

# Building a More Sustainable Future

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- 1 *Whereas* the Earth is the Lord's and everything in it; and God desires for people to be faithful stewards of the land;
- 2 *Whereas* humanity's current use of fossil fuels is changing Earth's climate, raising average global temperatures, leading  
3 to more common and more extreme weather events, and harming people, animals and natural ecosystems;
- 4 *Whereas* the 2024 General Conference of The United Methodist Church passed legislation stating "that the people of  
5 The United Methodist Church call on every level of its denominational polity to lead the way by...striving continuously  
6 to reduce the carbon footprint and greenhouse gas emissions of local churches, districts, annual conferences,  
7 jurisdictions...and their respective ministries up to and beyond carbon neutral and net zero"<sup>1</sup>;
- 8 *Whereas* at our 2023 Annual Conference, the West Ohio Conference of The United Methodist Church committed to  
9 achieving Net Zero carbon emissions by 2050<sup>2</sup>; and, for this quadrennium, the West Ohio Just Mission Lead Team has  
10 identified environmental sustainability as its top priority;
- 11 *Whereas* the West Ohio Conference's Green Church Movement has developed a sustainability audit guide and a Green  
12 Church Pledge in order to mobilize creation care work at the ground level ([www.westohioumc.org/green-church-movement](http://www.westohioumc.org/green-church-movement));
- 13 *Whereas* building energy use is one of the greatest global contributors to the greenhouse gasses that drive climate  
14 change, due to the reliance on fossil fuels to heat, cool and light buildings worldwide;
- 15 *Whereas* many types of changes can be made to existing buildings to make them more environmentally sustainable,  
16 and the design of new buildings can often incorporate energy efficiency that is either cost neutral or will result in long  
17 term financial savings;
- 18 *Whereas* the District Board of Church Location and Building "shall review the plans of any church in the district which  
19 proposes to construct... a new church or educational building or a parsonage" (para. 2521);
- 20 *Therefore, be it resolved:* Effective January 1, 2026, each District Board of Church Location and Building within the  
21 West Ohio Conference will require any church that is planning to construct a new church or educational building or  
22 parsonage to present to the Board at least one design that incorporates renewable energy, and/or reduces the use of  
23 fossil fuels by maximizing energy efficiency, before the Board will approve any new plan;
- 24 *Be it resolved:* The West Ohio Conference urges every church to take immediate action to make their existing buildings  
25 more energy efficient; these steps could include installing LED light bulbs, smart thermostats, smart power strips, and  
26 energy efficient appliances, adding insulation or weatherization such as caulking and air sealing, using electric heat  
27 pumps or more energy efficient HVAC systems, utilizing renewable energy such as solar, purchasing green power, and/  
28 or other energy efficiency upgrades;
- 29 *Be it resolved:* Under the guidance of the Just Mission Lead Team, the West Ohio Conference shall offer resources to  
30 equip local churches to build a more sustainable future, provide green church trainings that empower congregations to

1 <https://umcreationjustice.org/creation-care-and-justice-legislation-2024/>

2 <https://www.westohioumc.org/sites/default/files/page/files/2023-book-reportsrevised.pdf>

- 1 take tangible steps toward faithful property decisions, and develop practical tools to assist congregations in reaching
- 2 their sustainability goals;
- 3 *Be it further resolved:* The West Ohio Annual Conference encourages all congregations to perform a sustainability
- 4 audit<sup>3</sup> on their existing properties to seek faithful ways to care for God's Creation; and to declare their commitment to
- 5 environmental sustainability by signing the West Ohio Conference Green Church Pledge.<sup>4</sup>

**Submitted by**

West Ohio Creation Care Task Force

West Ohio Just Mission Team

West Ohio Net Zero Team

**Related links**

[westohioumc.org/green-church-movement](https://westohioumc.org/green-church-movement)

[westohioumc.org/creation-care](https://westohioumc.org/creation-care)

[www.energystar.gov/products/green\\_power\\_options](https://www.energystar.gov/products/green_power_options)

<sup>3</sup> [https://www.westohioumc.org/sites/default/files/page/files/Green%20Church%20Sustainability%20Audit\\_WOC.pdf](https://www.westohioumc.org/sites/default/files/page/files/Green%20Church%20Sustainability%20Audit_WOC.pdf)

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.westohioumc.org/sites/default/files/page/files/Green%20Church%20Pledge.pdf>