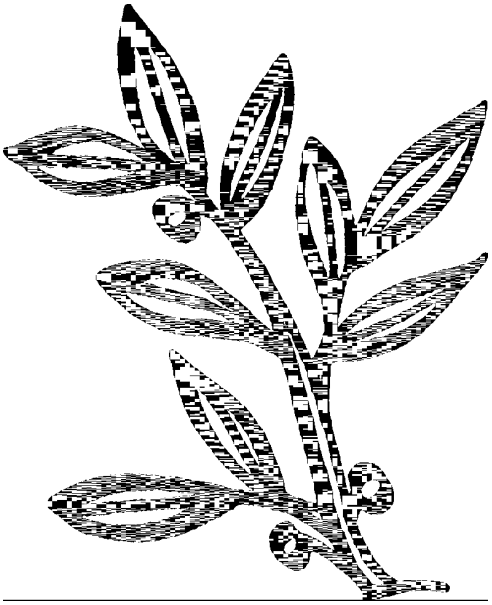
RESTORING CREATION
For Ecology and Justice



A Report
Adopted By The 202nd General Assembly (1990)
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

RESTORING CREATION FOR ECOLOGY AND JUSTICE

A **REPORT**
ADOPTED BY THE 202ND GENERAL ASSEMBLY
(1990)
PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

THE OFFICE OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY
THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)
LOUISVILLE, KENTUCKY

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Distribution Management Service (DMS),
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Louisville, KY 40202-1396,
or by calling 1-800-524-2612 outside of Louisville;
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September 1990

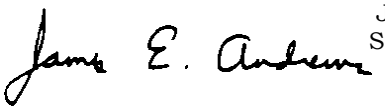
To All Governing Bodies, Entities, and Colleges of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

Dear Friends:

The 202nd General Assembly (1990) adopted the document entitled "Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice" along with its recommendations and instructed me to distribute it widely throughout the Presbyterian church, including its colleges, sessions, and agencies. It not only provides a thoughtful review of the deteriorating ecology of our entire world, but also provides guidance for ways in which we can participate in God's redemption of the creation.

Please help us make known the availability of this document to your colleagues, parishioners, and other Presbyterians who are known to you, sharing with them the ordering information which is to be found on the copyright page of this publication.

Sincerely,



James E. Andrews,
Stated Clerk of the General Assembly

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Resolution on Restoring Creation

The Committee on Social Witness Policy submits the following report on "Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice" to the 202nd General Assembly (1990) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), and urges the assembly

to adopt the following portions of the report:

—"Call to Restore the Creation";

—affirmations of the church's ecology and justice responsibility;

—recommendations for social policy;

—recommendations for church life and program;

to receive the background sections, appendixes to the report, and "Highlights of the Report";

to approve the report as a whole for churchwide use; and

to direct the Office of the General Assembly to print the entire report on "Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice" and to distribute it in a timely manner to

—all ministers or clerks of session of the PC(USA);

—leaders of other communions;

—members of U.S. Congress;

—appropriate persons in the executive branch of the federal government; and

—selected leaders of organizations working for eco-justice.

CALL TO RESTORE THE CREATION

Creation cries out in this time of ecological crisis.

—Abuse of nature and injustice to people place the future in grave jeopardy.

—Population triples in this century.

—Biological systems suffer diminished capacity to renew themselves.

—Finite minerals are mined and pumped as if inexhaustible.

—Peasants are forced onto marginal lands, and soil erodes.

—The rich-poor gap grows wider.

—Wastes and poisons exceed nature's capacity to absorb them.

—Greenhouse gases pose threat of global warming.

Therefore, God calls the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to

—respond to the cry of creation, human and nonhuman;

—engage in the effort to make the 1990s the "turnaround decade," not only for reasons of prudence or survival, but because the endangered planet is God's creation; and

—draw upon all the resources of biblical faith and the Reformed tradition for empowerment and guidance in this adventure.

The church has powerful reason for engagement in restoring God's creation:

—God's works in creation are too wonderful, too ancient, too beautiful, too good to be desecrated.

—Restoring creation is God's own work in our time, in which God comes both to judge and to restore.

—The Creator-Redeemer calls faithful people to become engaged with God in keeping and healing the creation, human and nonhuman.

—Human life and well-being depend upon the flourishing of other life and the integrity of the life-supporting processes that God has ordained.

—The love of neighbor, particularly "the least" of Christ's brothers and sisters, requires action to stop the poisoning, the erosion, the wastefulness that are causing suffering and death.

—The future of our children and their children and all who come after is at stake.

—In this critical lime of transition to a new era, God's new doing may be discerned as a call to earth-keeping, to justice, and to community.

Therefore, the 202nd General Assembly affirms that:

—Response to God's call requires a new faithfulness, for which guidance may be found in norms that illuminate the contemporary meaning of God's steadfast love for the world.

—Earth-keeping today means insisting on sustainability—the ongoing capacity of natural and social systems to thrive together—which requires human beings to practice wise, humble, responsible stewardship, after the model of servanthood that we have in Jesus.

—Justice today requires participation, the inclusion of all members of the human family in obtaining and enjoying the Creator's gifts for sustenance.

—Justice also means sufficiency, a standard upholding the claim of all to have enough—to be met through equitable sharing and organized efforts to achieve that end.

—Community in our time requires the nurture of solidarity, leading to steadfastness in standing with companions, victims, and allies, and to the realization of the church's potential as a community of support for adventurous faithfulness.

On the basis of these findings and affirmations the 202nd General Assembly (1990)

—recognizes and accepts restoring creation as a central concern of the church, to be incorporated into its life and mission at every level;

—understands this to be a new focus for initiative in mission program and a concern with major implications for infusion into theological work, evangelism, education, justice and peacemaking, worship and liturgy, public witness, global mission, and congregational service and action at the local community level;

—recognizes that restoring creation is not a short-term concern to be handled in a few years, but a continuing task to which the nation and the world must give attention and commitment, and which has profound implications for the life, work, and witness of Christian people and church agencies;

—approaches the task with covenant seriousness—"If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God . . . then you shall live" (Deut. 30:16)—and with practical awareness that cherishing God's creation enhances the ability of the church to achieve its other goals.

1. The 202nd General Assembly (1990) believes God calls the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to engage in the tasks of restoring creation in the "turnaround decade" now beginning and for as long as God continues to call people of faith to undertake these tasks.

2. RESTORING CREATION

FOR ECOLOGY AND JUSTICE

Bless the Lord, 0 My soul!

O Lord my God, thou art very great!

Thou makest springs to gush
forth in the valleys; they flow
between the hills,

they give drink to every
beast of the field. Thou
dost cause the grass to
grow

And plants for man and
woman to cultivate.

O Lord, how manifold are
thy works!

In wisdom hast thou made
them all;

the earth is full of thy
creatures.

These all look to thee

to give them their food in due season.

When thou openest thy hand, they are filled with good

things.

May the glory of the Lord endure forever,

may the Lord rejoice in the Lord's own works.

I will sing praise to my God while I have being.

These lines from the 104th Psalm lyrically reveal a view of creation that permeates the biblical story. The creation throbs with the life that the Creator bestows. Streams and fields nourish the beasts and the people. All God's works tell of God's wisdom and glory, and God rejoices in them all. The human creature responds with joy and praise.

The Psalms and other books of the Bible celebrate a radical relatedness. The Creator-Redeemer is so interrelated with the people and the nonhuman creation that together they all rejoice—or mourn. In the face of obstacles to the fulfillment of creation, human and nonhuman—obstacles of sin, suffering, violence, and oppression—they all mourn together.

In the context of Hebrew tradition, the Apostle Paul writes that "the whole creation has been groaning in travail together until now." The creation has been in "bondage to decay;' "subjected to futility." But it waits "with eager longing" to share in "the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom. 8:19-22). Paul's words are especially evocative in our time. Creation groans in agony from human abuse. Its bondage will begin to end as the children of God discover the meaning of their own freedom and stewardship in Jesus Christ, who restores creation to lively glory (Rom. 8:18). In this new time, we are called to follow Christ in the work of restoring creation.

PART I.
CREATION'S CRY: THE CRISIS OF ECOLOGY AND JUSTICE

The term "eco-justice"—ecology and justice—means ecological health and wholeness together with social and economic justice. It means the well-being of all humankind on a thriving earth. The vision of eco-justice, as a goal toward which to move, lifts up and affirms the church's longstanding commitment to justice and peace and adds a major new insight for our time: that justice and peace among human beings are inseparable from right relationships with and within the natural order.

Creation's cry rises from the "eco-justice crisis" that marks the extraordinary time in which we live. We stand at a historic turning point: abuse of nature and injustice to people place the future in grave jeopardy. The crisis, however, is not a moment of doom, as though a catastrophic fate were sealed. Our time of turning is an opening to a new era. Its shape will be determined by the responses of nations and people to unprecedented dangers but also to constructive possibilities. The ultimate "glorious liberty," to which Paul looks forward, may be partially realized, even in our time, as the sons and the daughters of God say "Yes" to the Creator-Redeemer's call to restore the creation.

The first two chapters of Genesis illumine the right relationship of human beings to their Creator and the nonhuman creation. God put man and woman, created in God's own image, in the garden "to till it and to keep it."

"Tilling" symbolizes everything we humans do to draw sustenance from nature. It requires individuals to form communities of cooperation and to establish systematic arrangements (economies) for satisfying their needs. Tilling includes not only agriculture but mining and manufacturing and exchanging, all of which depend necessarily on taking and using the stuff of God's creation.

"Keeping" the creation means tilling with care—maintaining the capacity of the creation to provide the sustenance for which the tilling is done. This, we now have come to understand, means making sure that the world of nature may flourish, with all its intricate, interacting systems upon which life depends.

But humans have failed to till with care. The eco-justice crisis is the consequence of tilling without keeping, together with the unfair distribution of the fruits of tilling. The Creator's

gifts for sustenance have not been taken carefully and shared equitably.

The Presbyterian Eco-Justice Task Force prepared a resource and study book, "Keeping and Healing the Creation," which became available to the church in June 1989. The introduction to this resource sets forth three key points that shape the entire document. These are

1. the twofold reason for human beings to care about the natural world: their own constant, unavoidable dependence on it, and nature's own intrinsic value;

2. the close connection of ecology and economics, so that, properly understood, they are inseparable;

3. the global crisis that entails both the degradation of nature and the inequities within human societies (most particularly, the inequities of access to nature's sustenance).

The first three chapters provide a systematic summary or "profile" of the eco-justice crisis. In the following summary paragraphs, we again call attention to the major components of the crisis.

A. Renewable Resources

Four basic biological systems support life by providing food and fiber: croplands, grazing lands, forests, and fisheries. These are gifts for sustenance that could be kept available indefinitely with proper care. In our time, however, these systems are severely strained by human demands, human numbers, and abusive treatment. The human species threatens to overrun their carrying capacity.

Soil erosion—in excess of nature's capacity to replace it—has become a worldwide epidemic. It afflicts one-third of U.S. cropland. In much of the rest of the world the situation is worse. Expanding deserts, denuded hills, and inappropriate farming methods have become a major factor in the declining ability of African nations to feed themselves.

As human beings demand too much from natural systems—by taking too much or taking it without care, and often poisoning these systems with pollution—the abused creation cannot provide the gifts that the Creator intended to be continuously available for the sustenance of all. Not only is this happening worldwide; it most seriously affects the members of the human family who have long been denied a fair share of the

sustenance available. Global systems of economic development and the population explosion have placed large regions under severe environmental stress, leaving people struggling to survive and hard put to maintain the land with care.

B. Nonrenewable Resources

By the development and improvement of tools human beings have vastly extended the capacity of the planet to carry their growing numbers. But tools can be utilized only by the expenditure of energy. Modern development and the high material standards of living that it makes possible entail an enormous energy budget. The sources of energy that make up that budget and sustain industrial, technological civilization are overwhelmingly nonrenewable. Roughly 75 percent of energy expended in the U.S. comes from oil and gas, and well over half of U.S. oil deposits have been used up. Studies indicate that U.S. stores of oil and gas will be effectively empty by 2020, and that world supplies may then last only two or three decades more. The decline in petroleum prices that occurred in the 1980s has brought only a very temporary return of the era of cheap energy, which had come to an abrupt termination in the previous decade.

Industry also depends heavily on nonfuel minerals—iron, copper, aluminum, tin, and scores of others. In most cases, the high quality deposits that once existed have been exhausted, and it is necessary to draw upon ores of progressively lower quality. As their quality declines, more and more energy is required for mining and refining. The availability and affordability of many nonrenewable resources that we have taken for granted are thus tied tightly to the availability and affordability of energy. In addition, the extraction of nonrenewable resources has proceeded without full consideration of the impact on workers, communities, and the land.

