necessary ends.

Our faith and our relationship to our Creator requires us to respond. Some of the things our judicatories and congregations and their members are doing are as follows:

- Re-visiting their own teachings and educating themselves about the relationship between love for God and care for Creation. *An example: A group of clergy and laity in the Episcopal Diocese of WNC exploring ways to more fully incorporate their denominational teachings on environment.*
- Forming regional interfaith coalitions on climate change issues. *Example: In Asheville, five faith communities distributed 500 compact florescent lights (cfl) along with our literature on energy conservation during their Thanksgiving Day Parade.*
- Forming Creation Care committees. *Some examples:*
 - *Myers Park Baptist Church in Charlotte.*
 - *St. Mark's Episcopal Church in Raleigh*
 - *Immaculate Conception Catholic Church in Durham*
 - *Church of the Reconciliation in Chapel Hill*
 - *The Catholic Diocese of Charlotte has recently formed a diocesan-wide Environmental Justice Advisory Committee*
- Conducting congregational energy audits, and using this information to reduce energy usage. *Some examples:*
 - *St. Philips Moravian in Winston-Salem changed out all their incandescent bulbs in 2005 following an energy audit.*
 - *United Church of Chapel Hill has bought dimmable CFL's for the chandeliers in their sanctuary.*
- Taking pledges to cut their energy usage by 10%. *Example: See the card in the folder. We just began asking folks less than a month ago to take this pledge, and we have received more than 100 responses to date, with more arriving daily.*
- Replacing light bulbs with compact florescent lights (cfl's). *Some examples: Several Christian congregations are using our Advent prayer/action guide and replacing a light bulb with a compact florescent light (cfl) as each new Advent candle is lit. In Asheville, the Jewish Temple is organizing a cfl replacement program around the lighting of candles on Hanukah.*
- Acting on their new knowledge in the public arena. *An example: At the Utility Commission public hearings in Raleigh and Asheville in May of this year that were attended by an unprecedented number of ratepayers, at least 12 of the citizens who testified were members of faith congregations related to the Council, and they spoke with the message that "we want to stop the wasteful consumption of energy, and address climate change through clean, safe generation, efficient use and conservation." Many others of our members told us they wrote the Commission chair conveying the same message.*

Many of us can sense deeply within that we are at a new place in the history of humankind where we are being called to a fundamental change in our relationship to nature and to creation. As I re-read, and re-ponder, Genesis 1, I am struck, to my core, with the knowledge that God loved the world and saw that it was good even *before* the creation of humankind. It was good before we ever came on the scene. We are only part of it, but we have a very special, solemn responsibility to carry out.

That awakens in me what all religious traditions have taught, that I must "walk humbly" before my Creator and Creation. I believe that we are the generation that must re-learn that. God never gives dominion to any creature, which has not received his image. The God I worship is a God of love and mercy. The God of creation will not place the ultimate reins of government into hands that have no heart for something that He has created and loves. I believe our authority to govern comes not only from the consent of the people but also from the very God in whom we profess our faith. I ask you to listen deeply to what your heart is telling you. Jesus told his disciples, "In as much as ye did it to one of the least of your brethren ye did it to me." Could he have been referring as much to our hurting globe as much as he was to us human beings? Could it be that the sun and the moon, the wind and the stars, the fish of the beautiful Albemarle Sound, or the majestic forests of our Western mountains, the bear, the wolf, the native flowers of our state, dare I say the acid-rain scarred tree tops of Grandfather Mountain near my home are also our brothers and sisters in communion with our Creator?

I like what the Episcopal Bishop of Iowa recently said to his diocese, "For, I am convinced that it is our Creator who is waking us up to the impossible at this eleventh hour. We, who are the first generation to see the planet from beyond itself, still have choices to engage our creativity and imagination in new ways."

You may say that what I have presented here are religious sentiments that have no place in the world of politics. I will not offer apology for my idealism. I'm a preacher – it is my call. But let me remind you that our "constituents" are also the General Assembly's constituents. The people I serve are the people you serve. I know they talk as if they care only about the price of gasoline and not the fumes that make the smog in our cities or the carbon in the atmosphere. But they do care, and they expect us to care, too. This is the work that God has now called us to.

