



**COUNCIL OF BISHOPS RESPONSE TO
UM Creation Justice Open Letter to UM Bishops
UM Creation Justice Movement [Open Letter](#) to UM Bishops
November 4, 2025**

Dear People called United Methodists,

In our scriptures, after the flood waters covered the earth and then dried up, God spoke to Noah and stated there was now a new covenant between God and humans and all of creation. God placed a bow in the sky saying,

The bow will be in the clouds, and upon seeing it I will remember the enduring covenant between God and every living being of all the earth's creatures. (Genesis 9:16)

The covenant promise was to do no harm to humans and to all of God's creation. This is the covenantal relationship we live within. God promises no harm, and as people who follow the ways of God, we too are committed to do no harm to any part of God's creation. For this reason, we must work as people of faith to keep God's creation in a state of health and goodness. We work to prevent all harm by our wrongful actions, our greed, or our inattention to the beauty and goodness of God's world. While the Council of Bishops has engaged in this discussion over time, including statements in 2009 and 2021, now is the time to once again address our care for God's world.

Urgency of this moment

In 2024, global temperatures rose to an average of 1.55°C, which is past the 1.5°C (2.7°F) lower limit that was agreed upon at the 2015 COP21 Paris Agreement. A science journal, *The Lancet*, noted a comprehensive report declaring, "Rising global heat is now killing one person a minute around the world." *The Lancet* also states "...the world's addiction to fossil fuels also causes toxic air pollution, wildfires and the spread of diseases such as dengue fever, and millions each year are dying owing to the failure to tackle global heating." ([The Guardian, October 28, 2025](#)). While the greatest responsibility for the damage to our ecosystem lies with developed countries, we lament that those who suffer the primary impact of harm are those who have contributed the least to the problem, developing countries, communities of color, communities with economic stress, children, and future generations. We can no longer afford to ignore our covenant with God to care for creation and humanity.

Our [Social Principles](#) have also stated the urgency of this moment:

We acknowledge that unsustainable human activities have placed the entirety of God's creation in peril. (Para. 160, pg. 110)

Specifically, the *Social Principles* address the destruction of ecosystems, global warming and climate change, and the dependence on fossil fuels. Further, we acknowledge the

harms of environmental racism, food injustice, and environmental toxins which calls us to create sustainable policies and practices in our communities. We understand that harmful actions are counter to our responsibility as stewards of creation.

2024 General Conference Decisions

It is our time to implement the decisions made at our 2024 General Conference. We agreed to:

- Create Green Teams in churches, districts, and conferences
- Implement sustainable practices in managing church properties as a recognition of their sacredness
- Join UM agencies and bishops in the commitment to Net Zero Green House Gas Emissions
- Establish conference Caretakers of God's Creation Coordinators
- Implement sustainable practices at Annual Conferences

These are the first steps we committed to in our work at General Conference.

Simple steps to action

In addition to the above commitments, the bishops of The United Methodist Church are inviting all United Methodist local churches and ministries to:

- Create Green Teams in each local church/ministry**
- Organize one church-wide action around creation care at least once a year**
- Study together for deeper understanding of the work of creation care and Justice**
- Engage with partners in the Ecumenical Decade for Climate Justice Action**

We will continue to support, advocate, give voice and lead

The bishops of The United Methodist Church commit to giving continued support in this endeavor to do no harm to God's world, to continue to advocate for creation justice, and to give voice and leadership to our commitment to care for all of God's creation.

We invite you into this urgent work. Together, and across the globe, United Methodists can make a difference and bring about health, sustainability, and care for the garden that we were created into. Please share this letter with your churches as soon as you receive it. This is our urgent work together. This is the way we respond to our call to be good stewards of God's creation and to fulfill our commitment to do no harm. This is how we live into our vision to ***love boldly, serve joyfully, and lead courageously.***

In love and care for all God's world,
The Council of Bishops of The UMC