C. Water

Humans are making excessive demands upon, and doing reckless damage to, the lakes and streams, the ground water, and even the oceans. Poorly planned and inefficient irrigation systems not only waste water and deplete aquifers, but lead to soil degradation from waterlogging and salinization. Industrial discharges, agricultural runoff, and municipal sewage contaminate rivers and lakes. Pesticide residues and landfill leachate seep into ground water. As rivers reach coastal areas,

the estuaries are polluted, with great injury to aquatic life. The sounds and the bays and the great oceans themselves suffer from the outflow, and from the spilling and dumping of oil, garbage, toxic chemicals, and radioactive wastes.

Meanwhile, most Third World nations cannot afford the systems that would provide safe drinking water and acceptable forms of sanitation. Some twenty-five million people, three-fifths of them children, die each year from diseases bred in or spread by water.

D. Solid Waste

Americans produce approximately 230 million tons of garbage per year. This breaks down into 5.1 pounds per person per day. Altogether, it is more than China produces with four times as many people; the per capita amount is roughly twice that of France and West Germany. Suddenly, almost everywhere in the U.S., municipalities are up against the problem of getting rid of the trash and stemming its flow. Thousands of landfills have been closed—as too full or too prone to leak. Virtually every new landfill siting generates protracted controversy.

In many places there is a rush to build incinerators, but this too runs into powerful public opposition. Critics and other citizens are concerned about the expense of such facilities and about health risks from fumes and the residue of ash that must be landfilled. Moreover, the efficient operation of incinerators, designed to convert waste to energy, requires large amounts of trash, and may constitute a disincentive to recycling. The movement to recycle instead of dumping or burning much of the waste stream has gained great momentum as a way to save costs and to recover valuable materials.

E. Hazardous Wastes

Apart from municipal waste, U.S. industry generates at least 250 million tons of hazardous waste each year, about one ton per person. The problem of hazardous wastes is largely a problem of synthetic chemicals—thousands of products, many of them toxic, generated by an industry that has grown phenomenally since World War II.

The greatest risks come from pesticides and a broad range of chemicals used in industrial processes. In numerous ways the protection of people from these risks falls short: inadequate safety precautions for workers, accidental releases from

chemical plants, improper and illegal disposal of wastes, excessive use of toxic products or use without adequate protective gear (as is often the case with farm workers), pesticide residues on fruits and vegetables, and the export to developing countries of pesticides (e.g., DDT) considered too dangerous to use in the United States.

The industrialized world is barely beginning to catch up with the problem of unsafe disposal. Tens of thousands of active and abandoned sites in the U.S. demand attention. The cost of cleanup could reach $100 billion and more.

Comparable problems surround the disposal of radioactive wastes from nuclear weapons production, nuclear energy plants, hospitals, universities, and research centers. Local opposition to the siting of facilities for disposal or storage of radioactive waste reflects a lack of public confidence in assurances by technical experts and public officials that such facilities can be maintained safely for the indefinite time required. Many geologists have expressed concern that underground storage may lead at some future time to serious public health problems, and "permanent" disposal or storage sites still have not been established despite the continuing proliferation of radioactive wastes.

F. Population

When the twentieth century began, the human population on this planet was considerably short of two billion. Now it has gone well beyond five billion. While the rate of growth has dropped sharply in the industrialized world and declined slightly in developing countries, the annual growth in absolute numbers—close to 100 million people—is greater than ever before. Even with some additional declines in Third World growth rates, we can expect a world population around six billion at the end of the century. Ninety percent of the increase will occur in countries whose populations are predominantly poor.

The human impact upon the environment depends on how we relate to nature (in terms of resources used and pollution generated) and on how many of us there are. Obviously the people in rich countries use many more resources and generate far more waste than do the inhabitants of the rest of the world. But the projected growth of population in poor countries will exacerbate the already serious problems those countries face. These environmental problems include soil erosion,

decertification, deforestation, habitat loss for other species, lack of access to land, deplorable sanitation, and urban squalor.

G. Nonhuman Creatures

In the face of a projected doubling of human numbers in four decades or so, the question is not only whether the planet can carry those numbers, but what other creatures it can carry as well. The expansion of the human species threatens the entire realm of animals and plants, the total biotic community interacting with nonliving forces. The essential lesson from the study of ecology is that the individual of whatever species depends upon the healthy functioning of its community and that the human community depends upon the vitality and stability of the biotic community.

The tale of Noah and the flood asserts God's will for the life of all kinds of creatures. It tells of God's covenant with "every living creature," which is to be for "all future generations" (Gen. 9:10,12).

The eco-justice crisis displays the anthropocentric attitude that only human interests really count. As economic development proceeds and cities expand, developers give little attention to the consequences for nonhuman creatures whose habitats are lost or threatened—birds, bears, elephants, the marine life in wetlands, and the many endangered species.

When other forms of life are regarded as having a significance that transcends their merely instrumental value to humans, questions arise concerning much that goes on: cruelty done to wildlife for the sake of profit or sport; inhumane treatment of domestic animals, including the "factory farming" of livestock; often unwarranted use of animals in research and testing; development of biotechnology (the genetic alteration of plants and animals) which has unassessed potential, not only for food production, but for new inequities and new forms of disrespect for living beings; resistance to strong measures to curb "acid rain," despite the mounting evidence of damage to trees, lakes, and fish; and massive destruction of the world's forests, accompanied by the extinction of enormous numbers of plant and animal species.

H. Global Warming

The "greenhouse gases" in the atmosphere are trapping heat at the earth's surface and, according to many climatologists, causing a gradual increase in global average temperatures. The phenomena involved are exceedingly

complex, and scientific opinion varies with respect to the reliability of models indicating climate change. The lack of certainty about projections, however, should not be an excuse for complacency for two reasons. First, delay in responding to the threat in the hope that it is not real would mean loss of precious opportunity to reduce the danger if it is real. If we wait for certainty we shall wait too long. Second, the measures to be taken to forestall the danger would have benefits in terms of conservation, economic efficiency, and renewable energy development, quite apart from the matter of climate change. The paragraphs that follow assume that the buildup of the greenhouse gases is very dangerous and that the world cannot afford to postpone an appropriate response.

Carbon dioxide (CO_2) is by far the largest component of these gases. Chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs), methane, and nitrous oxides, however, have been increasing rapidly in concentration, and their combined effect by the year 2030 could equal that of CO_2 alone. Without early and stringent counter measures, the average temperature by sometime between 2030 and 2050 will likely be 3 to 8 degrees Fahrenheit higher than at present. In geologic terms this will be an extraordinary spurt. The consequences for climate change are likely to be both erratic and severe. Upper latitudes are projected to warm up at nearly twice the global average. Weather patterns will include new extremes in heat waves, droughts, storms, and hurricanes. The effects on agriculture will be very disruptive, with main crop areas shifting poleward. As water warms, sea levels will rise; coastal areas will flood; and coastal cities will need to make massive investments in dikes to hold back the sea. Millions of people will become environmental refugees.

It is almost certainly too late to prevent some warming and disruption. Two crucial questions, however, remain to be determined: how much warming and how fast? Every degree of average warming prevented will mean less destruction and suffering. And the longer the time over which the change takes place, the more possible it will be for human and nonhuman creatures and systems to adjust without traumatic disruptions.

Substantial reduction of greenhouse gas emissions would delay and limit the warming of the planet. Obviously, this means (among other things) minimizing the burning of fossil fuels whose combustion releases CO_2. But these are the energy sources upon which modern economies are founded.

Only in the past few years has global warming come widely to the fore of environmental consciousness. Reports of recent studies suggest that it is the gravest threat of all. If not addressed, it could overwhelm all other efforts to deal with environmental and social issues.

I. Ozone Depletion

Ozone, a form of oxygen spread very thinly in the upper atmosphere, shields the earth from excessive amounts of the sun's ultraviolet radiation. Natural forces continually break it down and replenish it. The rate at which it is broken down, however, has been increased by various gases released to the atmosphere by industrial processes and consumer products. The chlorofluorocarbons—widely used as coolants, propellants, solvents, and foam blowing agents—account for about 80 percent of ozone depletion.

The largest losses of ozone have occurred in the Antarctic spring over the South Pole, but small percentages of depletion are being documented all around the globe. Although there is much uncertainty in projecting future ozone levels and their effects, studies indicate that even small percentages of ozone loss will have very injurious results: a substantial increase in skin cancers, more eye disease (cataracts), impairment of the human immune system, degraded aquatic systems, reduced lifetimes for synthetic plastics and paints, possible crop losses, and more ground-level smog.

The ozone problem has led to the most notable instance to date of international action on an environmental threat. Nations representing more than two-thirds of the world's use of ozone-destroying gases have signed agreements (the Montreal Protocol of 1987, greatly strengthened at Helsinki in 1989) to phase out CFCs by the year 2000. The Helsinki Declaration commits them, also, to phase out or reduce the other ozone-depleting gases "as soon as possible," to accelerate development of environmentally acceptable substitutes, and to assist developing countries to comply with the pact by providing information, funding mechanisms, and technology transfers.

The international community has taken some major steps to address the ozone depletion problem. Additional nations, however, need to be brought into the pact. Its success will depend on the diligence and good faith with which governments and industries act in the years immediately ahead.

J. Summary and Response

Such are the major components of the eco-justice crisis—the consequence of "tilling" without "keeping." They summarize what human beings have done to the abundant gifts of the Creator for the sustenance of life. The impact made by modern civilization upon nature in this one century has wrought more damage than was done by human agency in all preceding centuries combined.

In this century science, technology, and industry provided the means to gain material benefits previously unimaginable. This was a great achievement. Now, however, we see that it was marred in two ways that pose life-or-death questions for creation's future:

—First, the material benefits did not accrue to all members of the human family. Structures of power were used to feed the excessive demands of a minority, leaving unsatisfied the legitimate but ineffective demands of half the human family. The gap between rich and poor did not diminish, but grew wider.

—Second, the mobilization of knowledge and power to gain material goods was not carried out with respect for the integrity of the created order. The capacity of basic biological systems to regenerate themselves was severely impaired. Finite minerals were pumped and mined as if inexhaustible. The wastes and poisons from a global population that tripled and a global economy that multiplied many times exceeded the capacity of earth, air, and water to absorb them safely.

From the perspective of the final decade of the twentieth century, we may wonder how the spirit of the age could have been so unrestrained in making demands on nature. We may wonder that even in the church there was so little concern to take care of God's creation. Still, the present crisis reflects the unexpected consequences of good intentions. For example, it was not realized in advance that certain industrial processes and products that seemed especially beneficial would have effects on earth's atmospheric mantle that could eventually be catastrophic. But now we know. Warnings abound that present trends are unsustainable and unjust. The cry of the nonhuman creation joins the cry of the human victims of indifference and oppression.

"While the earth remains," God promised Noah, "seedtime and harvest, cold and heat, summer and winter, day and night, shall not cease" (Gen. 8:22). But now the impact of industrial

civilization has begun to change the climate and to make natural systems less dependable. For the first time in history, human agency is changing the character and degree of cold and heat, summer and winter, with incalculable effects on seedtime and harvest. Nature has become in part a human creation, but by our excessive intervention we humans have made it less predictable. We did not intend to do this, but we cannot undo all that we have done. To do more of the same would make conditions worse, threatening to make the world uninhabitable for our children's children. Instead, we can learn to till with care, to make industry and agriculture harmonize with natural processes, to limit the damaging impact, to restore creation.

We stand at the beginning of the last decade of the second millennium. The authors of the Worldwatch Institute report on the *State of the World 1989* declare that the decade of the nineties is the time for societies to turn around—"to reestablish a stable relationship with the earth's natural support systems" (p. 192). The choice to do so must not be postponed. If business as usual persists, the point will be reached when the problems of a degraded, overcrowded, unsharing planet become so all-consuming that it may not be possible to reclaim the future. "By the end of the next decade," say the Worldwatch authors, "the die will pretty well be cast. As the world enters the twenty-first century, the community of nations either will have rallied and turned back the threatening trends, or environmental deterioration and social disintegration will be feeding on each other" (p. 194).

In response to the environmental crisis the 202nd General Assembly (1990) calls the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to

—respond to the cry of creation, human and nonhuman;

—engage in the effort to make the 1990s the "turnaround decade," not only for reasons of prudence or survival, but because the endangered planet is God's creation; and

—draw upon all the resources of biblical faith and the Reformed tradition for empowerment and guidance in this adventure of restoring creation.

PART II.

RESPONSE TO AN ENDANGERED PLANET

A. God's New Doing

The leading player in the biblical story is the gracious God who creates, judges, and delivers. The creation is the theater of God's grace—the arena of God's gifts for life, beauty, and enjoyment. Among the high points of the story are the exodus, the return from exile, the Christ event, and Pentecost. At such points of peril, challenge, and promise, God's self-disclosure comes with special power and brilliance.

