

1 **GA-2338**

2
3 **CONCERNING FOOD WASTE, FOOD INSECURITY, AND ENVIRONMENTAL**
4 **JUSTICE**

5
6 **(Sense-of-the-Assembly)**
7

8 **WHEREAS**, the stories of Creation in Genesis teach us that all of Creation is good, that
9 food is provided for all living things, and that human beings are put in the Garden to till
10 and keep it; and

11
12 **WHEREAS**, Earth is a delicate ecosystem that requires the balance and sacrifice of all
13 living creatures to sustain life, yet human actions have tipped the balance to rapidly
14 accelerate climate change to the point of creating unhealthy and unsustainable living
15 conditions for all creatures, including humans; and

16
17 **WHEREAS**, the story of “the least of these” in Matthew 25 teaches us to feed all who
18 are hungry in the same way that we would readily feed Jesus; and

19
20 **WHEREAS**, climate change negatively affects agriculture and fisheries by decreasing
21 food harvests causing greater food insecurity and loss of food worker livelihoods;¹ and

22
23 **WHEREAS**, climate impacts on food systems are projected to increase occurrences of
24 malnutrition and diet-related mortality;² and

25
26 **WHEREAS**, thirty to forty percent of all food produced in the United States is wasted,³
27 accounts for about a quarter of the trash sent to landfills,⁴ and generates the same
28 amount of greenhouse gas emissions as 32.6 million cars;⁵ and

29
30 **WHEREAS**, beef produces more than five times the amount of greenhouse gas
31 emissions per serving as poultry and more than sixty times that of potatoes and
32 carrots;⁶ and

33
34 **WHEREAS**, many cities in the United States have demonstrated the ability to
35 dramatically decrease greenhouse gas emissions in landfills by providing city-wide
36 composting programs;⁷

37
38 **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the General Assembly of the Christian Church
39 (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada, meeting in Louisville, Kentucky,
40 July 29 – August 1, 2023 urges all Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) congregations,
41 organizations, ministries, and institutions to take seriously our responsibility to care for
42 all Creation and “the least of these” by reducing our production of greenhouse gases
43 and food waste that contribute to climate change and create unjust, unhealthy, and
44 unsustainable living conditions for all creatures, including humans; and

45
46 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the General Assembly urges all Christian Church
47 (Disciples of Christ) congregations, organizations, ministries, and institutions to take
48 seriously our responsibility to care for all Creation and “the least of these” by advocating

49 for public policies and/or personal actions that create just, healthy, and sustainable life
50 on Earth; and

51
52 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the General Assembly urges congregations of the
53 Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to educate our members about food waste,
54 greenhouse gases, composting, and environmental justice; and

55
56 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the General Assembly urges congregations of the
57 Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to take steps toward sustainable living such as:

- 58 • Compost food scraps and coffee grounds rather than throwing them away;
- 59 • Create a plan to share leftover food following church dinners;
- 60 • Encourage potluck dinners using plant-based foods;
- 61 • Serve water from refillable pitchers;
- 62 • Eliminate the purchase of disposable plates, cups, utensils, napkins, and
63 tablecloths;
- 64 • Create a culture of dishwashing as a spiritual practice and time of fellowship;
- 65 • Convert church lawns into community vegetable gardens;
- 66 • Provide space for local farmers' markets and food distribution centers;
- 67 • Utilize established resources provided by Green Chalice; and

68
69 **BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED** that the General Assembly urges members of the
70 Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to take personal steps toward sustainable living
71 such as:

- 72 • Compost food scraps and coffee grounds rather than throwing them away;
- 73 • Purchase and prepare only the amount of food needed;
- 74 • Manage food storage by eating foods before they are no longer edible;
- 75 • Bring home leftovers from restaurant meals;
- 76 • Replace one beef meal per week with poultry, fish, legumes, vegetables, or
77 pasta;
- 78 • Utilize established resources provided by Green Chalice; and

79
80 **FINALLY, BE IT RESOLVED** that the General Assembly urges congregations of the
81 Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) to work faithfully with local governments to create
82 affordable composting programs in our neighborhoods.

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85 Fireside Christian Church, Aurora, Colorado

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89 **BACKGROUND**

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91 Climate change affects all of us, but especially the poorest and most vulnerable. The
92 task of reversing it – or even slowing it down – is overwhelming. Such a task requires
93 the church's prophetic voice to till and keep the garden and its faithful action to care for
94 the least of these.

95

96 Methane, a greenhouse gas emitted in landfills as food decomposes, is 80 times more
97 powerful than carbon dioxide when it comes to trapping heat in the Earth's atmosphere.
98
99 Remarkably, rich countries in North America and Europe waste as much food as sub-
100 Saharan Africa produces,⁸ a clear example of squandering the Earth's resources
101 without regard for those who are hungry.
102
103 Eliminating food waste by producing less, preparing just what is needed, and
104 composting food scraps instead of throwing them in the landfill is a relatively easy way
105 to make a big difference.
106
107 Working with local governments to create affordable composting programs is a faithful
108 response to our role as stewards who till and keep the garden.
109
110 Our actions make a difference.⁹ By taking care of the Garden, we care for the least of
111 these.

**The General Board recommends that the General Assembly ADOPT GA-2338.
(Discussion Time: 12 minutes)**

¹ Nina Krebs, "Fact Sheet - Food and Water," October 2022,
https://www.ipcc.ch/report/ar6/wg2/downloads/outreach/IPCC_AR6_WGII_FactSheet_FoodAndWater.pdf.

² Nina Krebs, "Fact Sheet - Food and Water."

³ "8 Facts About How Food Waste and Global Hunger Are Connected," *World Food Program USA*, accessed January 4, 2023, <https://www.wfpusa.org/articles/8-facts-to-know-about-food-waste-and-hunger/>.

⁴ Megan Marples, "Composting Has Some Benefit to the Environment, If Done Right. Here's How," *CNN*, last modified September 14, 2022, <https://www.cnn.com/2022/09/14/world/composting-benefits-methane-environment-scn/index.html>.

⁵ "Fight Climate Change by Preventing Food Waste," *World Wildlife Fund*, accessed January 4, 2023, <https://www.worldwildlife.org/stories/fight-climate-change-by-preventing-food-waste>.

⁶ "Carbon Footprint Factsheet," *Center for Sustainable Systems*, accessed January 4, 2023, <https://css.umich.edu/publications/factsheets/sustainability-indicators/carbon-footprint-factsheet>.

⁷ "How To Reduce Your City's Climate Footprint? The Answer May Be In Your Trash Can," accessed January 4, 2023, <https://nextcity.org/urbanist-news/how-to-reduce-city-climate-footprint-zero-waste>.

⁸ "8 Facts About How Food Waste and Global Hunger Are Connected."

⁹ "UN Says Ozone Layer Slowly Healing, Hole to Mend by 2066," *NBC News*, last modified January 9, 2023, <https://www.nbcnews.com/science/environment/un-says-ozone-layer-slowly-healing-hole-mend-2066-rcna64927>.