

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that New England United Methodists pledge solidarity with those who seek reproductive health care, including abortion, by taking active measures, including accompanying people to medical appointments when necessary.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that New England United Methodists and their churches will support a person's right to reproductive health care, including abortion, through personal prayer, letter writing campaigns to their legislators and, when necessary, peaceful protest.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the New England Annual Conference Secretary shall submit this resolution to the next General Conference of The United Methodist Church by the appropriate deadline.

## **RS – 22 – 222 – STEWARDSHIP OF CREATION: RESPONDING TO GLOBAL CLIMATE CRISIS**

(Submitted by New England Conference Board of Church and Society)

(adopted 7 yes, 0 abstain, 0 no)

"All creation is the Lord's, and we are responsible for the ways in which we use and abuse it." (Book of Discipline 160)

It is striking that God places Adam and Eve in the Garden of Eden to tend it. No good gardener poisons and destroys their garden, yet humankind has fallen prey to greed, injustice, and apathy, and that is poisoning and destroying our beautiful, God-given, planet earth. The 2021 United Nations' Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC) report, put together by over 300 scientists world wide, says that we have 10 years to drastically reduce our fossil fuel emissions (CO<sub>2</sub> and methane) or life as we know it on earth will cease to exist.<sup>11</sup> To be blunt we have to stop burning things and instead take advantage of natural sources of power like sun, wind and geothermal.

By burning fossil fuels (which emit CO<sub>2</sub> and methane) and emitting CO<sub>2</sub> and methane through modern agriculture, climate change and deforestation, we are setting in motion major ecosystem changes to our oceans, air and land which threaten the basic web of life on which we all depend. Although 1/3 of all the foods we eat depend on pollinators, insect populations are collapsing.<sup>12</sup> While 50% of atmospheric oxygen comes from plankton, ocean plankton populations have themselves dropped by 50%, and fish stocks are in decline.<sup>13</sup> Just in the state of California, severe drought has caused wildfires of a size equal to all of Vermont, New Hampshire and Massachusetts combined.<sup>14</sup> On the extremes, both rainforests

<sup>11</sup> General Secretary's Statement on the IPCC Working Group 1 on the Physical Science Basis of the Sixth Assessment, <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/secretary-generals-statement-the-ipcc-working-group-1-report-the-physical-science-basis-of-the-sixth-assessment>

<sup>12</sup> How much of the world's food production is dependent on pollinators?  
<https://ourworldindata.org/pollinator-dependence>

Worldwide decline of the entomofauna: A review of its drivers,  
<https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/abs/pii/S0006320718313636>

<sup>13</sup> Building blocks of ocean food web in rapid decline as plankton productivity plunges,  
<https://www.cbc.ca/news/canada/newfoundland-labrador/ocean-phytoplankton-zooplankton-food-web-1.4927884>

<sup>14</sup> Wildfire Statistics, <https://sgp.fas.org/crs/misc/IF10244.pdf>

1 and Siberia are also burning.<sup>15</sup> The east is seeing record breaking rainfall and flooding because warming  
 2 supercharges our storms.<sup>16</sup>  
 3

4 The poorest people of the earth are already suffering the most from climate change.<sup>17</sup> All of creation has  
 5 been groaning. The latest scientific data confirms that global temperatures increased by about 1.2  
 6 degrees Fahrenheit over the course of the last century. Unless we can keep the rise in temperature  
 7 below 1.5 degrees, scientists warn that we face irreparable damage to the earth's ability to support  
 8 human life as we have known it.<sup>18</sup>  
 9

10 The ways we consume and live are putting future generations, and all of creation, at great risk.<sup>19</sup> We  
 11 confess our complicity in this crisis, and commit to becoming more faithful stewards of God's creation.  
 12 We must change our ways in order to change the course of global climate change. Solutions exist to help  
 13 us solve this problem. It is time for Christians to act and act quickly and boldly.  
 14

15 THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT:

16  
 17 1. The New England Annual Conference (NEAC) shall create a Creation Care Task Force, with at least one  
 18 member from each state, under the direction of the Board of Church and Society of the New England  
 19 Annual Conference that will implement, resource, educate, and monitor the implementation of the  
 20 measures outlined in adoption of this resolution into the life of the New England Conference.  
 21

22 2. We call on the NEAC to prioritize education and resourcing regarding climate justice.  
 23