1. God Comes to Judge. . .

> Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;
>
> let the sea roar, and all that fills it;
>
> let the field exult, and everything in it!
>
> Then shall all the trees of
> wood sing for joy before
> the Lord, for [God] comes,
>
> for [God] comes to judge
> the earth.
>
> [God] will judge the world with
> righteousness, and the
> peoples with [God's] truth.
>
> (Ps. 96:11-13)

In our time the image of nature rejoicing before the Lord—in expectation that God comes to judge the peoples with righteousness and truth—suggests that nature turns from mourning to rejoicing because its deliverance from abuse and neglect is at hand. God comes to restore the joy of creation—to deliver the vulnerable earth from the same powerful forces of greed and carelessness that have oppressed the vulnerable people. And if deliverance begins with judgment, that is an act of grace, instrumental to repentance, forgiveness, renewal, and restoration.

If our analysis of the crisis points to truth that God wants us to acknowledge, we may begin to receive as judgment—as an indication of broken covenant—the evidence of tilling without keeping and of failing to share equitably the fruits of tilling. If we have been managers or beneficiaries of modern economic

development, we may confess that habits of carelessness, motivations of greed, and corruptions of power have stood in the way of tilling carefully and sharing fairly.

These factors have heightened the ancient temptation to seek security and material abundance beyond what is sufficient for members of human community on a finite planet. We are the beneficiaries and the victims of industrial civilization's triumph in harnessing the enormous power of fossil energy, science-based technology, and industrial organization to make nature yield spectacular abundance. The success of this enterprise seemed so solidly based on human wisdom and skill that the flaws of inequitable distribution and disrespect for nature were overlooked, tolerated, or denied.

The pursuit of prosperity in a culture of competitive individualism has turned the human "household" into an unloving arena of winners and losers. And, at the same time, this aggressiveness overrode the sense of responsibility to maintain the health of natural systems and to respect the limits that they impose upon economic development.

The grace of God's judgment brings a new humility, partly because it does expose the "greedy for unjust gain" (Jet 6:13), which is coupled with uniquely modern concentrations of economic, political, and military power. And it does expose a human sloth or irresponsibility in exercising stewardly "dominion."

But it does more. It shatters basic assumptions of modern Western culture: (1) an assumption that nature is there to be unhesitatingly manipulated and dominated by human beings for strictly human purposes; and (2) an assumption that the good life is something to be measured quantitatively by ever-increasing possession and consumption. The first assumption undermines the practice of stewardship as a careful husbandry of God's provisions for the entire household (Luke 12:42). The second assumption contradicts Jesus' explicit teaching that life does not consist in the abundance of one's possessions (Luke 12:15).

In 1971, the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America adopted a statement on "Christian Responsibility for Environmental Renewal," which acknowledged some of the cultural assumptions and societal institutions that get in the way of responsible stewardship. If God's provisions indeed are for the needs of all, "People and all other living things are to be valued above rights of property and

its development." But, "The structures of modern society and the priorities of contemporary politics seem to work in the opposite direction."

Similarly, society's assumptions about "progress" have led to an uncritical acceptance of technological developments and a dismissal of those who warned of environmental dangers. In responsible stewardship, however, technology is understood as servant, not as master.

Most of us in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) have benefited and been blessed in many ways by science, technology, and industry. Many have felt called to service in rendering the benefits—helping to overcome want through mass production or some other application of scientific knowledge. But now the stark facts about new dimensions of human misery and new realities of environmental degradation come to warn and to jolt us. Some of our deepest assumptions, long unquestioned, can stand no longer. Surely we have been too uncritical, too unbiblical, too self-serving in going along with our culture's abuse of nature and its pursuit of affluence. We have been blind and deaf in our servanthood and stewardship (Isa. 42:19), stubbornly slow to heed the warnings that have been given. But God comes to judge our world—our civilization, our nation, our "tilling," our way of life—with righteousness and truth. By God's grace in the eco-justice crisis, we may receive and accept judgment and forgiveness and make a new beginning.

2. And to Restore

> The Lord is good to all,
>
> and has compassion over all that [God] has made.
>
> All thy works shall give thanks to thee, 0 Lord,
>
> and all thy saints
> shall bless thee! The
> Lord upholds all who
> are falling,
>
> and raises up all who are
> bowed down. The eyes of all
> look to thee,
>
> and thou givest them their food in due season.
>
> Thou openest thy hand,

thou satisfiest the desire of every living thing.

[God] fulfills the desire of all who fear [God],
and hears their cry, and saves them.

(Ps. 145:9-10,14,15,16,19)

In this psalm of praise the themes of creation, care, and deliverance are thoroughly intertwined. Because the Lord's compassion extends to all that God has made, we should not think the deliverance of all who are bowed down refers only to human beings. Because God satisfies the desire of every living thing, those whom God saves may be other forms of life, not only people.

The biblical-theological basis for restoring creation is very simple: The Creator is always also the Redeemer, and the Redeemer is always also the Creator. The God "who made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them" is the one "who executes justice for the oppressed" (Ps. 146:6f.). Because God the Creator loves the whole creation, God the Redeemer acts to save the creation when it is bowed down and cries out. As Colossians 1:15-19 affirms, the crucified and risen Christ reconciles all things.

The fundamental claim that the earth is God's creation means that those who acknowledge the claim are bound to relate to the natural world with respect and care. "God saw everything that [God] had made, and behold, it was very good" (Gen. 1:31). The creation has value simply because it is God's creation. And people who understand themselves as God's people cannot treat carelessly or destructively God's world, in which God delights.

The knowledge of the cosmos and our planet that we may acquire from the sciences of physics, astronomy, geology, and biology enriches the biblical story. We learn of the intricate configuration, unique in the universe, of processes, cycles, and conditions that make it possible for life to appear and flourish and to increase in ordered complexity and beauty. The human creature reflects upon the story and celebrates the creation. Created in God's image, we humans are called by God to relate consciously, lovingly, caringly not only to the Creator but to all human and nonhuman companions.

The church's affirmation that deliverance or redemption is the characteristic activity of God in the biblical story reinforces the significance of the land and the world of nature in God's intention for the human family. This intention encompasses

both our human dependence on the land and our responsibility for it. This world is the arena of the Creator-Redeemer's liberating activity. In the story, the land to which the people go is entrusted to them that it may be cultivated with care and made instrumental to justice and community.

The biblical theme of redemption comes to its climax in the incarnation—the ministry, crucifixion, and resurrection of Jesus Christ. In Jesus, God is uniquely present in the world. Again the significance of life in the world is reinforced. The consequence of saying yes to God's love in Jesus Christ is to become "in Christ . . . a new creation" (2 Cor. 5:17), set free to "walk in newness of life" (Rom. 6:4) in the realm of creaturely existence, free to live as fully human beings in community with God, other people, and the rest of creation.

Throughout the biblical story the writers testify to God's concern to execute justice and to extend compassion at the points of greatest agony and need. They tell of God's acts and commands in behalf of the hungry, the stranger, the blind, the widowed, the orphaned, and the imprisoned. But now nature itself presents innumerable points of greatest agony and need. This realization comes to us like a revelation in the eco-justice crisis. Nature has become co-victim with the poor; the vulnerable earth and the vulnerable people are oppressed together.

Despite all the indications in the biblical literature of the importance of the nonhuman creation and its connectedness with the human, theology has generally understood justice anthropocentrically, as having to do only with human relationships. This partly explains the church's failure over many years to expose the flaws in cultural assumptions, its inadequate sensitivity to the cry of creation, and its uncritical acceptance of unecological development. Now an enlarged understanding becomes not only possible but necessary. Justice must be understood as eco-justice.

Theologically, then, we believe that God who redeems and liberates, who executes justice, and who acts with revelatory power in special times, comes at this turning point in history not only to judge but to restore. God hears creation's cry. God calls human beings, especially those who, following Jesus, accept stewardship as servanthood. In faith we discern God's new doing and hear the call to become involved with God in restoring creation, human and nonhuman.

If we will have the wisdom to survive,

to stand like slow-growing trees

on a ruined place, renewing, enriching it,

if we will make our seasons welcome here, asking not too much of earth or heaven, then a long time after we are dead

the lives our lives prepare will live

here, their houses strongly placed

upon the valley sides, fields and gardens

rich in the windows. The river will run

clear, as we will never know it,

and over it, birdsong like a canopy. On the levels of the hills will be

green meadows, stock bells in noon shade.

On the steeps where greed and ignorance cut down

the old forest, an old forest will stand,

its rich leaf-fall drifting on its roots.

The veins of forgotten springs will have opened. Families will be singing in the fields.

In their voices they will hear a music

risen out of the ground. They will take nothing from the ground they will not return, whatever the grief at parting. Memory,

native to this valley, will spread over it

like a grove, and memory will grow

into legend, legend into song, song

into sacrament. The abundance of this place, the songs of its people and its birds,

will be health and wisdom and indwelling light. This is no paradisal dream.

Its hardship is its possibility.

—Wendell Berry, "Work Song," in *Collected Poems* (San Francisco: Worth Point Press: 1985), 187-88.

B. Norms for Keeping and Healing

Restoring creation will require humility. It challenges us to develop better habits and new arrangements for keeping creation well, together with concerted measures for healing injuries already inflicted. Healing means mainly to remove or reduce the human interventions that keep self-renewing natural systems from functioning properly. There can be no restoration to pristine creation. We humans will continue to make many imprints upon the natural order. But we can learn to relate to nature with respect and restraint so that our work and play fit

into natural systems and enhance creation's capacity to support life and provide sustenance.

The Creator-Redeemer's love for the world remains constant. God's will for the salvation of humankind and the fulfillment of creation does not vacillate. In response the church prays, "Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth. . . . " The response of faith to the gospel is always a matter of trust and faithfulness. And the content of faithfulness is love inclusive of justice.

More concretely, however, the content of faithfulness—the determination of love and justice—depends in "each time and place" upon the "particular problems and crises through which God calls . . ." (Confession of 1967, 9.43). We need some norms or guidelines peculiarly appropriate to our own time to help us bridge the distance between the all-encompassing claim of the love command and the specific decisions of our daily lives. The ethical norms appropriate for this time of the eco-justice crisis will keep faithful people rooted in their own community of faith, but will also enable them to collaborate effectively and persuasively with others who share their concern about the crisis.

The joint statement on energy adopted by the two General Assemblies in 1981 enunciates three norms appropriate to an "ethic of ecological justice": sustainable sufficiency, participation, and justice. These are stated with particular reference to choices about energy production and use, but the ethic they express may be applied more broadly to all eco-justice concerns.

In the present statement we distinguish four norms. The first two, sustainability and sufficiency, require separate discussion. They may be in tension with each other. If so, it is necessary to hold to both, even with the tension, because both are essential to eco-justice. We deal with justice as a basic ethical claim whose distinctive meaning for our time is best expressed by the third norm, participation, and by sufficiency. We add a fourth norm, solidarity, to lift up the emphasis required in our time for giving concrete and forceful expression to the value of community. With all four norms we venture to suggest something of the content of God's call in the eco-justice crisis—that the Creator-Redeemer calls faithful people to earth-keeping, to justice, and to community.

1. That Earth May Be Well: Sustainability

Sustainability is simply the capacity to continue indefinitely. For eco-justice, sustainability means, first of all, the capacity of natural systems to go on functioning properly, so that the living creatures that belong to these systems may thrive. As a norm for human behavior sustainability expresses the meaning of God's call to earth-keeping: Relate to the natural world so that its stability, integrity, and beauty may be maintained.

Sustainability refers, also, to the stability and healthy functioning of social systems or a whole society. Since social systems depend upon natural systems, the former are sustainable only if they permit the health of the latter to continue. The Worldwatch Institute defines a sustainable society as "one that shapes its economic and social systems so that natural resources and life-support systems are maintained" *(State of the World 1984,* p. 2).

Picking up on our biblical metaphor of tilling and keeping, we may say that sustainability is the capacity of those who till to keep the garden with sufficient care for tilling to continue. But this is not quite adequate for eco-justice. Because the garden is intrinsically good as God's creation, it is to be cherished not only for tilling but for its own sake. Sustainability is the capacity of the natural order and the socioeconomic order to thrive together.

In order to strengthen the relationship of humans to renewable biological systems, sustainability leads to such rules as: desist from any practice that may undermine the self-renewing capacity of the natural systems; do not demand yields that cannot be maintained indefinitely.

Regarding nonrenewables, sustainability says: shift to renewable resources if possible; insist on appliances that are durable and repairable; plan ahead for the time when energy and other resources will be in short supply, so that a transition to alternatives will be well under way and disruptions will be minimized.

The norm points to many such rules. More importantly, it leads to a mind-set that recognizes the need to lighten the human impact on the natural order and regards a healthy earth-human relationship as a challenge to ingenuity and creativity. It leads also to a serious, concerted effort to stabilize the world's human population, by measures addressing the quality of life as well as family planning.

Precisely because individuals and institutions have been relating to the natural order in ways that are so manifestly unsustainable that they put the future in grave jeopardy, sustainability gets at the heart of the practice and policy necessary for the stewardship of creation. Stewardship entails the incorporation of earth-keeping into earth management. The steward is a manager, charged with responsibility for tilling and keeping for the sustenance of the household. We humans can lighten our impact on nature, but we cannot eliminate it. Therefore, we must learn to manage wisely and humbly, remembering that "our property" is actually God's. The steward is a responsible servant, whose model of "dominion" is the servant Lord.