We hope that the measures that you recommend will be significant, not timid. That you will set goals that will really address the problem, even if those goals require some sacrifice. Maybe religious leaders feel more comfortable asking for noble responses from people, than do lawmakers. We commonly call for generosity, self-restraint, caution, or courage. For all of us, though, since global warming is a huge problem, it stands to reason that there must be big solutions that will call for us to change our ways. The familiar patterns of get and spend, rugged individualism, Me and Mine, won't work here. The task will call for the best we have, but I have confidence that our people will give their best to it when they see us doing the same.

We ask that the economic interests of the state's weaker, poorer and less politically empowered citizens will be kept in mind as you ponder our choices. We'd like to see solutions that employ not just the highly skilled in one or two counties but that provide living wages for the large numbers left behind by lost industries and dwindling supplies of fish or degraded agricultural land. I live in a county – Caldwell - that

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NORTH CAROLINA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES

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MEMBERS

African Methodist Episcopal Church

Second Episcopal District
North Carolina Conference
Western North Carolina Conference

African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church

Eastern North Carolina Episcopal District
Albermarle Conference
Cape Fear Conference
Central North Carolina Conference
North Carolina Conference
Piedmont Episcopal District
Blue Ridge Conference
West Central North Carolina Conference
Western North Carolina Conference

General Baptist State Convention: North Carolina State Convention

Christian Methodist Episcopal: Carolina Conference

Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in NC

Episcopal Church

Diocese of East Carolina
Diocese of North Carolina
Diocese of Western North Carolina

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America: Synod of North Carolina

Metropolitan Community Churches: Region 3

Moravian Church in America: Southern Province

NC Alliance of Baptists

Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Presbytery of Charlotte
Presbytery of Coastal Carolina
Presbytery of New Hope
Presbytery of Salem
Presbytery of Western North Carolina

Reformed Church in America: Regional Synod of New York

**STATEMENT OF GLOBAL WARMING AND CLIMATE CHANGE BY NORTH
CAROLINA'S RELIGIOUS AND SPIRITUAL LEADERS**

As witnesses of the serious climate changes the earth is now undergoing, North Carolina's various spiritual traditions join together to voice our concerns about the health of the planet we share with all species. We acknowledge the need to commit ourselves to a course of action that will help us recognize our part in the devastating effects on much of our planet brought about by increasingly severe weather events. We declare the necessity for North Carolina's spiritual communities to be leaders in turning human activities in a new direction for the well being of the planet.

Scientific evidence indicates that greenhouse gases are linked to global warming which threatens the health of the entire planet and all its inhabitants. We believe that global warming is a challenge to all of earth's inhabitants, but particularly to the spiritual communities that recognize the sacredness of preserving all eco-systems that sustain life.

Global warming violates that sacredness. It leads to species extinction, destruction of habitat for all species, melting ice caps, and rising sea levels. It disrupts our supplies of food and water. Already we see people dying from extreme weather conditions exacerbated by climate change, including record-breaking storms, heat waves, floods, and droughts. The burdens of a degraded environment fall disproportionately upon the most vulnerable of the planet's people: the poor, sick, elderly, and those who will face still greater threats in future generations.

In response to the global warming crisis, we join with you in establishing the North Carolina Interfaith Global Warming Campaign.

We commit our spiritual community to join with others to address this serious issue in the following ways:

Attend with awe, humility, and gratitude to the beauty in nature as well as in scripture.

Pray for the wisdom to address global warming as a violation of the integrity of the earth.

Distribute educational materials, offer presentations, and convene study groups to help our communities understand the negative impact on the earth of some personal behaviors and lifestyles, and take action to conserve energy and reduce excessive use of fossil fuels.

Share our spiritual perspectives on global warming with representatives of key sectors in our business, agriculture, and environmental organizations, seeking ways to work together for the common good.

Encourage others in our North Carolina communities to act on their responsibility to care for the earth.

Organize our communities to meet with local and state political leaders, and members of Congress, to encourage their participation and support.

Declare our support for U.S. Senate ratification of the Kyoto Protocol, which commits the U.S. to limit its greenhouse gas emissions to 7% below 1990 levels, and thereby join the international effort to address the threat of climate change.

Let us now "join together as many and diverse expressions of one loving mystery: for the healing of the earth and the renewal of all life." (United Nations Environmental Sabbath Program).

