

Food Forestry Resolution

Whereas climate change presents a clear and present challenge— not only to earth’s various environments but also to the great array of societies, cultures and communities that inhabit this green and blue planet,

Whereas an endemic negative lethargy, promoted by companies and landed interests that benefit from inaction on climate justice issues, has tended to stifle effective collective solutions to the problem of diminishing natural resources,

Whereas many young people—as well as elders and other potential change-makers—are succumbing to despair, concerning reversal of the downward spiral and shortening time-line that must lead to positive turn-around of this trend.

Whereas we as Christians and as a church are mandated to steward and share the rich and nurturing garden given us as our home.

Whereas the Ethiopian Orthodox church has provided a successful template for preserving, restoring and maintaining a “church forest” that already encourages green growth, fresh air, and shade in a cattle-ravaged countryside.

Whereas the ELCA in its 1993 Social Statement *Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope and Justice* has recognized the danger of ongoing “damage to the environment that eventually will affect most people through increased conflict over scarce resources, decline in food security, and greater vulnerability to disease,”

Whereas the humanity is one family, regardless of labels and conditions that appear to divide us,

Whereas food forestry or forest gardening has provided insight and energy (and free food) toward counteracting toxic climate change and local hunger,

Let it be resolved that the Oregon Synod develop an intergenerational, interdenominational, and interfaith working model of a “food forest” on its own grounds and/or in cooperation with one or more other congregations and organizations.

Let it be further resolved that working group be set up, both to gather and share ideas in designing and replicating this project in other settings. Let this work-play-pray group be established to explore practical means and ceremonial ways of facing the issue of climate change and embracing the energy and insight of spiritual activist partners already immersed in addressing climate change.

Toward this end, let this group network with pioneers on this subject, such as Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon’s “Green Circles,” *Eloheh* (wisdom from North American traditional indigenous knowledge about the land), the “Climate Café” project of Christ the Healer, UCC, etc.

Let this group be formed by the end of May, 2022 to meet monthly and report back to next year’s assembly. Let a timeline be established, in which working group members

covenant to make contact with some of the above-mentioned climate activist groups. Let an area be designated on synod grounds for an exploratory community “forest garden. Let links be made with other congregations contemplating a food forestry project (eg., Smyrna UCC, Prince of Life ELCA)

Finally, let it be resolved that a paper be written, explaining the why and how of food forestry as a vital ministry and offering regular progress reports from this working group be publicized in the Synod newsletter and other venues.