"As each has received a gift, employ it for one another, as good stewards of God's varied grace" (1 Pet. 4:10). Today, all are stewards with gifts to employ for creation's sake.

For some, these are gifts to be employed more faithfully in work they are doing already, gifts of wiser, humbler management. The farmer undertakes measures to conserve the soil. The manufacturer installs equipment to recover toxic substances and use them again in the production process. The engineer designs a more efficient engine. The developer chooses a more expensive site for a housing development in preference to one that would destroy a wetland. The researcher looks for ways to make photovoltaic cells affordable. The business person promotes energy-efficient appliances. The industrial or clerical worker advocates and observes occupational safety measures. The professor introduces appropriate eco-justice issues in courses where they previously were ignored. The restaurant manager stops using throwaway containers and goes back to dishwashing.

All of us can take steps, however small and unspectacular, that reduce the impact we make on nature and tie in with the similar steps that growing numbers of people are beginning to take. We can plant trees, grow gardens, compost leaves and kitchen scraps, recycle trash, avoid throwaway products, use public transportation, keep ourselves informed, introduce children to natural wonders, and influence friends and neighbors. We can also organize, advocate, and act politically. Steps such as these are an offering of gifts for restoring God's creation.

There is, in short, a dynamic quality to sustainability. Many kinds of human and economic growth are possible and desirable within the limits set by sustainability. Sustainability is

not stagnation, but the careful stewardship of creation.

2. That All People May Know Justice: Participation and Sufficiency

God's call for justice pertains particularly to right relationships in the community or society. Justice is an extension of love for the immediate neighbor to a concern for the common good. It is also the insistence that all members of society be included in its "good." A society's institutions, therefore, are to be structured with respect for the basic needs and rights of all its members. Their interests, of course, do not entirely coincide, but a just society achieves a relative harmony. Its laws and institutions are designed, not only to promote the well-being of the society as a whole, but to meet the rightful claim of each member to a fair share of the resources available for a fulfilling life.

Some sense of what justice means is intrinsic to being human. Nevertheless, the weak and the vulnerable are always subjected to, or threatened with, unjust treatment. The 1981 joint energy statement reminds us that "In the biblical witness the touchstone of justice is consistently the welfare and liberation of the poor and the care of the land" *(Minutes,* UPCUSA, 1981, Part I, pp. 293-305).

We have noted already that the crisis of our time compels us to transcend the traditional, strictly anthropocentric understanding of justice. The neighbors that claim respect and concern include our nonhuman companions. The human community depends upon the biotic. Nature's systems are vulnerable. Earth is oppressed along with people. Social systems cannot be just if they are not sustainable. We may still speak of justice when thinking mainly about people, but justice is a subset of eco-justice.

In the context of the eco-justice crisis a distinctive meaning of justice that must be stressed is the requirement that economic arrangements provide for inclusive participation. In this context, participation means being included in the social process of obtaining and enjoying the good things of God's creation. Because the Creator's intention is that nature's gifts for sustenance be available to all members of the human family, all have a right and a responsibility to participate, as able, in these arrangements. If any are excluded, something is unacceptably wrong.

In accordance with their root meaning, economics and

ecology both have to do with ordering the oikos, our house or home, and the harmonious interaction of its members. If the economy were structured and the ecology were protected following the model of a wisely managed household, the criteria would be full participation, careful husbandry, and cooperative, mutually beneficial relationships. There would be some kind of useful, fulfilling work for each member to do, as well as a fair, dependable share of the available "goods" for each person to enjoy.

The modern economic order, both local and global, is characterized by massive nonparticipation. In Third World countries modernization has shattered the traditional, participatory economies. It has pushed peasants off their land and established a new set of arrangements in which the masses of the people either are not participating or are participating precariously with poverty-level wages. Even in the advanced industrialized countries, where most people depend on jobs but have no part in vitally important company or union decisions, participation for large numbers is very precarious, subject to abrupt termination.

The norm, therefore, pushes societies toward transformed economic structures and development strategies, intended to address basic needs by means of appropriate, sustainable technologies, and designed with and for the participation of the people concerned.

Justice demands not only that all participate according to their talents and needs; it insists that all participants be able to obtain a sufficient sustenance. Sufficieny means enough for a reasonably secure and fulfilling life. The imperative of sufficiency as a distinctive norm of justice for our time arises from the salient realities: the poverty which prevails massively in the Third World and plagues significant numbers in rich countries; the severe strains that modernization and industrialization have already put on natural resources and systems; and the certainty that the world's population will swell by additional billions before it stabilizes or drops. In this situation sufficiency for all will be achieved and sustained only if the good things of God's creation are shared according to a keen sense of what is needful.

The majority of the world's people need more for health and fulfillment. If sufficiency for them is to be approached in a manner that can be sustainable, sufficiency has to have another side. The already excessive demands on nature must

be reduced. Those who now take too much must learn to live well on less. The unmet necessities of the many preclude the indulgence in wasteful luxuries that now characterizes the high-consumption culture of affluent people. The norm, therefore, calls for a reconceptualization of the "good life," a wide range of lifestyle changes that move toward frugality in the affluent sectors of society, and arrangements whereby all may participate in the community and the economy.

Responding to the "energy crunch," the two Presbyterian General Assemblies asserted in a 1979 joint energy ethics letter: *"We* have no right to squander the world's energy resources for short-term benefit. We are called to live simply and share liberally, while advocating the common good of all." They declared that the church "should evaluate all energy policy choices in terms of their impact on the poor and powerless, as well as their impact on future generations, and insist that governments and institutions observe this basic principle of justice." The subsequent short-term improvement in the availability and price of petroleum must not be allowed to obscure the ethical insight of that statement. It should, instead, be extended beyond energy issues to the totality of the eco-justice crisis.

That will require acknowledgement that economic structures, domestic and global, are not geared either to long-term sustainability or to full participation and sufficiency. The drive to maximize production and profit has not been significantly qualified by these norms. Governments can adopt policies that shape the framework within which the economy operates in order to foster environmental quality and resource conservation, full participation in socially useful and fairly compensated work, and the gearing of production to needs now unmet. The tasks of constructing such policies will be difficult and controversial. Nevertheless, a viable future depends upon a transition to new economic arrangements that reflect the norms. The church, equipped with Reformed theology's understanding of sin and Jesus' warnings of the danger in being rich, must recognize that much of the resistance to the necessary transition comes from powerful individuals, corporations, and nation-states that are determined to maintain their position, wealth, and power. They demonstrate not only the evils rooted in the love of money, but the hold of the obsolete assumptions about controlling nature and finding fulfillment through unchecked expansion and accumulation. The church must address the resistance to necessary change

not only with a prophetic word, but with pastoral concern and support for creative new forms of adventurous faithfulness.

The obstacles to policies of sustainability and justice have to be met with political organization and democratically based power. To organize and act for stewardship and justice means to demand and enact a more democratic and equitable share of nature's sustenance, together with serious respect for nature's limits. The details of a strategy to achieve a sustainable sufficiency for all have yet to be determined. Nevertheless, the church should speak to, and be represented in, the arenas of public action—pressing for practices and policies that will be steps toward sustainable sufficiency. And the church, faithful in proclamation of the gospel and in public witness, may offer to new leaders and many people a spiritual empowerment, a transcendence of self-interest, and a vision of eco-justice, whereby human intelligence, energy, and creativity may be released to fashion the new economic arrangements that will accord with the norms for our time.

3. That Community May Be Achieved: Solidarity

In the face of the widening gap between rich and poor, the alienation of humankind from nature, God's new doing comes as a call for reconciliation and the achievement of community. The norm of solidarity gives forceful expression to the affirmation of community. Solidarity means strong, vibrant community based on commitment and fidelity. In the context of the eco-justice crisis it embraces ecological, ethical themes of each individual's worth and dignity together with the fundamental interdependence and unity of the Creator's creatures. It affirms that human beings are all members of one human family, sharing common needs and aspirations, making an equal claim for basic sustenance, while belonging also to nature as integral components of one creation.

Like the other three norms, solidarity makes a powerful claim of relevance and authority as we realize that its violation underlies the present plight of earth and people. Secular movements for justice and liberation frequently have perceived more quickly than the church the importance of solidarity. The church is in their debt.

Solidarity directs participants in the tasks of keeping and healing to link and stand with three particular sets of companions. First, it leads them to find and cherish immediate companions who share their concern for the liberation of earth and people. These constitute their community of support and

encouragement, enjoyment and persistence. Second, it directs them to stand supportively with those who suffer most from the oppression and the poisoning directed against earth and people. And, third, solidarity directs concerned people to join forces in broad coalitions to address the various dimensions of the eco-justice crisis.

> But we have only begun
>
> to love the earth.
>
> We have only begun
>
> to imagine the fullness of life.
>
> How could we tire of hope?
>
> —So much is in bud.
>
> How can desire fail?
>
> —we have only begun
>
> to imagine justice and mercy, only begun to envision
>
> how it might be
>
> to live as siblings with beast and flower, not as oppressors ..
>
> We have only begun to know
>
> the power that is in us if we would join our solitudes in the communion of struggle.
>
> So much is unfolding that must complete its gesture,
>
> so much is in bud.
>
> —Denise Levertov *(Candles in Babylon* [New York: New Directions Publishing Corp., 1982], 82-3.)

There is an understandable tendency to want to salvage the future without breaking sufficiently with the past. The gospel, in the power of the Holy Spirit, may bring a word of grace and empowerment that will free people to turn around and face the future. In Christ there is freedom from obstacles of anxiety and inertia, pride and apathy, that stand in the way of steps and tasks that need to be taken. In the turnaround decade it is necessary to look at the world in a new way, to acknowledge problems that have long been evaded, to face the challenge of ecologically responsible living, and to accept the costs and joys of the transition that has begun but needs urgently to be accelerated.

For Christians, the acceptance of the costs and joys may depend upon the church's application of the norm of solidarity to itself—the church's fuller realization of its own potential as a community of support for adventurous faithfulness. Will the

church become a place where people learn how to live in this time of turning, how to engage in restoring the creation? As such, it would be a place not only for learning about the problems and finding fellowship with others who care, but also for discovering a fuller life not dependent on excesses of consumption and inequality, or an unsustainable impact on nature. The church would be a place for exploring diverse viewpoints, expressing anxieties, recovering a biblical memory, and searching for wisdom. In environmentally sensitive worship, study, and action, people would learn to bear each other's burdens; puzzled, tired, or threatened people would find new assurance and strength. Throughout all, the common thread would be the intention to be faithful in this special time as members with diverse responsibilities and opportunities in the world, and as a church with a mission to restore creation. There would also be celebration—in worship and in convivial fellowship—celebration of the Creator-Redeemer's steadfast love, of the creation itself, and of small and maybe even large steps toward its restoration.

Such a model of solidarity would spill over to the world. In neighborhoods, municipalities, and nations, Christians must join with others to build a renewed sense of common purpose—to face the problems, pay the costs, enjoy community, and achieve the restoration essential to our children's future.

Responding theologically and ethically to the endangered planet, we, the 202nd General Assembly (1990), find powerful reasons for engagement in restoring God's creation:

—God's works in creation are too wonderful, too ancient, too beautiful, too good to be desecrated.

—Restoring creation is God's own work in our time, in which God comes both to judge and to restore.

—The Creator-Redeemer calls faithful people to become engaged with God in keeping and healing the creation, human and nonhuman.

—Human life and well-being depend upon the flourishing of other life and the integrity of the life-supporting processes that God has ordained.

—The love of neighbor, particularly "the least" of Christ's brothers and sisters, requires action to stop the poisoning, the erosion, the wastefulness that are causing

suffering and death.

—The future of our children and their children and all who come after is at stake.

In this critical time of transition to a new era, God's new doing may be discerned as a call to earth-keeping, to justice, and to community.

Therefore, we affirm that:

—Response to God's call requires a new faithfulness, for which guidance may be found in norms that illuminate the contemporary meaning of God's steadfast love for the world.

—Earth-keeping today means insisting on sustainability—the ongoing capacity of natural and social systems to thrive together—which requires human beings to practice wise, humble, responsible stewardship, after the model of servanthood that we have in Jesus.

—Justice today requires participation, the inclusion of all members of the human family in obtaining and enjoying the Creator's gifts for sustenance.

—Justice also means sufficiency, a standard upholding the claim of all to have enough—to be met through equitable sharing and organized efforts to achieve that end.

—Community in our time requires the nurture of solidarity, leading to steadfastness in standing with companions, victims, and allies, and to the realization of the church's potential as a community of support for adventurous faithfulness.

These ethical norms are a guide to political decisions, economic practice, and daily lifestyles that contribute to restoring planetary health.

