

The following resolution was approved by the delegates at a plenary of the Thirty-Fourth General Synod of the United Church of Christ, held in Indianapolis June 30-July 4, 2023.

**A RESOLUTION URGING PLANNING FOR AND IMPLEMENTING
ELECTRIFICATION**

A Resolution of Witness

1 TEXT OF THE MOTION

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

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37 WHEREAS God calls on each of us and all of us together in community to act prophetically, to
38 be role models, to be the Moses of our time, and

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40 WHEREAS our church communities can lead the way to protect God’s earth and its people by
41 electrifying and helping our members and neighbors electrify;

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

²<https://uccfiles.com/pdf/gs26minutes.pdf>, pages 15-16

³ Ibid.

⁴ “Existing Buildings Electrification Strategy,” City of Berkeley, California, 4, 2021, pages 6 & 7; Fresh Energy, “What’s Up With Natural Gas in My Home,” February 24, 2021.

⁵Stanford Earth Matters. “A roadmap to reducing greenhouse gas emissions 50 percent by 2030.” September 20, 2019.

⁶ Electrify Everything in Your Home. Joel Rosenberg. Rewiring America, 2.; Fresh Energy. “Buildings 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.

⁸ <https://www.nytimes.com/interactive/2022/08/13/upshot/whats-in-the-democrats-climate-health-bill.html?name=styl-n-domestic-policy-bill~>