



Climate Change Colloquy Series

Sponsored by the Greater Pacific Northwest USA Mission Center
Community of Christ

From the North American Climate Justice Team:

In the communication we sent you prior to Community of Christ World Conference, we promised to distribute “a post-Conference summary of actions taken” in the resolutions that touched on climate issues and global security. By now, you are well aware that climate change is a threat multiplier. Every conflict, injustice, and societal problem is increased by the stress and crises brought by rapidly changing and escalating climate impacts. As a result, several resolutions considered at World Conference were of importance to the North American Climate Justice Team, and we want to share the results of conference action concerning them.

Climate Emergency

One of the first resolutions under consideration at World Conference calls for the global church to declare a “Climate Emergency;” promote sustainability in individual, congregational, and mission center life; and requested the Earth Stewardship Team to create resources to raise awareness and foster action mitigating carbon emissions throughout the global church. There was passionate discussion about the resolution, but few comments in the negative.

The Order of Bishops brought an amendment to the original resolution that widens the responsibility of providing educational and motivational materials. Rather than asking the small, under-funded Earth Stewardship Team to assume the burden of creating resources for the global church, they suggested the entire church body take responsibility. In this way, materials can be produced locally, adapted to the needs and culture of each area.

Racial Justice

The World Conference considered and passed a resolution acknowledging racial injustice and calling for repentance and change. Issues of racial injustice are increased by eco-racism in several ways:

- The populations least culpable in increasing carbon emissions are the ones most impacted by global warming and climate catastrophes. Drought, flood, fires, hunger and poverty add to the suffering endured by those who are already oppressed by racial injustice.
- Developed nations are often the slowest to make the changes needed to mitigate climate change and assist racially disadvantaged peoples.
- Climate solutions tend to unjustly benefit the wealthy while ignoring the economically challenged, perpetuating prejudice and systemic injustice.

The first resolved in the resolution on racial justice crafted by the Greater Pacific Northwest Mission Center begins with “... Jesus has declared God’s love for all the world and all creation...” The statement lays as a foundation for racial justice the unconditional love of God for the diversity built into all creation. The passing of this resolution affirms the equality of all, calls for the elimination of

institutional racism, and promotes actions that will bring about a just, equitable, and peaceful world for all people—and by implication, creation and all life.

Climate Refugees

Friday, the assembly approved a Resolution for a Refugee Day, in cooperation with the United Nations, set for June 20, and tasked a team with creating associated educational information in multi languages. During that discussion, a delegate from Africa proposed an amendment that “climate refugees” be specifically included in our focus on Refugee Day.

Climate refugees are those people whose lives, livelihoods, and living environments have been destroyed by climate disasters, causing them to leave their homeland and seek refuge in another country. Although international law protects refugees in general from oppressive actions and inhumane treatment, climate refugees are not included. They are the invisible poor, at high risk wherever they go. The UN High Commissioner Report estimated an annual 21.5 million refugees have resulted from climate disasters since 2008. This number could increase to 1.2 billion by 2050.

By including climate refugees in our resolution, we are raising awareness about the difficulties faced by those displaced by climate crises, and speaking out against the injustices they suffer. The amendment – and the resolution – passed with an overwhelming majority. It is unlikely that educational materials will be created and available this year to assist people in remembering Refugee Day, but you can raise awareness in your own congregation. Please mark it on your calendar and plan your own activity of remembrance on June 18 or 25, which are the two Sundays closest to the official UN Refugee Day of June 20.

Non-Violence

The topic of non-violence was chosen by the First Presidency for consideration throughout the week using Alternative Common Consent Surveys of interest and preferences. As a result, a great deal of information and multiple perspectives were shared during the week. The primary question was:

Should the First Presidency continue to develop a statement on the role of nonviolence in the pursuit of “peace on and for the Earth” (Doctrine and Covenants 165:1d) and in the life and mission of the church?

Please note that the primary question includes avoiding violence to the earth and all life forms, in addition to human life. This initial question was followed by delegates choosing their top three perspectives on this issue, and then the one perspective that was most important in their thinking. The First Presidency will consider that information carefully as they continue to work on a statement about non-violence that can be helpful throughout the global church and applied in multiple contexts.

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. Conversations throughout the week in quorum meetings and informal situations helped broaden the applicability to environmental non-violence. The North American Climate Justice Team was privileged to help raise awareness, provide information, and encourage action on the climate emergency, and foster non-violence in all its forms.

As we look toward the future, the North American Climate Justice Team is committed to providing awareness, education, and resources to assist individuals, congregations and mission centers in addressing issues of climate emergency. You can help. Talk about climate issues. Share with others the steps you have taken to make changes in your own lifestyle. Write letters and emails to your legislators supporting sustainable environmental policies. And continue to uphold the sacredness of God's creation in every possible way, to empower the flourishing of all life.

If you have any questions or concerns, visit the "Contact Us" section of our website, <https://cofchristclimatejustice.org>, or contact me directly, as indicated below.

Thanks for participating!
Warm regards,

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