**The following North Carolina Religious and Spiritual Leaders
signed the February 2001 Statement on Global Warming and Climate Change.**

Rabbi James M. Bennett, Temple Beth El, Charlotte
The Right Reverend Dr. Leonard Bolick, Bishop, Evangelical Lutheran Church of America, Synod of NC
The Reverend George Briggs, retired, Unitarian Universalist Church
Council of Christian Life and Public Affairs, Baptist State Convention of North Carolina
The Most Reverend William G. Curtin, Bishop, Roman Catholic Church, Diocese of Charlotte
The Right Reverend Michael Curry, Bishop, Episcopal Church, Diocese of North Carolina
The Right Reverend Clifton Daniel, III, Bishop, Episcopal Church, Diocese of Eastern Carolina
The Reverend Daniel Charles Davis, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, Winston-Salem
Rabbi Lucy Diner, Temple Beth Or, Raleigh
Bishop Marion M. Edwards, Resident Bishop, United Methodist Church, North Carolina Conference
The Most Reverend F. Joseph Gossman, Bishop, Roman Catholic Church, Diocese of Raleigh
The Reverend Franklin W. Grice, District Superintendent, Northeast District, United Methodist Church, Western NC
Conference
The Reverend Dr. Herman Haller, Interim Conference Minister, United Church of Christ, Southern Conference
The Reverend Charles M. Hawes, Chaplain, UNC-Greensboro, Episcopal Diocese of North Carolina
The Right Reverend J. Gary Gloster, Bishop Suffragan, Episcopal Church, Diocese of North Carolina
The Reverend Lone T. Feusen, Unitarian Universalist Fellowship, Wilmington
The Reverend Glenda N. Johnson, District Superintendent, Durham District, United Methodist Church, North
Carolina Conference
The Reverend Nelson Johnson, Pulpit Forum, Greensboro
The Right Reverend Robert H. Johnson, Bishop, Episcopal Church, Diocese of Western North Carolina
The Reverend J. Michael Leatherwood, District Superintendent, Lexington District, United Methodist Church,
Western NC Conference
Sister Evelyn Mattern, Program Associate, North Carolina Council of Churches
The Reverend Jack McKinney, Pullen Memorial Baptist Church, Raleigh
The Reverend Alan Neely, Wake County Interfaith Alliance
Taitaku Pat Phelan, Priest, Chapel Hill Zen Center
The Reverend James Pike, Binkley Memorial Baptist Church, Chapel Hill
The Reverend J. George Reed, Executive Director, North Carolina Council of Churches
The Reverend Charles M. Smith, United Methodist Church, North Carolina Conference
Mr. Howard Smither, President of the Chapel Hill Zen Center
The Reverend Frank Stith, III, District Superintendent, Greensboro District, United Methodist Church, Western NC
Conference
Mrs. Barbara Volk, President of The Christian Women United, North Carolina
The Reverend Larry D. Wilkinson, District Superintendent, Waynesville District, United Methodist Church, Western
NC Conference
The Reverend T. Melvin Williams, Jr., Watts Street Baptist Church, Durham,

Excerpts from Denominational Statements on Global Climate Change

In addition to writing statements reminding their believers of the obligation to care for God's creation, most denominations have issued specific calls to stop the threat of global climate change. The most recent is The Evangelical Call to Action signed by 90 evangelical leaders, issued January 2006. Following are excerpts from statements by several US denominations urging their members to take very seriously the danger to God's creation that climate change presents.

From North Carolina Religious Leaders

As witnesses of the serious climate changes the earth is now undergoing, we leaders of North Carolina's various spiritual traditions join together to voice our concerns about the health of the planet we share with all species. We acknowledge the need to commit ourselves to a course of action that will help us recognize our part in the devastating effects on much of our planet brought about by increasingly severe weather events. We declare the necessity for North Carolina's spiritual communities to be leaders in turning human activities in a new direction for the well being of the planet.

From a statement on Global Warming and Climate Change by North Carolina's religious and spiritual leaders. February, 2001. Signers include nine bishops from the Roman Catholic, Lutheran, Methodist and Episcopal denominations, along with several rabbis and Muslim leaders, a Buddhist priest, and the Council on Christian Life and Public Affairs of the Southern Baptist State Convention.

