TEXT OF THE MOTION

A Resolution of Witness

WHEREAS the major 2018 report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change told us that we must reduce carbon emissions 50% by 2030 in order to avoid the most catastrophic effects of climate change, a widely accepted benchmark;¹ and

WHEREAS when we fully ground ourselves in God’s word, we understand that this is God’s earth that scientists are talking about, and the Twenty-Sixth General Synod has recognized that the earth belongs to God;² and

WHEREAS God’s earth could be catastrophically impacted by the climate change we are causing and the Twenty-Sixth General Synod has recognized that the earth is affected by climate change;³ and

WHEREAS protecting God’s creation also protects all God’s people by reducing air pollutants and sickness;⁴ and

WHEREAS, because air pollutants from burning fossil fuels are especially harmful for children, the elderly, rural and under-resourced communities, and people of color⁵ protection measures must be just and equitably available; and

WHEREAS God’s word as set out in Genesis, Leviticus, Mark, Mathew, and Luke leave no doubt about what is required of a steward, to care for God’s land while in our temporary tenancy; and

WHEREAS about 40% of the United States’ emissions causing climate change come from the places we live and the vehicles we drive and those emissions are increasing⁶ and

WHEREAS our electricity is getting cleaner with the addition of very inexpensive wind- and solar-generated electricity and electricity will continue to get even cleaner as expensive coal-fired electric generation is retired⁷; and

WHEREAS the Inflation Reduction Act strongly supports clean electricity with significant funding and strongly supports and funds electrification, storage, and solar for low and middle income people,⁸ and

WHEREAS God calls on each of us and all of us together in community to act prophetically, to be role models, to be the Moses of our time, and
WHEREAS our church communities can lead the way to protect God’s earth and its people by
electrifying and helping our members and neighbors electrify;

NOW THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that, as one of the ways to protect all of God’s
creation God’s earth and its people from climate changing emissions, the Thirty-Fourth General
Synod encourages United Church of Christ congregations and individuals to actively plan for
and promote electrifying fossil-fueled space heating and cooling equipment, appliances and
machines when old ones fail or become outdated or replacing outdated or failing electric space
heating and cooling equipment, appliances and machines with new, far more efficient, electric
ones, and to become role models for electrification for individual members and the broader
community; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod acknowledges the
challenges of electrification for certain locations and settings and trusts the guidance of the Holy
Spirit as each congregation and individual considers the practicality, or lack thereof, for their
setting while still following the heart of the resolution; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod urges United Church of
Christ congregations to actively promote and advocate for electrification as one of the ways to
protect God’s earth, all of God’s creation, and its people, and, with environmental justice in mind,
help our members and neighbors' communities electrify; and

BE IT FINALLY RESOLVED that the Thirty-Fourth General Synod requests Conferences and
Associations of the United Church of Christ to gather and distribute information and guidance
for their local congregations and individual members necessary and helpful to implement
electrification, thereby becoming role models for the broader community.

FUNDING: Funding for the implementation of the resolution will be made in accordance with
the overall mandates of the affected agencies and the funds available.

IMPLEMENTATION: The Officers of the Church, in consultation with appropriate ministries
or other entities within the United Church of Christ, will determine the implementing body.

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1 Stanford Earth Matters. “A roadmap to reducing greenhouse gas emissions 50 percent by 2030.”
   September 20, 2019. https://exponentialroadmap.org/wp-
   content/uploads/2020/03/ExponentialRoadmap_1.5.1_216x279_08_AW_Download_Singles_Small.pdf
3 Ibid.
4 “Existing Buildings Electrification Strategy,” City of Berkeley, California, 4, 2021, pages 6 & 7; Fresh
   September 20, 2019.
   for a healthy future.” December 2021.
7 Fresh Energy. “Our accomplishments of 2021 and what we are looking forward to in 2022: Further
   changes to coal plant operations secured & Otter Tail Power begins to exit coal and increase renewables.”
   January 24, 2022.