The preceding findings and affirmations are in line with a rapidly mounting global and ecumenical awareness. The World Commission on Environment and Development, which reported in 1987 to the United Nations General Assembly, has commanded wide attention to its central focus on development that is sustainable. The World Council of Churches has engaged its member churches and other Christian bodies in a conciliar process of mutual commitment to justice, peace, and the integrity of creation. This led to a World Convocation in Seoul,

Korea, in March 1990.

The World Convocation on Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation stressed the linkage of the three components of the theme and declared, "There are no competitive struggles for justice, peace and integrity of creation. There is one single global struggle." The convocation, looking at the present time as a unique historical moment in which "all life on earth is threatened," entered into an Act of Covenanting to raise the JPIC issues within member bodies of the World Council of Churches and to report progress to the WCC's Seventh Assembly in Canberra (1991). The JPIC process provides a context for the Presbyterian church's own action on the major report, "Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice." This report is a contribution to the JPIC process and provides a foundation for continuing participation in it.

Since 1985 the National Council of Churches' Eco-Justice Working Group has served as an instrument for expression of the churches' concern for ecology and justice. National church bodies, nondenominational organizations, and local church members, in the United States and Canada, have moved forward in various ways to make concern for creation an integral part of their life and mission.

Taking account of these findings, affirmations, and developments, and building upon existing policy, noting particularly the action of the 201st General Assembly (1989) affirming "Cherishing God's Creation" as one of sixteen continuing Church wide Goals, the 202nd General Assembly (1990) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.):

—Recognizes and accepts restoring creation as a central concern of the church, to be incorporated into its life and mission at every level.

—Understands this to be a new focus for initiative in mission program and a concern with major implications for infusion into theological work, evangelism, education, justice and peacemaking, worship and liturgy, public witness, global mission, and congregational service and action at the local community level.

—Recognizes that restoring creation is not a short-term concern to be handled in a few years but a continuing task to which the nation and the world must give attention and commitment, and that has profound implications for the life, work, and witness of Christian people and church agencies.

—Approaches the task with covenant seriousness—"If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God . . . then you shall live" (Deut. 30:16)—and with practical awareness that cherishing God's creation enhances the ability of the church to achieve its other goals.

We believe God calls the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to engage in the tasks of restoring creation in the "turnaround decade" now beginning and for as long as God continues to call people of faith to undertake these tasks.

PART III.

SOCIAL POLICIES TO PRESERVE THE ENVIRONMENT

A. Existing General Assembly Policy: An Overview

The General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church in the United States and the United Presbyterian Church in the United States of America responded to the dramatically heightened environmental awareness and concern of the 1970s and the 1980s with policy statements that related biblical vision and theological reflection to an analysis of contemporary conditions and problems. These statements then offered ethical guidelines and made recommendations for specific actions.

The most substantive summary of overall policy on the environment is a statement entitled "Christian Responsibility for Environmental Renewal," adopted by the 1971 United Presbyterian General Assembly. This statement acknowledges complicity in a "biblical split" between history and nature, "with nature always the loser." "An equitable, hospitable environment for all life," the 1971 assembly recognized, on the one hand, that physical deprivation is "the most urgent environmental problem for the poor." On the other hand, that assembly called for an "ecoethic" in which rights of living beings would prevail over property rights, technology would be changed from master into servant, a more disciplined lifestyle would conserve the environment and build community, and new modes of corporate decision-making, monitored by government, would embody a responsible stewardship that anticipated potential hazards before they became critical *(Minutes,* UPCUSA, 1971, Part I, pp. 574-83).

The 1971 assembly also incorporated into Presbyterian social investment policy the achievement of environmental responsibility. Drawing upon the Confession of 1967 and previous General Assembly teaching, the policy developed guidelines for church investors to affirm or reshape corporate practices affecting the environment. The church's objective was to encourage investment in enterprises that make products and use production methods that reduce environmental damage, while meeting basic human needs.

The consistent incorporation of the church's concern for economic justice into its environmental statements has distinguished church policy from the emphases that usually characterize secular environmental organizations. This is exemplified in the report of the 1974 UPCUSA General

Assembly standing committee on Stewardship of the Environment. It processed several items for consideration including a report on "World Population and Hunger" and "Christian Responsibility in the Energy Crunch." The General Assembly also supported a moratorium on the construction of a super-port in Puerto Rico and advocated measures to cut down on the waste of paper and encourage recycling at General Assemblies. More importantly, it asked for a special report developing an in-depth stewardship ethic.

The result was a study paper, "Economic Justice Within Environmental Limits: The Need for a New Economic Ethic," commended to the church by the 1976 General Assembly. The study paper calls for a broad-based dialogue and debate on the value and objectives of the United States economic system, alternative values, the church's own economic life, and the obstacles and possibilities facing human society.

The study paper offers several basic theological-ethical guidelines for Christian understanding and action. First, humankind's whole economic enterprise is a response to the gifts a gracious God has bestowed upon us. Second, the material benefits of creation and human endeavor are from God for the human race to enjoy. Third, the distribution of economic goods and services must at least meet the needs of the poor. Fourth, material prosperity is not a standard by which human beings can claim and measure God's faithfulness or justice.

Fifth, human beings are called to be stewards, not owners, of the created order and the material fruits of human endeavor, making their economic activity a part of the harmony of the whole. Sixth, this stewardship provides all the motivation for economic creativity the world needs. Seventh, the function of government in human society is, in the providence of God, to care for public justice and the welfare of all. Finally, human sin such as greed, covetousness, and the lust for power infects social structures as well as individuals.

The study paper seeks to identify and analyze the ideological and value assumptions underlying the United States economic system. It focuses primarily on the belief that the greatest public good is achieved automatically through unrestricted competition for maximum private gain in a completely free market. The study paper challenges this belief with some observations about the present results of economic activity, particularly environmental degradation. Questions about sustainability and solidarity are posed. However, in the

study paper's selection of issues to explore in terms of distributive justice and economic democracy, only one (land use) deals with environmental questions.

In this study paper, environmental limits are seen as adjuncts to human economic activity. Can we meet the needs of the poor and sustain economic growth environmentally? The primary emphasis is upon meeting human needs. Creation is not viewed in terms of its intrinsic worth, and non-human species are never mentioned. The norm of sufficiency is suggested only in terms of guaranteeing enough for other human beings, not so that creation might be healed and other creatures thrive. The study paper maintains a decidedly anthropocentric focus, partly as a result of the process whereby a committee formed to study questions of poverty was assigned the added task of addressing the environment.

1. Energy Policy

A statement on "Christian Responsibility in the Energy Crunch," adopted by the 1974 UPCUSA General Assembly, calls for curtailment of U.S. energy consumption in order to share energy resources with the rest of the world. This statement builds upon previous statements, particularly the 1971 "Christian Responsibility for Environmental Renewal," and affirms several theological points: (1) God entrusts to our care the earth with all its creatures and resources. (2) The purpose of our stewardship is to serve human need and to act responsibly within God's creation. (3) We are accountable both to present and to future generations. (4) A just distribution of scarce resources is basic to political and ecological peace. The statement focuses on changing lifestyles to reduce energy dependence and explores some of the social justice dimensions of environmental issues.

The following year, the Presbyterian Church in the United States spoke out against military intervention to guarantee the flow of Middle Eastern oil, and in 1977 both assemblies urged research into new sources of energy and increased conservation. In 1979, both assemblies sent a joint pastoral letter to all Presbyterians on the subject of energy ethics, which restated the themes from previous statements and underscored the importance of lifestyle integrity.

In 1980, the General Assembly Mission Board of the PCUS produced a study paper on energy issues which sought to reflect upon the work of other church bodies and incorporate responses from the church at large. Entitled "The Energy

Question: An Exploration of Meaning and Values," the study paper explores ecological as well as sociopolitical and economic criteria for evaluating energy policies. It also sets forth theological and ethical criteria based upon a biblical view of humanity "inseparably linked with a great cosmic community, of which God and nature are also a part" (PCUS, 1980, Part I, pp. 516-542). Each segment of the created order has an instrumental value by contributing to "a harmonious interdependence by which the life of the whole is sustained." This value is related to humankind's role in the maintenance of the community of creation, which has intrinsic value because it is of value to God. "Nature cannot be evaluated simply in reference to human needs and wants."

The criteria set forth for evaluating energy policy options reflect the themes of solidarity among all peoples, sustainability through environmental protection, and securing the rights of future generations. The criteria emphasize participation and equity for the poor in distributing the costs and benefits of pollution controls. The paper asserts that a responsible energy policy must provide an "optimal socio-political structure for the investment of human life with dignity and meaning," and the role of the church is to insure that the discovery and living out of dignity and meaning reflect the great richness of materials, motifs, and insights provided by the biblical tradition.

Joint PCUS-UPCUSA attention to energy concerns, stressing the immediate priority of the needs of the poor over the comforts of the rich, together with concerns for future generations, culminated in a 1981 statement by both General Assemblies on energy policy entitled, "The Power to Speak Truth to Power" (UPCUSA, 1981, Part I, pp. 293-305). The appropriate Christian ethic is defined as one of "ecological justice," entailing justice in the form of fairness, sustainable sufficiency in meeting basic needs, and participation as a standard of mutual responsibility in decision making. (This reflects the 1970s World Council of Churches' emphasis on a just, participatory, and sustainable society.) In the area of social policy, the statement calls for a mixture of energy systems coupled with increased research and conservation, and a social commitment to "increase efficiency in the use of resources; and to expand the practical application of appropriate technologies based on renewable energy resources." It also raises cautions about nuclear energy due to unanswered questions about its long-term environmental and economic impact. The church is called to innovative ministries and responsible energy

consumption, and individual Christians to new energy-conscious lifestyles.

The 199th General Assembly (1987) followed up with a resolution on high-level nuclear waste. It urges the U.S. government to search diligently for "geologically acceptable, permanent high-level nuclear waste disposal sites, meeting the requirements set by the Environmental Protection Agency." It asks for careful consideration of public objections to various sites, and the resolution cautions against monitored retrieval storage facilities as a solution to the problem.

2. Hunger Action

Presbyterian social witness on issues of food and hunger has been two-fold: providing food relief to the hungry, and promoting food production and farming that represent careful, productive use of agricultural capabilities. From 1946 on, General Assembly statements have called for the just distribution of surplus food to insure that the hungry are fed. As the hunger crisis deepened, the 1969 PCUS General Assembly declared world hunger to be a "top priority concern" and launched the first major hunger program of a U.S. religious community. In 1975, the United Presbyterian Church started its hunger program. Both programs placed a strong emphasis upon public policy to address systemic causes of hunger while responding with direct food relief. In 1979, a "Common Affirmation on Global Hunger," adopted by both assemblies, delineated five emphases (direct food relief, development assistance, public policy, education, and responsible life-style), which have become the basis for the Presbyterian Hunger Program.

A similar policy history can be identified concerning food production. Family farming was supported in 1947, and the encroachment of agri-business was opposed. Public policies have been sought that provide "reasonable price and income stability to American farmers" *(Minutes,* UPCUSA, 1954, Part I, p. 197 and *Minutes,* PCUS, 1976, Part I, p. 75), preserve prime land for agricultural purposes *(Minutes,* PCUS, 1977, Part I, p. 181), and transform agrarian structures in the interest of more justice for small farmers and landless peasants in other countries so that they can more adequately meet their own food needs *(Minutes,* PCUS, 1977, Part I, p. 181).

General Assembly-level concern for sustainable food production worldwide was given further attention in a 1978

Consultation on the Response of Land-Grant Universities to World Hunger. The consultation was convened by John T. Conner, 1977 moderator of the UPCUSA General Assembly, and it resulted in a book, *The Agricultural Mission of Churches and Land-Grant Universities* (Iowa State Press, 1980). Participants critiqued the strengths and weaknesses of U.S. food programs involving developing countries, and the land-grant schools' agricultural curricula and training programs.

"Who Will Farm?"—a policy statement on the family farm adopted in 1978 by the UPCUSA assembly—affirms specific goals for environmental and conservation policies in the U.S. It advocates comprehensive land-use planning to prevent the loss of farmland to non-farm uses, and the sharing of costs connected with long-range soil conservation practices. It raises questions about excess use of fertilizers and pesticides. It asks the government to enact and enforce strict laws protecting surface and underground water, particularly for agricultural use. It supports regulations designed to spread the benefits of publicly financed irrigation water to the maximum feasible number of family farms. It advocates more research into low-energy farm machinery and technology, and consumer practices that would reduce the energy use of long-distance shipping, intensive processing, and fancy packaging.

This was followed by a 1985 General Assembly resolution on "Rural Community in Crisis," which establishes a solid foundation for the church to respond to the problems of farm indebtedness, health needs, land stewardship, and a decline in rural community life. The 1989 assembly asked for an update and reissuing of this document.