Church of the Brethren

Planet earth is in danger. The ecological crisis that threatens the survival of life on earth is evident now not only to professional biologists, botanists, environmental scientists, but to all. Awareness grows that humanity is facing a global crisis..... The Creator-Redeemer seeks the renewal of the creation and calls the people of God to participate in saving acts of renewal. ...Our task is nothing less than to join God in preserving, renewing and fulfilling the creation. From "Creation: Called to Care," 1991. http://www.brethren.org/ac/ac_statements/91Creation.htm

Episcopal

We are called to be good neighbors and act with love and care for all of what God called "Sacred". The natural greenhouse effect set up by God has been disrupted and the imbalance is causing temperatures to rise. Global warming means not only higher average temperatures, but also changes in weather patterns, precipitation, and ranges of plants insects and animals. Such changes would threaten natural resources, human health, already endangered species, and fragile ecosystems. Although no person would be immune from the consequences of climate change caused by global warming, the world's poor would be especially vulnerable. From a resolution adopted by the Executive Council of the Episcopal Church, 2001. http://www.ecusa.anglican.org/1866_70059_ENG_HTML.htm

Evangelical

As American evangelical Christian leaders, we recognize both our opportunity and our responsibility to offer a biblically based moral witness that can help shape public policy in the most powerful nation on earth, and therefore contribute to the well-being of the entire world.¹ *Whether we will enter the public square and offer our witness there is no longer an open question. We are in that square, and we will not withdraw.* Over the last several years many of us have engaged in study, reflection, and prayer related to the issue of climate change (often called "global warming"). For most of us, until recently this has not been treated as a pressing issue or major priority. Indeed, many of us have required considerable convincing before becoming persuaded that climate change is a real problem and that it ought to matter to us as Christians. From: "Climate Change: An Evangelical Call to Action." Signed by 90 Evangelical Leaders, Issued January 2006. <http://www.christiansandclimate.org/statement>

Jewish

We have a solemn obligation to do whatever we can within reason both to prevent harm to current and future generations and to preserve the integrity of the creation with which we have been entrusted. Not to do so when we have the technological capacity - as we do in the case of non-fossil fuel energy and transportation technologies - is an unforgivable abdication of our responsibility. From a resolution adopted at the 111th Convention of the Central Conference of American Rabbis: March 2000. <http://www.interfaithpower.org/TDSjewishCCAR.htm>

Lutheran (ELCA)

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. 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. From "Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope and Justice," August 1993. <http://www.interfaithpower.org/TDSevangelicalLutheran.htm>

Orthodox

God's creation delivers unsettling news. Earth's climate is warming to dangerous levels To continue to walk the current path of ecological destruction is not only folly; it is sin

Churches, as communities of God's people in the world, are called to exist as representatives of the loving Creator, Sustainer, and Restorer of all creation. We are called to worship God with all our being and actions, and to treat creation as sacred. We must engage our political leaders in supporting the very future of this planet. We are called to cling to the true Gospel - for "God so loved the cosmos" (John 3:16) - rejecting the false gospels of our day. From "God's Earth is Sacred: An Open Letter to Christians in the United States" Conference of Canonical Orthodox Bishops in the Americas (SCOBA), July 2005

Presbyterian USA

"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." (1990 General Assembly)

"... Reaffirms the call of the 202nd, 210th, and 211th General Assemblies (1990, 1998, and 1999) for the United States to ratify the Convention on Climate Change and the Kyoto Protocol.... Calls on the United States government to join in the world effort to reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and to develop and enact a national emergency response, underwritten by law, with adequate financial support, and economic enforcement mechanisms, to be fully functioning by 2005, with targeted reductions by that time." (2003 General Assembly) www.prcweb.org/

Reformed Church in America

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.... From "Climate Change Update." 1993. <http://www.rca.org/mission/witness/climateupdate.html>

Roman Catholic

At its core, global climate change is not about economic theory or political platforms, nor about partisan advantage or interest group pressures. It is about the future of God's creation and the one human family. It is about protecting both "the human environment" and the natural environment.¹ It is about our human stewardship of God's creation and our responsibility to those who come after us. From "Global Climate Change: A Plea for Dialogue, Prudence, and the Common Good" US Catholic Bishops. June 15, 2001. <http://www.nccbuscc.org/sdwp/international/globalclimate.htm>

Society of Friends

Protecting God's Earth and its fullness of life is of fundamental religious concern to the Society of Friends. The links between human activity, the dramatic rise in atmospheric greenhouse gas concentrations, and the rise of average global temperatures are now of sufficient concern to lead us to action. From Society of Friends statement on global climate change. June 2000. <http://www.interfaithpower.org/TDSocietyOfFriends.htm>