24 3. We encourage each charge to complete an energy audit and act on it, reporting and celebrating  
 25 progress at their annual church conferences.  
 26

27 4. We urge churches to consult with their state's Interfaith Power and Light chapter. Some chapters (VT,  
 28 NH, MA) have grants available for energy audits and energy efficiency projects.  
 29

30 5. All church facilities and camp structures are encouraged to practice recycling, composting,  
 31 weatherization, energy efficient lighting, and use of native plants in landscaping. We encourage reducing  
 32 the use of single use items (including cups, plates, utensils), due to the difficulty of recycling.  
 33

34 6. Wherever practical, we encourage the design and construction of new church facilities and camp  
 35 structures to integrate ecologically responsible design principles. Where possible buildings should  
 36 include a focus on net zero heating, cooling and appliances.  
 37

<sup>15</sup> FIRES IN THE RAINFOREST, <https://rainforests.mongabay.com/rainforest-fires/>  
 Photos show scale of massive fires tearing through Siberian forests, <https://news.mongabay.com/2020/07/photos-show-scale-of-massive-fires-tearing-through-siberian-forests/>

<sup>16</sup> Climate Change Is Making Hurricanes Stronger, Researchers Find,  
<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/05/18/climate/climate-changes-hurricane-intensity.html>

<sup>17</sup> Poverty and Climate Change Reducing the Vulnerability of the Poor through Adaptation, Organisation for  
 Economic Co-operation and Development Report, <https://www.oecd.org/env/cc/2502872.pdf>

<sup>18</sup> General Secretary's Statement on the IPCC Working Group 1 on the Physical Science Basis of the Sixth  
 Assessment, <https://www.un.org/sg/en/content/secretary-generals-statement-the-ipcc-working-group-1-report-the-physical-science-basis-of-the-sixth-assessment>

<sup>19</sup> Ibid.

7. We encourage virtual meetings and/or car-pooling at all church and conference related meetings and gatherings to reduce the use of fossil fuels:

8. We encourage people to use their votes and other advocacy channels to challenge elected officials to move quickly and boldly on the issue of reducing carbon emissions;

9. Congregations in the New England Conference are encouraged to observe the celebration of God's creation annually on the Sunday closest to Earth Day (April 22).

## **RS – 22 – 223 – IDENTIFYING AND OPPOSING APARTHEID IN THE HOLY LAND**

(Submitted by the Divestment Task Force, the Commission on Religion & Race, the Board of Church & Society, Open Table of Christ UMC)

(adopted by respective submitting body 4-0-0-0, 9-0-0-3, 7-0-0-1, 16-0-0-0 yes-no-abstain-absemt)

**Whereas** United Methodists strongly reject and condemn all forms of racism and religious prejudice including antisemitism and must reject as well any attempts to equate criticism of Israel with antisemitism, in that such empty charges of bigotry seek to protect Israel from responsibility for its policies and actions, discourage others from standing with a suffering and oppressed people, and dangerously weaken the vital work of identifying and opposing real antisemitism in our society, and

**Whereas** race in international law is defined not as a biological concept, but as a social concept, applying to "race, colour, descent, or national or ethnic origin,"<sup>1</sup> and

**Whereas** apartheid is a term denoting "inhuman acts committed for the purpose of establishing and maintaining domination by one racial group of persons over any other racial group of persons and systematically oppressing them,"<sup>2</sup> and

**Whereas** apartheid is named as a "crime against humanity" under international law and the primary features of apartheid include:

- Codifying into law a preferred group of people and giving that group preferential access to resources, benefits and services;
- Segregating the population into geographic areas based on identity; and
- Establishing laws and policies designed to suppress opposition to the regime and enforcing domination through arbitrary imprisonment, torture, cruel and inhumane treatment, and other violations of human rights; and

**Whereas** apartheid is not defined by the conditions that existed in South Africa, but by the United Nations Convention on Apartheid of 1973 and the Rome Statute of the International Criminal Court of 1993,<sup>3</sup> and the form it takes can vary from country to country: in South Africa the apartheid system was based on skin color and racial identity; in Israel/Palestine it is based on religious and ethnic identity (Jews vs. non-Jews), and

**Whereas** in most of the region between the Jordan River and the Mediterranean Sea, Israel is the sole governing power, and, in the remainder, Israel maintains primary control over Palestinians' lives, and

**Whereas** Israeli authorities have demonstrated a clear intent to maintain domination over Palestinians