

CALL FOR STAFFING TO ADDRESS ECOJUSTICE CONCERNS

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ has by resolutions, pronouncements, and proposals for action over many years proven itself to be deeply concerned with issues of the environment, including, but not limited to, issues of ecojustice and environmental racism, air and water quality, sustainable growth, and matters of national and international environmental policy, and

WHEREAS a review of Synod history between 1975 and 1999 identified over twenty actions that deal explicitly with various environmental concerns, and

WHEREAS the Seventeenth General Synod recognized the role of the Church in environmental issues by adopting the priority, “Integrity of Creation, Justice and Peace,” affirming that these issues are central to our identity, and called on many instrumentalities of the church to address these issues, and

WHEREAS the United Church of Christ has encouraged member conferences and churches to examine their own role within their community and to adopt a posture of being a “Whole Earth Church” or “Whole Earth Conference,” and

WHEREAS issues of environmental integrity and sustainability are of great and increasing importance to individuals, communities, and the global ecosystem, and

WHEREAS God has created all things (Genesis 1—2, John 1:1–5), joined in relationship with all creatures (Genesis 9:8–17, Job 38—41), and redeems all of creation (Romans 8:18–25, Colossians 1:15–20), and

WHEREAS God calls humans to strive toward shalom—peace, justice, and harmony for all of creation, and

WHEREAS responding to God’s love and grace requires that people in the modern world rethink the place and purpose of humanity within God’s creation. and

WHEREAS in our modern world, a faithful response to God’s creation, redemption, and call toward shalom requires more than ministries of justice and witness, but also requires education, pastoral care, spiritual direction, acts of service, and new perspectives in worship, and

WHEREAS under the current structure of the denomination, individual members, churches, and conferences, as well as secular and religious bodies outside of the church, do not have a clear point of contact for information, assistance, and leadership in areas involving environmental faithfulness, and

WHEREAS other secular and religious bodies outside of the church have ongoing, active and vital environmental offices which could benefit conferences, churches, and individual members of the United Church of Christ if such contact was facilitated, and

WHEREAS prior actions of General Synod make clear the intent that faithful attention to environmental issues requires leadership, program, and resources from all parts of the national church, addressed to local churches as well as ministries in other settings, and

WHEREAS “ecojustice” refers both to the intertwined areas of environment sustainability and social justice and to theological and spiritual perspectives that affirm the integrity of creation, and

WHEREAS it has become clear that ecojustice cannot be broadly addressed in Covenanted Ministries without staff assigned to that theme;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Twenty-third General Synod affirms the many actions by previous Synods which have dealt with the integrity of creation and environmental issues and looks to that history of action as an indicator of broad theological and ethical conviction in support of ecojustice.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Twenty-third General Synod urges the four Covenanted Ministries to evaluate the extent to which their programming and staffing reflect the United Church of Christ’s deep and historic commitment to ecojustice.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the four Covenanted Ministries are encouraged to identify clearly the program areas and the member of their staff that address ecojustice concerns.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Twenty-third General Synod requests the Executive Council to provide ongoing encouragement and support to the Covenanted Ministries as they work individually and collaboratively for ecojustice.

Funding for this action will be made in accordance with the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

Prudential resolution. Requires majority vote for passage