

The Riverside Church



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A Statement of Commitment to Become a Sustainable Earth Community Congregation

The Church Council, the Mission and Social Justice Commission, and the Sustainable Earth Community Committee of the Global Justice and Peace Ministry of The Riverside Church commit prophetically to a new covenant with Creation. We envision transforming our institutions and communities to become integral parts of just, participatory, and sustainable societies. We acknowledge that this requires each of us to become responsible stewards of the earth's resources with which we have been abundantly endowed.

We are called to this because we have not heeded God's vision of creation. This has led to the destruction of ecological life forms, resources, and earth systems, which threaten the very existence of our families, communities, and our small planet.

Throughout history, The Riverside Church has given leadership to the critical issues of our times: peace, disarmament, the ending of nuclear conflict, civil rights, racial justice, and health care. We must now respond creatively to the global and local ecological crisis.

We call on The Riverside Church to affirm:

1. The sacred value of all forms of life and resources on our planet because the earth is the Lord's;
2. The interdependence of all life systems, natural and human, because they are essential to the functioning of the whole;
3. The responsibility of human beings to preserve life in its integrity and diversity while avoiding destruction and waste of resources;
4. The right of all to a healthy environment and sustainable ecosystems now and for generations to come;
5. The principles of justice and equity, which promote universal participation in sustainable societies and require overcoming environmental racism and disparities between rich and poor;
6. The holistic nature of human life--physical, intellectual, ethical, and spiritual--which requires simplicity, frugality, and respect for all life and the earth's resources.

Therefore, on this day, we call on The Riverside Church to commit itself to become a sustainable earth community congregation by the following means:

1. Developing spirituality through worship, reflection, and action that cherishes, preserves, and regenerates the earth with wonder and respect for all of life;
2. Practicing ecological accountability of all our institutional resources;
3. Changing our lifestyles and consumption patterns so that we become responsible stewards of the earth's resources;

Finally, we pledge to join with other religious and community groups in education and action programs that seek to achieve environmental justice and ecological sustainability for our common home on the planet earth.

Adopted: June 5, 1994; Reaffirmed: April 25, 2004