Unitarian Universalists

Our seventh Principle challenges contemporary Unitarian Universalists to remember that we are part of the interdependent web of all existence. The choices we make, coupled with the choices made by government and the private sector, profoundly affect our environment. We have a moral responsibility to future generations to mitigate global warming while there is still time. From "Threat of Global Warming Study/Action Issue" 2004 General Assembly <http://www.uua.org/csw/threatofgw.html#Threat%20of%20Global%20Warming>

United Church of Christ:

(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;

From "Statement on Global Climate Change," Twenty-second General Synod. <http://www.interfaithpower.org/TDSUnitedChurch.htm>

United Methodist Church

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.... We support strenuous efforts to conserve energy and increase energy efficiency. A transition to energy efficiency and renewable energy sources will combat global warming, protect human health, create new jobs, and ensure a secure, affordable energy future. From the General Board of Church and Society Energy Policy Statement, Resolution 5, 2000. www.umc-gbcs.org

Please indicate below how you will continue to make Earth a better place to live. Please keep one for yourself as a reminder, and send one to us, so we can calculate the carbon dioxide reduction of respondents.

10 simple things to do to reduce global warming

<p>CHANGE A LIGHT Replacing one regular light bulb with a compact fluorescent light saves 150 pounds of carbon dioxide a year (up to 730 pounds over the life of the CFL). By replacing four bulbs this Advent, you've saved 600 pounds of carbon dioxide.</p>	<p>We've replaced this many bulbs this: _____ which has saved _____ pounds of CO². We plan to replace this many more bulbs _____ which will save _____ pounds of CO².</p>
<p>DRIVE LESS You'll save one pound of carbon dioxide for every mile you don't drive! Walk, bike, carpool more often.</p>	<p>We will reduce our driving by _____ miles each month, and save _____ pounds of CO².</p>
<p>ADJUST YOUR THERMOSTAT Move your thermostat down 2 degrees in winter and 2 degrees up in summer and save about 2,000 pounds of carbon dioxide.</p>	<p>We will adjust our thermostat by this many degrees _____ and save _____ pounds of CO².</p>
<p>RECYCLE MORE You can save 2400 pounds of carbon dioxide per year by recycling half of your household waste.</p>	<p>We will recycle _____% of our household waste and save _____ pounds of CO².</p>
<p>REDUCE WASTE Avoid products with a lot of packaging. You can save 1,200 pounds of carbon dioxide if you cut down your garbage by 10%.</p>	<p>We will cut down our garbage by _____% and save _____ pounds of CO².</p>
<p>USE LESS HOT WATER It takes a lot of energy to heat water. Use less by installing a low flow showerhead (350 pounds of carbon dioxide) and washing your clothes in cold or warm water (500 pounds per year).</p>	<p>We will install a low flow showerhead and save 350 pounds of CO² _____ (yes). We will wash our clothes in cold/warm water and save 500 pounds of CO² _____ (yes).</p>
<p>PURCHASE NC GREEN POWER For only \$4.00 more on your monthly utility bill, you can add one block of 100 kWh's of clean energy onto the electric grid, replacing 100 kWh's of conventional power. To learn more go to www.ncgreenpower.org.</p>	<p>To discover the reduction in emissions that can result from your participation, go to www.ncgreenpower.org/signup/calculator.html. _____</p>
<p>PLANT A TREE A single tree will absorb one ton of carbon dioxide over its lifetime.</p>	<p>We will plant _____ trees and save _____ tons of CO².</p>
<p>TURN OFF ELECTRONIC DEVICES Simply turning off your television, DVD player, stereo, and computer when you're not using them will save thousands of pounds of carbon dioxide a year.</p>	<p>We will save CO² this year by turning off the following:</p>
<p>BE INFORMED ABOUT ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES. Join Climate Connection listserv to keep track of global warming public policy issues, and learn how to affect legislation that could save millions of pounds of carbon dioxide.</p>	<p>We will join the Climate Connection listserv so we can let our legislators know that global warming is a moral issue that they must address, which can potentially save millions of pounds of CO².</p>
<p>Please send this copy to Climate Connection, 1307 Glenwood Avenue, Suite 156, Raleigh NC 27605. Name _____ Address: (street, city, zip) _____ Phone _____ Email _____</p>	

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