



AME Church Climate Change Resolution

***Whereas* Jesus commands us to “...love one another” (John 13:34) and God has given us responsibility to care for His good creation (Genesis 1:28, Genesis 2:15).**

Whereas, the burning of fossil fuels is polluting our air and waters, warming the planet and putting our seasons out of balance with uncertain weather, extreme heat and freezing cold.

Whereas, of the millions of Americans who live close to polluting coal plants, 39 percent are low income communities and communities of color that are most impacted but not fairly represented in the decisionmaking processes that would lead to a clean, healthy, and prosperous environment; while we all deserve the health and economic benefits of the clean energy economy;

Whereas, climate change puts the health of children, elderly, and those with chronic illnesses like asthma at greater risk and disproportionately impacts African Americans, especially Black children who are twice as likely as white children to be hospitalized and four times as likely to die from asthma.ⁱ

Whereas, our faithful in Africa are the most vulnerable to the adverse impacts of climate change including floods, droughts, increased spread of infectious diseases, and changing weather patterns that challenge their ability to provide food and livelihood for millions of Africans.ⁱⁱ

Whereas, our faithful in the Caribbean are especially vulnerable to more extreme storms and rising sea levels in a warming world, and these conditions especially impact the rural and urban poor, many of whom live along the coasts or in informal settlements in high risk areas like flood plains and steep slopes (in Haiti 70% of the people live in informal settlements)ⁱⁱⁱ;

Whereas, our rural communities face particular obstacles in responding to climate change including physical isolation, limited economic diversity and higher poverty rates combined with an aging population that increase their vulnerability.^{iv}

Therefore, we stand together with many other leaders of faith who are calling for urgent action on climate change on behalf of the world’s poor and God’s creation, including Pope Francis (in [Laudato Si](#) and in historic addresses to the United Nations^v and U.S. Congress^{vi}), Ecumenical Patriarch Bartholomew^{vii}, and the Lausanne Movement’s^{viii} Cape Town Commitment,^{ix} which was affirmed by the World Evangelical Alliance^x).

We can move away from the dirty fuels that make us sick and shift toward safe, clean energy like wind and solar that help make every breath our neighbors and families take a healthy one, create new jobs that can’t be outsourced, help protect the least among us and preserve what God bestowed.

Therefore, we will:

Urge our leaders, ministries, congregations, laity and members of the AME church to engagewith their communities and elected officials to support the historic 2015 Paris Climate Agreement wherein 195 nations agreed to reduce global carbon emissions by 80%, limit temperature increases to 4 degrees F, provide \$100 billion in support to developing countries^{xi}; and support the national, state and local plans and policies that will be needed to make this commitment a reality;

Take action and promote solutions that will help our families and communities save money by making our congregations, homes, buildings, and transportation more energy efficient and that reduce the pollution that is damaging our climate;

Help build stronger communities that protect us from the harmful impacts of damage to our climate that we are already experiencing so that we and our children can live our best lives;

Commit to becoming climate literate as leaders and individuals; build awareness and support for climate solutions by inspiring and empowering our congregations and congregants with actionable information, powerful engagement tools and best practice resources including sermons, worship materials, articles and church discussions; and join and support the [Blessed Tomorrow](#) program as a resource and a means of sharing our work and witness with others.^{xii}

Respectfully submitted,
COMMISSION ON SOCIAL ACTION
AME CHURCH
Bishop Reginald T. Jackson, Chairperson
Mr. Reginald McGill, Vice Chair
Mrs. Jacquelyn Dupont-Walker, Director

Endnotes

- ⁱ National Institute of Allergy and Infectious Diseases [Asthma Facts](#), Site last Updated April 11, 2014
- ⁱⁱ Niang, I., O.C. Ruppel, M.A. Abdrabo, A. Essel, C. Lennard, J. Padgham, and P. Urquhart, 2014: Africa. In: *Climate Change 2014: Impacts, Adaptation, and Vulnerability. Part B: Regional Aspects. Contribution of Working Group II to the Fifth Assessment Report of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change*. Cambridge University Press, Cambridge, United Kingdom and New York, NY, USA, pp. 1202-1204. On the Web: https://ipcc-wg2.gov/AR5/images/uploads/WGIIAR5-Chap22_FINAL.pdf
- ⁱⁱⁱ World Bank Group. 2014. *Turn Down the Heat : Confronting the New Climate Normal*. Washington, DC: World Bank. © World Bank. License: CC BY-NC-ND 3.0 IGO, Executive Summary pp. xxv-xxvi <https://openknowledge.worldbank.org/handle/10986/20595>
- ^{iv} Hales, D., W. Hohenstein, M. D. Bidwell, C. Landry, D. McGranahan, J. Molnar, L. W. Morton, M. Vasquez, and J. Jadin, 2014: Ch. 14: Rural Communities. *Climate Change Impacts in the United States: The Third National Climate Assessment*, J. M. Melillo, Terese (T.C.) Richmond, and G. W. Yohe, Eds., U.S. Global Change Research Program, 333-349. doi:10.7930/J01Z429C; p. 338. On the Web: <http://nca2014.globalchange.gov/report/sectors/rural-communities>
- ^v UN Live Web TV, September 25, 2015 [Address By His Holiness Pope Francis - General Assembly: 3rd Plenary Meeting, 70th Session](#)
- ^{vi} *The Washington Post*. Sept. 24, 2015 [Transcript of Pope Francis' Speech to Congress](#)
- ^{vii} [Message by His All Holiness Patriarch Bartholomew to The Interfaith Summit on Climate Change, Organised by the United Nations, in Association with the World Council of Churches and Religions for Peace](#), New York September 21-22, 2014
- ^{viii} <https://www.lausanne.org/about-the-movement>
- ^{ix} The Lausanne Movement, October 1, 2010: [The Cape Town Commitment](#), The Third Lausanne Conference on World Evangelization, p. 31. *Christianity Today* called this gathering the most representative gathering of Christian leaders in the 2,000 year history of the Christian movement. From p. 31 of the Commitment:
“We encourage Christians worldwide to:
a. Adopt lifestyles that renounce habits of consumption that are destructive or polluting;
b. Exert legitimate means to persuade governments to put moral imperatives above political expediency on issues of environmental destruction and potential climate change;
c. Recognize and encourage the missional calling both of (i) Christians who engage in the proper use of the earth’s resources for human need and welfare through agriculture, industry and medicine, and (ii) Christians who engage in the protection and restoration of the earth’s habitats and species through conservation and advocacy. Both share the same goal for both serve the same Creator, Provider and Redeemer.”
- ^x World Evangelical Alliance, January 28, 2011; [The WEA Fully Supports the Cape Town Commitment](#)
- ^{xi} European Commission, [Paris Agreement](#)
- ^{xii} See blessedtomorrow.org for resources and to join.