3. Economic Justice

As the reunion process picked up momentum, both former streams released study papers on economic justice. In 1984, "Christian Faith and Economic Justice" was published by the PCUS Council on Theology and Culture. It builds on the biblical and Reformed theological precepts stated in the 1980 PCUS study paper on energy issues, and it outlines "Economics and an Ethic of Justice." The 1984 study paper includes an important section on the ecological crisis and limits to growth. One year later, the Advisory Council on Church and Society published "Toward a Just, Caring and Dynamic Political Economy" as part of its exploration into issues of the political economy. The paper notes environmental issues and also deals

helpfully with the need for economic growth to meet human needs. Thus, it addresses solidarity, sufficiency, and sustainability measures, though its primary focus is on sufficiency.

In 1982 the United Presbyterian General Assembly adopted a report on the "Theology of Stewardship," The report creatively uses environmental themes to get into the concept of stewardship as it relates to all of life. The task force that prepared the report surveyed Presbyterians on the subject and found that more than 75 percent agreed that "as Christian stewards we are called to work toward the protection of the earth and its resources" (p. 4). The report also reflects on the biblical meaning of "dominion" and concludes that human beings are to become stewards who tend and nurture creation. In a concluding section, the report asserts that the church must work to protect the land from abuse.

4. Other Topics

A 1972 UPCUSA statement on population policy relates population growth to environmental stress and the strain on resources, and calls for national and international measures to stabilize both U.S. and world population. At the same time, it insists that population policy should be integrated into overall plans for achieving equality for races and sexes, ensuring adequate minimal income, and distributing equitably the world's resources.

Other General Assembly actions have been less complete, as in 1975 when the UPCUSA assembly simply affirmed "advocacy of the protection of wilderness areas and parklands" *(Minutes,* UPCUSA, Part I, p. 59). The same assembly also urged Presbyterians to study several environmental issues and take appropriate action. These included use of agricultural chemicals, "alleged" destruction of the ozone layer, the handling of waste through recycling, and pollution due to population increases. Other General Assemblies have advocated looking into the practices of chemical companies and their products.

In 1984 the General Assembly affirmed a statement on acid rain from a Toronto consultation of Canadian and U.S. religious bodies as consistent with the assembly's own policy and goals, and adopted its theological section. That section affirms that God as Creator-Deliverer acts in the ecological-social crisis of our time, and that God's covenant people are called to a level of stewardship "commensurate with the peril and the promise with which God confronts us in this crisis." Stewardship, understood

as caretaking or earthkeeping reflective of God's "equivocal love for this world," requires "respect for the integrity of natural systems and for the limits that nature places on economic growth and material consumption," and anticipates nonhierarchical social relations in harmonious balance with creation and other creatures. Stewards, according to this statement: (a) seek a political economy that protects the poor and provides sufficient and sustainable sustenance for all; (b) act politically to check abuses of power; and (c) insist on equitable distribution of the costs of environmental restoration and institutional restructuring *(Minutes,* 1984, Part I, p. 349).

Five years later, following the Alaska oil spill, the 1989 General Assembly took an ethical approach by declaring the cleanup, recovery, and remedial costs related to the oil spill in Prince William Sound to be the major responsibility of the polluter rather than the taxpaying consumer public. The assembly also called for a moratorium on oil drilling in Bristol Bay and on oil exploration and drilling in the Arctic National Wildlife Refuge; called upon the federal government to strengthen regulations and enforcement regarding the transport of oil and hazardous substances and regarding vessel construction; and affirmed that more faithful responses to the requirements of Christian stewardship include: (a) the increased conservation of all our natural resources and efficiency in their use and (b) the lessening of our reliance on nonrenewable energy resources.

Finally, the 1989 General Assembly specified a commitment to "Practicing Stewardship" and "Cherishing God's Creation" in its statement of priority and continuing churchwide goals for the 1990s: "The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) will call its members to be accountable for the maintenance of God's created order . . . [and] to be active examples and advocates for the healing, protection, and nurture of the environment." Now, in 1990, the whole church is asked to embody this commitment by working for particular social policy changes (see the rest of Part III) and by initiating new programs (Part IV).

B. Mission in the Public Arena: Five Areas of Social Policy

Various forms of eco-injustice distort or threaten to destroy creation. They call for a human response of stewardship through policies and practices that promote earth-keeping, justice, and community. As shown in the preceding overview, earlier General Assemblies received careful homework and took pertinent positions on some issues of

eco-injustice: world hunger, population growth, energy policy, acid rain, and high-level nuclear waste, to name just five social policy subjects on which previous church statements provide an adequate, operative policy base. (The Articles of Agreement adopted in the Presbyterian reunion of 1983 specify that previous General Assembly policy statements "shall have the same force and effect in the PC(USA) ... until rescinded, altered, or supplanted by action of the General Assembly.") The Eco-Justice Task Force decided not to revisit these issues here.

This section of the current report focuses on five new areas of social policy concern that deserve priority attention and have been examined by the Eco-Justice Task Force. Some other areas of social policy concern—air pollution, animal rights, and sustainable development—were not addressed due to time constraints. Papers prepared in the course of the task force's study and printed in *Church and Society* magazine in March/April 1990 provide in-depth background on each problem that is addressed in this section of "Restoring Creation." In addition, Part I of this report entitled, "Creation's Cry," gives an overview of each area of social policy concern. Here, the discussion of each social policy concern is limited to a brief summary of insights that inform the recommendations.

The task force is aware that in some cases the social policy recommendations in this report may place high short-term costs on local communities. However, the costs of not addressing eco-justice issues are already high, and paid disproportionately by poor and racial/ethnic communities in terms of illness, premature death, social unrest, and unfair burdens placed on people least able to pay. The just solution would be to spread the short-term costs among those able to pay, for the sake of long-term benefits for all.

1. Area One: Sustainable Agriculture

The farming systems that have prevailed in North America for at least the past half century are often called "conventional agriculture." Under these systems, food production has significantly increased, and American agriculture has become something of a model for food production around the world. Measured, however, by the criterion of sustainability (and, it may be added, the criterion of community or solidarity), the success of conventional agriculture may be regarded as problematic. In making this assertion, the task force has in mind the following features and consequences of the prevailing systems:

—heavy reliance on large machines, chemicals, and fossil fuel energy;

—reduced crop rotation;

—separation of livestock from grain production;

—departure from many soil and water conservation practices;

—farms of larger size and more concentrated farm ownership;

—rural depopulation and erosion of community;

—lessened interdependence among neighboring farmers; and

—pressures for overproduction and resulting reliance on export markets.

A concept of "sustainable agriculture" has emerged that seeks to counter the adverse effects upon land and people that have come from conventional agriculture. The concept is not an absolutist, detailed prescription for a different system. It points to a movement, a direction, aiming at an agriculture system that would be

—ecologically sound (suitable to the local environment; protective of the land's regenerative capacity);

—economically viable (allowing farmers a decent livelihood);

—socially just (fair to agriculture producers, farm workers, and consumers; sufficient to meet basic needs for food and fiber);

—lower in off-farm inputs (less energy-, chemical-, and capital-dependent); and

—humane (supportive of rural community and culture, quality of life, and the well-being of animals).

The sustainable agriculture movement has been driven by a combination of several forces: (1) the "farm crisis" of the 1980s, i.e., the increased uncertainty of farm income, the growth in farmers' indebtedness, and the steady loss of family farms; (2) the environmental crisis, entailing, among other things, soil erosion and deteriorating quality and the contamination of surface and ground water from pesticides and nitrates; and (3) the desire to return to a more direct and harmonious

relationship between people and the land.

The methods of sustainable agriculture reduce the farmer's input costs. The return to crop rotations, diversification, and conservation practices improves the earth's regenerative capacity, as does the integration of livestock and grain production, whereby manure returns to the land and the land returns food to the animals. Reduced use of chemicals (with more reliance on natural pest control agents) lowers the health risks of farmers, food handlers, and consumers. While there is concern about loss of income from switching to such practices, there is considerable evidence that any sacrifice of net income as a result of using sustainable methods is only temporary. In addition to other considerations, agriculture has great potential to reduce its contribution to global warming through reduced use of fossil fuel.

Important General Assembly policy statements on farming and the family farm were adopted in 1978 and 1985. The 1978 UPC(USA) statement included the affirmation of specific goals with respect to soil conservation and environmental protection. The 1985 PC(USA) statement focused on the rural economic crisis. Building upon those statements, there is need for additional emphasis on sustainability in agricultural policy.

Therefore, the 202nd General Assembly (1990) recommends:

A. Basic Policies in Support of Sustainable Agriculture

1. Federal and state farm policies that assist those who are good stewards of the earth and that effectively halt the degradation of land and water.

2. Federal and state farm policies that encourage family-operated farms, diversified agriculture, and integration wherever possible of livestock with grain production.

3. An agricultural research agenda and budget focused more substantially on sustainable agricultural systems in the broadest sense, including the sustainability of rural communities.

4. Public policies that support waste and pest management consistent with environmental responsibility—aiming in the case of chemical pesticides at more careful handling and application as well as considerable reduction in their use.

5. U.S. policies and development assistance that make

environmental consequences central, are targeted to sustainable projects in Third World countries, and promote cooperative international efforts to foster sustainable agriculture.

6. Federal and state policies that serve energy conservation, decentralized control, and enhanced food security through movement toward domestic and global regionalization of food production and distribution systems.

7. Involvement of local people, including farmers, in developing and enforcing policies and procedures.

B. Implementation of Policies Through Federal Legislation

1. Shift the basic focus of farm policy toward an ecologically, economically viable, and socially sustainable system of food production, with special attention to research and extension components.

2. Design agricultural support payments that reward farmers according to their land stewardship practices, and not merely according to their production of particular commodities.

3. Improve the conservation provisions of farm legislation, including specifics on the long-term future of the conservation reserve program.

4. Give preference in purchase or lease of government inventory farmland to new (or re-entering) farmers who are willing to implement sustainable systems.

5. Target federal assistance to minority and other limited-resource farmers.

6. Provide safe working conditions as well as adequate living conditions for migrant and other farm workers and families.

7. Ensure fair compensation for farm workers commensurate with the risks taken, along with full information about the risks involved.

CHURCH SUPPORT OF SUSTAINABLE AGRICULTURE

The churches have a historic responsibility to be supportive of land stewardship, farm people, and rural community life. An important dimension of this responsibility is educational—nurturing a theology and ethic of the land. The Presbyterian church working with other denominations (as the policy study group on sustainable agriculture worked with

United Methodists and Lutherans) should foster responsibility for protecting and restoring creation by building awareness of what it takes to till and keep the land.

The church at all levels and on six continents should provide opportunities

—to examine the problems of unsustainability and the promise of sustainable alternatives;

—to bring together people from urban and rural churches for dialogue and mutual sharing of burdens; and

—to help farm people deal with the economic problems that too often confront them, even as they continue to cherish the land for the sake of all who must depend on it for sustenance.

Therefore, the 202nd General Assembly (1990) recommends to its ministry units and related bodies and to Presbyterian synods, presbyteries, congregations, and colleges of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A) that:

1. The church as landowner practice a sense of institutional integrity consistent with its social goals of land stewardship with respect to the care, use, and sale of its own land.

2. The church as educator support rural life centers—directing funds, as may be feasible, toward their development; and develop educational curricula on land stewardship and sustainable agriculture.

3. The church in ministry with land grant universities encourage more direct focus on sustainable agriculture through educational, research, and extension efforts that combine critical social insight with technical know-how to approach food production around the world in more appropriate ways.

4. The church in commissioning of mission personnel emphasize the placement of agriculturalists, conservationists, environmental specialists, and other natural resource managers. Such individuals should be qualified through education and experience to work with partner churches and to cooperate with host country nationals on sustainable projects designed to preserve the integrity of creation.

5. The church through observances of its presbyteries and congregations participate in the annual celebration of Soil Stewardship Week.

2. Area Two: Water Quality

Contamination of waterways and groundwater has become a major focus of environmental concern and action. To get a manageable handle on this large subject, the Eco-Justice Task Force decided to focus on two examples: the case of the Puget Sound and water problems particular to Pennsylvania. The Puget Sound Symposium was co-sponsored by the Eco-Justice Task Force of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Commission for Church in Society of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Pacific Lutheran University, the Washington State Department of Ecology, the Puget Sound Water Quality Authority, and the Puget Sound National Bank. The Pennsylvania symposium was jointly sponsored by the Eco-Justice Task Force, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, and eight presbyteries and two synods from the tri-state area. Both events were notable for their integration of scientific, economic, political, and ethical perspectives to produce a holistic overview of the water problems in their regions.

The Puget Sound case illustrates the kinds of problems that are found in relation to countless other bays and watersheds in the nation and throughout the world. The growth of population in the Puget sound basin (soon to be three million), the various kinds of development accompanying it, and the use of polluting technologies have led to the pollution of the sound and to a major loss of wetlands.

Three classes of contaminants affect the sound: synthetic organic chemicals, inorganic chemicals, and the biological contaminants that come mostly from sewage. About 20 percent of these contaminants eventually reach the open ocean, but most are deposited in sediments in the sound.

