

“Caring for Creation—A Study from a Native American Perspective”

Resolution, United Methodist Church General Conference 2000.

WHEREAS, we worship and honor a God who is Creator and Sustainer of all we have and are, and seek to cherish and care for God’s creation, but have failed in our stewardship, and,

WHEREAS, in Christ God has healed our alienation from God and extended to us the first fruits of the reconciliation of all things, and

WHEREAS, God calls us to commit ourselves to extend Christ’s healing to a suffering creation and await the time when even the groaning of creation will be restored to wholeness, and

WHEREAS, we are called to commit ourselves to work vigorously to protect and heal that creation for the honor and glory of God, whom we become fully aware of through Christ;

WHEREAS, we and our children face a growing crisis in the health of that creation in which we live, through which, by God’s grace, we are sustained;

WHEREAS, we continue to degrade this creation through land degradation, deforestation, species extinction, water degradation, global toxification, the alteration of the atmosphere, and human and cultural degradation;

WHEREAS, many of the degradations are signs that we are pressing against the finite limits God has set for creation;

WHEREAS, with continued population growth, these degradations will become more severe and our responsibility is not only to bear and nurture children, but to nurture their home on earth and we recognize that human poverty is both a cause and a consequence of environment degradation;

WHEREAS, Native Americans whose religious cultures for centuries have taught them how to care for creation; and

WHEREAS, Native Americans through this unique perspective on caring for creation are convinced that environmental problems are more spiritual than technological;

Therefore, be it resolved, that the 2000 General Conference mandate the following:

(1) That there be developed a four-year study on “Caring for Creation from a Native American Perspective.”

(2) The General Conference directs the Native American Comprehensive Plan working with program agencies of The United Methodist Church and other Native American entities, to develop the study.

(3) That up to \$80,000 be allocated to complete the study with resources, and provide a report with recommendations to the 2004 General Conference.

“Cease Mountaintop Removal Coal Mining”

Resolution, United Methodist Church General Conference 2000.

WHEREAS, mountaintop removal coal mining is extremely profitable to the coal companies who practice it; and

WHEREAS, a large part of its profitability is that fewer miners are required than in the usual traditional methods of coal mining, and

WHEREAS, the entire tops of West Virginia mountains have been removed at Kayford, Kanawha County, at Blair, Boone County, at Sharpless, Logan County, and at Spruce River, Boone County, and at Wise County, Virginia, and mountaintop removal projects are proposed in Kentucky and Tennessee, and

WHEREAS, this removal of mountaintops has resulted in severe damage to homes of persons living in the nearby communities, along with damage to wells, the bombarding of their homes with “blast rock,” and massive amounts of dust, and

WHEREAS, the millions and millions of tons of earth and rock removed from the tops of mountains are dumped into the valleys next to these mountains, totally destroying the springs and headwaters of streams in these valleys, along with all plant and animal life in them, and

WHEREAS, mountaintop removal mining, by destroying home places, is also destroying ancestral ground, sacred ground where generations after generations have lived, gone to church, married, made and birthed babies, taken family meals, slept in peace, died and been buried, and

WHEREAS, staff employees of the West Virginia Department of Environmental Protection and Department of Natural Resources testified before the West Virginia Legislature in its 1998 session that the long-term effect of mountaintop removal is unstudied and unknown, and that it should be stopped until its long-term effects are known, and

WHEREAS, Psalm 24:1 firmly reminds us that “The earth is the Lord’s and the fullness thereof; and the world and they that dwell therein,” and

WHEREAS, the sanctity and sacredness of human life and the natural environment should not be destroyed in the name of corporate profit,

Therefore, be it resolved, that the General Conference of The United Methodist Church, meeting in Cleveland, Ohio in May of the year 2000, implore those state and national governmental and regulatory agencies involved in mountaintop removal mining to halt this practice until scientific study of its long-term effect on human life and the natural environment has been accomplished.