



The United Church of Canada General Council

GC38 Earth Charter (2003-08-10- GC38-095)

True Document Date

August 9, 2003

That the 38th General Council receive the following resolutions and petitions and take the actions contained therein: Petitions 64, **65**, 68, 76, and 90.

GC38 2003 ROP, p. 90

Petition 65

Title: Earth Charter

Originating Source: Alberni Valley United Church, Comox-Nanaimo Presbytery

Official Board Action: Concurrence

Presbytery Action: Concurrence

Conference Action: Concurrence

Funding Implications: Basic cost of having material in stock at the distribution centre

Source Of Funding: Regular budgets

Staffing Implications: Minimal

THEOLOGICAL RATIONALE:

As people called to be the church we have been entrusted, along with all other creatures, to take care of the earth and all that is in it. Our scriptures tell us caring is an intricate component of our faith and the life of Jesus Christ. Over and over again passages like: *The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it, The world, and those who live in it.* Psalm 24:1; *For in him (Jesus Christ) all things in heaven and on earth were created, things visible and invisible...all things have been created through him and for him.* Colossians 1:16; and *In the Spirit, we live and move and have our being.* Acts 17:28 continue to enliven our faith and challenge us as faith-full people to examine how we live out the Good News in our world in tangible ways. It is this understanding that finds expression in our theology when we speak of a God of compassion, care, nurturance, and creation. The Church has linked God to all of creation, organic and non-organic, in such a way that it is a cornerstone of our faith.

WHEREAS since union in 1925 The United Church of Canada has reflected a core understanding and theology of social justice incorporating both an eco-theology and a vision of ecumenical relationships that would enable all of God's creatures to coexist in multi faceted harmonic relationship based on respect for the diversification of all creation; and

WHEREAS in 1995 The United Church of Canada's Creed was changed to reflect the continuing and growing concern of how fundamental both social justice and a sound ecological ethic are in the life of The United Church of Canada with the addition of the line "to live with respect in creation", thus giving the church *A New Creed* and

WHEREAS *The Earth Charter* "is a declaration of the fundamental principles for building a just, sustainable, and peaceful global society in the 21st century" that evolved from the 1987 United Nations World Commission on Environment and Development. The Charter speaks to four foci that create "a shared vision of basic values to provide an ethical foundation for the emerging world community" which are: Earth Our Home, The Global Situation, The Challenges Ahead, and Universal

Responsibility and reflects within it the teachings of all the major faith traditions from around the world; and

WHEREAS It has become increasingly difficult to express in tangible ways an understanding of an eco-ethic that is faith based and accessible to the wider church community; and

WHEREAS *The Earth Charter* provides a concrete framework that not only upholds many of the tenets of our faith, but also provides a mechanism through which dialogue and progress towards right relations can occur.

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that Comox-Nanaimo Presbytery Petition the 38th General Council of The United Church of Canada through BC Conference to endorse the Earth Charter and use it as a tool to discern how we live "with respect in creation."

GC38 2003 ROP, p. 480

Document Type: [Social Policy](#)

General Council: [GC43 or earlier](#)

Originating Body: [Other](#)