The main sources of "point" pollution (from specific, identifiable points of discharge) are municipal sewage treatment plants, industries, and "combined sewers" (which carry both sewage and storm water and overflow when their capacity is exceeded). "Nonpoint" or "runoff" sources of pollution are numerous and dispersed—e.g., soil erosion, water runoff containing pesticide and herbicide residues, failed septic systems, landfill leachate, and spillages and illegal discharges from boats.

In areas of high density and industrial activity, such as the Puget Sound watershed, the detrimental effects of pollution keep mounting. Scientifically, much remains unknown about the seriousness of the damage done or that which is likely to

occur. Nor can scientists say definitely when "clean" water is clean enough. The hard political-economic fact is that it is expensive to keep water clean and even more expensive to restore it to an acceptable state.

But the detrimental effects of deteriorating water quality demand that action be taken. So hard questions are raised about drawing lines and making trade-offs (slower development for more protection?) and about who should pay and what measures will work. While everyone agrees that education is part of the solution, there is disagreement over the relative merits of using regulations or price incentives (i.e., charging polluters for polluting, so that they have an incentive to do otherwise). Underlying all these measures are questions of justice and concern for creation—the welfare of the nonhuman, the claims of future generations, and the strong inclination of the powerful to reap benefits for themselves, while transferring burdens to the weak and the unborn.

This case study shows the need for the church at all levels, national to local, to support through education and influence on public policy a vigorous campaign to improve water quality throughout the nation.

Therefore, the 202nd General Assembly (1990) recommends:

A. Basic Policies in Support of Water Quality

1. Increased federal, state, local, and private funding for the investigation of air, water, and ground contamination, to include basic scientific research, the establishment of baselines for data, and the monitoring of specific problems.

2. The pursuit of a three-pronged strategy—education, regulation, and economic incentives—to combat environmental pollution.

3. Greater coordination of legal jurisdictions, reliance on the concept of watershed or groundwater basin in identifying the jurisdictions to be coordinated, and the use of integrated approaches in planning and action.

4. Placing the burden of proof that water quality is not degraded on those who discharge or introduce potentially harmful substances to the environment.

B. Implementation of Policies

1. The vigorous protection of remaining wetlands through the enforcement of existing laws.

2. Increased funding for the conversion of municipal sewage plants that provide only primary treatment (50 percent removal of suspended solids and metals) to facilities that provide secondary treatment (85 to 95 percent removal), and for the elimination of combined sewer systems and storm runoff in urban areas.

3. Tighter restrictions on point sources of water pollution and illegal dumping.

4. Increased efforts to address the problem of pollution from urban and rural runoff.

5. Research on methods of preventing and controlling ground water contamination.

6. Consistent application of national water quality standards.

7. Continued study and greater control of acid rain and airborne contaminants that enter surface water, in coordination with air quality authorities.

8. Increased federal funding for national estuary planning and action.

9. The upgrading of municipal water systems.

CHURCH SUPPORT OF WATER QUALITY

The General Assembly notes that the educational role of the church should put considerations of water quality in the context of its basic commitment to eco-justice and restoring creation. Specific references should be made, when possible, to local or nearby problems of water quality.

Study and ethical reflection should move on into community action and participation in the inevitable task of balancing the interests of competing groups. Churches should work ecumenically on specific problems of water quality and should foster public leadership, provide ethical resources for community decision making, and help develop community support for necessary action.

When the church makes specific recommendations to policymakers on scientific and technical problems on which the church, as such, has no special expertise, it should do so only after studying the issues involved and making the best use it can of expert opinion. It should offer its wisdom without claim to infallibility, but with special cognizance of the ethical and spiritual dimensions of the issues it addresses.

The credibility of the church depends on practicing what it preaches. With respect to water quality, this means at minimum that it takes steps to ensure that its wastes do not contribute to further degradation. If its wastes flow into an inadequate treatment facility, the integrity of the church requires it to advocate the upgrading of the facility and to contribute its fair share of the higher costs.

3. Area Three: Wildlife and Wildlands

Biblical faith originated with a land ethic; the Hebrews discerned a close link between good soil (adamah) and spirited humanity (adam). What they perceived to be a promised land we now understand to be a promised planet, the context of covenant, chosen for abundant life. Love of the land is expressed in the traditions of every people. The Hebrews "integrated this love into a comprehensive moral framework that encouraged human creativity while it affirmed the integrity of other species and the landscape itself" (Richard Austin, *Hope for the Land* [Atlanta: John Knox Press, 1988], p. 94).

The divinely given natural world is vanishing, while the "built environment" of human culture has been increasing dramatically. About 96 percent of the contiguous United States is developed, farmed, grazed, timbered, or designated for multiple use. Only about 2 percent has been designated as wilderness, and another 2 percent, as yet little developed, might be suitable for wilderness. Still, even the built environment, with its private property, may retain much naturalness. The land of promise is never just a piece of real estate, but a landscape, an environment supporting life.

National policy toward wildlands must involve collective choice producing a public land ethic. Maximum effort must be made through national, state, and local policy to protect the minimum of genuine wildlands that remain. But laws and regulations will be ineffective unless they are supported by widespread voluntary compliance, based upon common values.

In addition to preserving a place for natural sectors and even some wildness within the built environment, responsible environmental policy provides for wild domains, to which human beings come only as visitors who do not remain. A forest or other wilderness area may be experienced religiously as a sacred space, and Christian people should have a particular interest in preserving such places as sanctuaries. For this reason among others, the church should insist that economic values cannot justify the further reduction of the pristine

natural environment. In the U.S., human needs can be met from the 96 percent of land that has already been domesticated.

In law, wildlife are not private property but part of the commons, whether on public or private land. The mobile animals do not stop at property lines; they do not result from human labor and are largely outside human control; they ought not to be captured and imprisoned without just cause. Compassion for wild animals consists usually in respecting their wildness and allowing nature to take its course. Even their suffering is in the context of natural history and is instrumental to that history's continuance.

The biblical story tells of the first endangered species project—Noah and his ark. The teaching is clear, that God wills for each species on earth to continue, despite whatever judgments fall on human wickedness. At the level of species all concepts of ownership ought to lapse; no one "owns" a species. Anyone who would destroy species in the name of development takes, in monstrous arrogance, the prerogative of God. It is past time for the church to call humans to respect the plenitude of being in the wild world surrounding us, a plenitude once so vast and now so quickly vanishing.

The meek, said Jesus, "shall inherit the earth" (Matt. 5:5). Biblical meekness means the controlled use of power, disciplined by respect and love. The blessing is conferred on humans who control their desires in their relations with others. We can see now that the blessing of the promised earth is conferred also on those who control their desires in relations with wild creatures and the land.

Therefore, the 202nd General Assembly (1990) recommends:

A. Basic Policies in Support of Wildlife and Wildlands, Consistent with the Spirit of the Following Aphorisms

—Keep wildlife wild and free.

—Avoid irreversible change.

—Protect and expand remaining public wildlands.

—Optimize natural diversity; optimize natural stability.

—Increase options for experiencing natural history.

—Do not "discount" the future value of the environment.

—Respect life, the species more than the individual.

—Respect life, the more sentient the more respect.

—Think of nature as a community, more than a commodity.

(These aphorisms indicate that the more fragile, rare, or beautiful an environment, the more carefully it ought to be treated.)

B. Implementation of Policies

1. Preserve wildlands in all the diverse kinds of American ecosystems, including wildlands near urban areas; and restore degraded wild-lands, reintroducing all the original native fauna and flora where possible.

2. Protect wetlands, showing special concern for critical environments that support internationally migratory wildlife.

3. Support opportunities for wilderness and wildlife education for all ages.

4. Stop cutting remaining pristine forests on public lands.

5. Provide interpretation and economic support for those persons whose lives and jobs must be altered in the interest of long-range environmental quality.

6. In economic development, prefer the most environmentally sustainable option over development that maximizes short-term profits.

7. Support Native American efforts to retain and restore wildlands and to maintain a sustainable relationship with wildlife.

8. Prohibit trade in endangered wild animals and endangered plants, or products derived from them.

9. Stop indiscriminate killing of wild animals.

10. Make a high priority the welfare of all zoo animals and other wild animals in captivity.

C. Church Support of Wildlife and Wildlands

1. Include an understanding and appreciation of wildlife and wild-lands in all teaching efforts.

2. Mobilize the resources of church camp and conference centers to foster environmental appreciation and stewardship.

3. Provide opportunities for wilderness experience combined with Christian fellowship.

4. Manage church lands and properties according to the most environmentally sensitive alternative.

5. Support the Christian ministry in national and state parks and other public wildlands.

4. ***Area Four: Reducing and Managing Our Wastes***

A recent analysis of the volume of hazardous and solid waste (excluding nuclear) showed a U.S. annual total production of about half a billion tons. This does not include other forms of waste such as industrial "non-hazardous" waste, oil, gas, and mining waste.

Except for deep-well injection (principally for oil and gas wastes) or on-site storage, the options for disposal are to recycle, landfill, incinerate, or export. Community concern about waste management has grown rapidly as a majority of the states reach the limit of their own landfill capacity. A fifth approach to solving the industrial and municipal waste problems, of course, is to reduce waste by reducing wasteful production and consumption.

Background for recommendations on solid and hazardous waste management may be found in Part I of this report, as well as in papers in *Church and Society* Magazine (March/April 1990) and in the task force resource paper, "Keeping and Healing the Creation," pp. 31-38. In light of that background we move directly to policy considerations.

a. Solid Waste

The 202nd General Assembly (1990) recommends:

A. Basic Policies for Solid Waste Reduction and Management

1. The federal government should assert leadership to develop a comprehensive national policy, coordinated with state and local initiatives, to conserve the resources that are now expended wastefully by

(a) reducing as much as possible the amount of garbage requiring disposal;

(b) giving clear definition to the roles of each level of government in meeting the solid waste challenge;

(c) setting appropriate standards for solid waste facilities and operations; and

(d) ensuring that the financial and environmental costs of carrying out this strategy are distributed equitably.

2. The highest priority should be given to waste reduction—to reduce the quantity and/or change the composition of products that become waste, by substituting products that are more durable, repairable, recyclable, less resource-intensive, less toxic, and biodegradable; and phasing out products that are injurious and unnecessary.

3. The second highest priority should be given to recycling—to keep materials that are still useful from the waste stream.

4. Land filling should be kept to a minimum, and the construction and operation of landfills should meet rigorous standards for protecting the environment from pollution, both during operation and after closure.

5. Incineration, though a possible source of energy, must not be a substitute for waste reduction and recycling. It may be necessary in some cases to reduce the volume of waste that must be landfilled or to destroy some toxic chemicals and pathogenic organisms. Combustion facilities should be made as environmentally safe as possible—by means of effective technology and competent operation.

B. Implementation of Policies

1. Individuals and institutions should make choices as consumers that will help implement a strategy of waste reduction by minimizing the purchase and use of throwaway items and other products that generate waste in manufacture, marketing, or disposal.

2. Manufacturers and vendors should avoid unnecessary packaging, and governments at all levels should pursue measures (e.g., "disposal" or "packaging" taxes) to discourage nonessential packaging and products that are nondurable or nonrecyclable.

3. Municipalities should set significant goals for the proportion of solid waste recycled (some have already achieved 50 percent or more).

4. Municipalities, community development agencies or coalitions,

and private entrepreneurs should give serious consideration to the possibilities for starting new local manufacturing companies and businesses based on the recycling of materials to make new products.

5. State and federal incentives should encourage industries based on recycling, development of new products from recycled materials, and expansion of markets for recycled materials. Corporations, government agencies, churches, and other institutions should help increase market demand by purchasing paper and other products made from recycled materials.

6. Municipal recycling programs should be (a) mandatory, (b) designed for efficiency and ease of compliance, and (c) inclusive of as many kinds of materials as possible.

7. Special programs should be undertaken to separate household toxics—cleaners, solvents, paints, pesticides, batteries—from the municipal waste stream, so that they may be kept from the municipal landfill and either recycled or sent to a toxic waste facility.

8. The ash residue from incineration should be disposed of according to its toxicity.

9. Landfills and incinerators should be located where they can be best situated according to scientific, technical, and socially just criteria, not where there is the least political resistance.

b. Hazardous Waste (and Other Toxic Threats)

Social justice issues abound in the hazardous waste area. A few are: exposure in the workplace; the location of production facilities and hazardous waste disposal sites in poor, rural, and racial/ethnic communities; the export of banned substances (primarily pesticides) and hazardous wastes to nations; and the deleterious health effects of abandoned waste disposal sites on surrounding communities. These and other problems demand attention and action, and underscore the need for critical examination of the lifestyles that contribute to the problems.

Regulatory legislation deals broadly with hazardous substances including hazardous wastes, specific air and water pollutants, and certain chemicals. Additional facets of the problem include runoff from agricultural irrigation and urban pavements, medical wastes that foul beaches, low-level radioactive wastes from industry, and uranium mill tailings. Earlier General Assemblies have touched on some of these problems.

