

## **Inviting Local Churches to Conserve Energy, Increase Energy Efficiency, and Transition to Renewable Energy**

**Whereas**, God created the heavens and the earth and said “it was very good.” (Genesis 1:31); and

**Whereas**, “All creation belongs to God and is a manifestation of God’s goodness and providential care . . . [and so] we are called to practice responsible stewardship and to live in right relationship with the Creator and the whole of God’s creation (*Preface, Community of All Creation, The Book of Discipline of The United Methodist Church, 2020/2024*); and

**Whereas**, “Unsustainable human activities have placed the entirety of God’s creation in peril. . . [and] the degradation and wholesale destruction of the natural environment threatens unprecedented harm, bringing danger to human and nonhuman life alike.” (*Community of All Creation, Creation in Peril, Book of Discipline, 2020/2024*.) and

**Whereas**, “The negative impacts resulting from the degradation of the natural world have fallen disproportionately on marginalized communities, including indigenous tribes, religious and ethnic communities, people living in poverty, and other vulnerable groups.” (*Community of All Creation, Stewardship of Creation, Book of Discipline, 2020/2024*); and

**Whereas**, in January of 2025 NASA and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) both announced that 2024 was the hottest year since records were started in 1850 and that the ten warmest years on record have all occurred within the last decade (NOAA, *2024 Was the World’s Warmest Year, 1/10/25*); and

**Whereas**, according to NOAA, “Heat is the leading cause of weather-related deaths in the United States with the CDC estimating 1,220 people are killed by extreme heat every year.” (NOAA, *Extreme Heat, 5/29/24*) Furthermore, extreme heat days, while creating risks to all, are particularly dangerous for low-wealth people who lack air conditioning, have inefficient units, can’t afford to cool their homes, or are unhoused. (John Hopkins Bloomberg School of Public Health Magazine, *Extreme Heat Hazards, 7/8/24*); and

**Whereas**, global warming and the resulting climate change are increasing the frequency and severity of extreme weather events like Hurricane Helene in East Tennessee and torrential flooding in Kentucky early this year (NASA, *Extreme Weather and Climate Change*); and

**Whereas**, a preponderance of scientific evidence points to the burning of fossil fuels such as coal, oil, and natural gas as the greatest single cause of the buildup of greenhouse gases and the consequent warming of earth’s atmosphere (NASA, *Scientific Consensus*); and

**Whereas**, technological advances now provide means for churches to adopt alternative clean renewable energy resources and the means to reduce energy consumption through conservation and efficiency; and

**Whereas**, many energy efficiency changes result in immediate cost savings and all provide cost savings over time, resulting in more funds for ministry; and

**Whereas**, the TWK Conference Creation Care Ministry stands ready to provide consultation on ways local churches can reduce their carbon footprint, including connecting congregations that are exploring options with those that have already taken effective steps to make that reduction.

**Therefore, Be It Resolved,** that churches in the Tennessee-Western Kentucky Conference are encouraged to take concrete steps to reduce energy consumption through such means as insulation, air leak prevention, temperature regulation, LED lighting, upgrading of HVAC systems, installing highly efficient heat pumps; planting of shade trees, and other energy-efficient measures; and

**Be It Further Resolved,** that churches are encouraged to explore the possibility of adopting clean renewable energy technology in their buildings, including solar arrays, battery storage, or geothermal systems. Connecting to community solar projects where available is another option to explore; and

**Be It Further Resolved,** that, in recognition of the fact that advance planning is often required to make changes to conserve energy, use energy more efficiently, and switch to renewable energy systems, Trustees Committees and other church leadership teams are encouraged to develop forward looking timelines to achieve those outcomes.

**Be It Further Resolved,** that churches be invited to share their successes with the TWK Creation Care Ministry so that that other congregations can be inspired to take similar action.

**This resolution is submitted by Rev. Ann Cover on behalf of the TWK Creation Care Ministry Leadership Team.**