The 202nd General Assembly (1990) recommends:

A. Basic Policies on Hazardous Waste

1. Support the development of public policies that result in reducing the generation of hazardous wastes and reduction in the use of hazardous substances. Techniques include (a) substituting nonhazardous for hazardous substances used in production processes,

(b) changing end-products so fewer hazardous substances are required,

(c) modifying or modernizing production lines, (d) better housekeeping practices during production, and (e) recycling hazardous substances and other materials within the production process.

2. Support hazardous waste source reduction public policies, and only as a last resort, public policies that rely on incineration, other treatment technologies, and land disposal.

3. Support just solutions to the selection of hazardous waste disposal sites. Incorporate social justice considerations into the criteria for siting waste-producing or handling facilities, recognizing the grievous impact hazardous wastes have had on poor and racial ethnic communities.

4. Profess our solidarity with workers and communities feeling the impact of poor hazardous substance use and disposal practices by supporting policies that (a) encourage the development of consistent environmental regulations across the U.S. and in other nations, (b) provide understandable information to workers and the general public on workplace and community toxic hazards, (c) locate dangerous production facilities away from population centers, and (d) identify and inform those who in the past have been exposed to hazardous substances.

5. Support policies with economic disincentives to pollute and create hazardous wastes. Support policies with strong incentives for all producers and consumers to move quickly toward the production and use of nontoxic alternative products and to ensure safe collection and recycling of the wastes.

6. Encourage revision of the pricing of consumer products to reflect the total costs associated with production and disposal, including but not limited to worker health costs, disposal costs of the non-recyclable byproducts of production, and disposal costs for the product when it is no longer useful or needed.

7. Ensure that, as far as possible, those responsible for creating toxic and hazardous pollution bear the cost of cleanup and safe disposition.

8. Encourage public policies that address under-regulated aspects of the hazardous waste problem, such as agricultural application of pesticides, storm and irrigation runoff, and the household use of hazardous substances.

9. Encourage full participation in the decision-making process by all who are affected by the siting or cleanup of hazardous waste sites in their communities.

10. Educate citizens regarding personal responsibilities for hazardous and solid waste problems through examples of environmentally sensitive individual and institutional decisions.

B. Church Support of Solid and Hazardous Waste Policies

1. Churches should be involved in local policy formation and

decision making on solid and hazardous waste management by relating to the appropriate government agencies and concerned groups of citizens; by offering support, mediation, and advocacy; and by helping individuals and groups temper narrow self-interest with concern for the common good.

2. Churches should support, promote, and monitor solid waste recycling programs. While these programs should be a government responsibility, churches may need to initiate recycling efforts in communities where governments are slow to act.

3. Churches should direct attention to the environmental and justice issues that lie beyond an immediate solid or hazardous waste crisis—placing pollution in the larger context of resource depletion and the eco-justice crisis, and showing that waste management is not a problem to be solved once and for all, but a concern to be addressed continuously.

5. Area Five: Overcoming Atmospheric Instability—Global Warming and Ozone Depletion

Background information on ozone depletion and global warming may be found in Part I of this report, in "Keeping and Healing the Creation," pp. 21-25, and in *Church and Society* Magazine (March/April 1990).

We note that the phenomena determining climate are very complex and that scientific opinion varies with respect to the reliability of models projecting temperature increases. The weight of evidence, however, justifies a serious response to the threat of global warming.

Ozone depletion and global warming have risen rapidly to head the list of concerns about the future of creation. They are significantly different from other problems in several respects. They have to do with global problems that lie ahead and cannot now be measured. No place on earth will be unaffected, however. Without united action worldwide, no nation can do much about global warming and ozone depletion. They represent the unintended consequences of proud industrial achievements. The gases released were not toxic. Chlorofluorocarbons (CFC) have had all sorts of beneficial uses, and we breathe air with CO_2 in it. Now in the upper atmosphere these gases are doing enormous damage. But we cannot get them down again. We can only stop sending them up and thereby limit the damage.

In the case of CO_2, substantial reduction of emissions means changing the energy basis of our whole civilization. We knew that fossil fuels would not last indefinitely; but suddenly the danger is that they will last too long, that the world will not make the transition soon enough to simpler, more efficient, and renewable energy sources and technologies.

In 1989 the United Church of Canada and eight European churches came to a "Covenantal Agreement Regarding the Threat of Global Warming" They did this in connection with the meeting in Basel, Switzerland, of Protestant and Catholic Christians from East and West Europe on the Justice, Peace, and Integrity of Creation theme of the World Council of Churches. They agreed to work together on the problem of global warming and to give particular attention to the role of energy. They have already

made an important approach to governments by advocating cooperation on reduction in the use of fossil fuels by means of energy-saving technologies and the development of renewable (solar) energy supplies. They presented comments and policy statements to the October 1989 environmental meeting in Sofia, Bulgaria, of governments belonging to the Conference on Security and Cooperation in Europe.

These are significant developments. An invitation has come to U.S. churches, through their representatives on the NCC Eco-Justice Working Group and through their delegates to the 1990 World Convocation on JPIC in Seoul, Korea, to participate in this international cooperative effort of churches on global warming.

The 202nd General Assembly (1990) recommends:
A. Ecumenical Participation and International Participation

1. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) declares its serious concern, in concert with ecumenical partners, that the global atmospheric warming trend (the greenhouse effect) represents one of the most serious global environmental challenges to the health, security, and stability of human life and natural ecosystems; and

2. The church affirms its intention to participate in ecumenical efforts to address this challenge cooperatively with Canadian and European churches and the conciliar movement.

3. The General Assembly affirms its intention to participate in the United Nations International Conference on Environment and Development, to be held in 1992, and requests a report to a subsequent General Assembly as appropriate.

B. Policies on Global Warming

1. The United States, as consumer of nearly a quarter of the world's energy, must take the lead in reducing its own combustion of fossil fuels and shifting to renewable sources of energy which do not contribute to the atmospheric buildup of carbon dioxide.

2. Appropriate response to the warnings of impending climate change requires an extended frame of reference for decision-making by governments, international agencies, industries, educational institutions, churches, and community organizations. The U.S government, other governments, the United Nations, and appropriate scientific organizations should increase their capability to monitor and project trends in atmospheric temperature and to make broad environmental and social assessments.

3. The United States should work through the United Nations and appropriate diplomatic channels to reach firm international agreements for steady and substantial reduction of the gases

causing climate change, and for halting deforestation and promoting reforestation. Some programs already in place should be given an enlarged role and increased funding—the U.N. Environment Programme, for example, and the U.N.'s programs on development and population.

4. The United States government should adopt legislation and administrative policies, with adequate funding, for vigorously stepped-up research and development of energy-efficient technologies.

5. The U.S. government should promote the introduction and use of energy-efficient technologies by applying carefully targeted incentives and disincentives.

6. Similarly, the U.S. government should adopt legislation and administrative policies, with adequate funding, to step up research and development on the various sources and technologies for solar energy. Appropriate incentives and disincentives to accelerate the transition to an economy based on renewable, safe, nonpolluting, affordable energy should be developed and implemented.

7. The United States and the other industrialized nations should assist developing countries to achieve the energy sufficiency necessary for the general improvement of living standards that these countries desperately need. This assistance should include appropriate technology transfers for pollution control and energy efficiency. In particular, assistance will be necessary to enable developing countries to find equitable solutions to the problems of debt and land use that figure heavily in the destruction of their forests.

8. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency should act promptly to strengthen fuel economy and emission standards for automobiles, buses, and trucks by mandating and consistently enforcing a schedule of energy efficiency improvements, leading to a substantially higher standard of efficiency within a few years. Incentives and disincentives to encourage consumers to choose fuel-efficient vehicles will also be in order.

9. Comparable standard-setting and incentive-generating measures should be advanced by the U.S. Bureau of Standards with respect to efficiency improvements in lighting, heating, air-conditioning, appliances, building construction, the weatherization of existing buildings, and the cogeneration of heat and electricity (with legislation as necessary where the bureau's powers do not apply). As more efficient technologies become available, public policy should encourage and facilitate their adoption and use by individuals and businesses.

10. Public policy should encourage alternatives to private automobiles. Alternatives include municipal mass transit, railroads, bicycles, and walking.

C. Policies on Ozone Depletion

To a large extent the kinds of policies needed for reducing the emissions of chlorofluorocarbons and other ozone-destroying gases parallel the policies required for reducing the buildup of the greenhouse gases. The CFCs, which are the leading cause of ozone depletion, also add significantly to the greenhouse effect. To protect the ozone shield, there clearly is need for international action through

1. leadership by the United States, which is the largest contributor to the problem;

2. a longer-term and global frame of reference, with improved foresight capability by governments and international agencies;

3. strong international agreements and cooperative arrangements; specifically, firm adherence to the Montreal and Helsinki agreements on phasing out the production of CFCs by the end of the century and discontinuing the other ozone-destroying chemicals as soon as possible, with continuing efforts to bring additional nations into the pact;

4. improved technologies and development of acceptable substitutes for the chemicals that must be phased out; rapid shifts in production processes;

5. assistance to developing countries by providing them with information, training, funding mechanisms, and technology transfers that will enable them to participate in the Montreal-Helsinki pact and have access to the improved technologies and substitute chemicals;

6. strict standards, in line with international agreements but enforced by governments;

7. incentives and disincentives that lead actors in a market economy to make environmentally rational decisions.

D. Church Support Through Personal and Institutional Practice

1. The American people, beginning with members of our churches, must be challenged to form personal habits consistent with the need to cut back on the emissions of the gases that are causing the greenhouse effect and the depletion of the ozone layer. This means energy conservation and cutting back on the use of fossil fuel energy. It means avoiding foams made with CFCs and making sure that CFC-based coolant is not released when air conditioners are serviced.

2. The greenhouse and ozone problems reinforce the call to a less materialistic and wasteful style of life. It is unrealistic and self-serving to think that efficient and renewable energy technologies, now in the early stage of the transition, will take effect fast enough to provide sufficient insurance against the potentially disastrous consequences of global warming—unless there is also a move away from unnecessary and wasteful production and consumption.

3. The church in its own life must teach, exemplify, and advocate the values and principles, policies and practices that foster energy

efficiency, the transition to renewable sources, and the avoidance of products that break down the ozone. Obviously the church must be responsible in the construction and maintenance of its own buildings. If habits of conservation and responsible consuming are cultivated consistently, we shall discover many practical applications of our values.

As this report has repeatedly made clear, the affliction of the creation will not be healed unless the human part of creation undergoes significant personal and institutional transformation. Our recommendations suggest something of what the transformation may entail, but they fall far short of prescribing all that is needed. That will be the agenda for the coming years.

UNITED STATES ROLE IN THE UNITED NATIONS

The U.N., through the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP) and other agencies with related concerns (Food and Agricultural Organization [FAO], World Health Organization [WHO], United Nations Educational, Social and Cultural Organization [UNESCO], and United Nations Population Fund [UNFPA]) has fostered research, the development of international law, and programs addressing many of the concerns of this report. It serves as the focus for the coordination of global responses to these concerns.

Therefore, the 202nd General Assembly urges:

Increased U.S. cooperation with the United Nations Environment Programme (UNEP), including increased U.S. funding and a strong U.S. role, in the U.N. context, in the development of and adherence to international environmental law.

C. A Concluding Word About Other Urgent Social Policy Questions

The preceding recommendations for social policy respond to several current environmental problems, without attempting to cover other urgent issues. The reasoning of the task force and of its appointing body, the Committee on Social Witness Policy, was that church bodies and members need to become qualitatively engaged in environmental policy inquiry and advocacy, rather than attempting to deal with every facet of the subject.

Two social policy concerns about which the task force drew no conclusions, but which deserve ecumenical exploration and future policy development work as needed, are animal well-being and sustainable development.

1. **Animal Well-Being**

There is increasing recognition that all the creatures with whom we share the planet have value in their own right. What then is an appropriate human relation to other animals, particularly animals raised for food or utilized in experiments? The key issues are how much animal suffering and what kind of genetic alteration of animals are justifiable for human benefit? These questions are especially urgent in relation to animals with advanced nervous systems. Any attempt to answer these questions brings us face to face with anthropocentrism, which has dominated recent Christian theology, and a mechanistic view of nature, which has dominated modern science.

By emphasizing that the church's theology should move beyond anthropocentrism to meet the eco-justice crisis, and by making particular recommendations to preserve wildlife and wildlands, this report also speaks indirectly to the issues of animal "rights" and the well-being of domesticated animals. The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) also participates in ecumenical explorations of ethical issues that surround genetic engineering of plants and animals. Further policy work on this subject may be appropriate as the ecumenical conversation proceeds.

2. Sustainable Development

This eco-justice report exposes the severe limitations—"tilling without keeping"—of the prevailing model of economic development. But the task force was not ready to state precise implications for economic development policy. Instead, this report recognizes the importance and difficulty of implementing "sustainable development," the theme of "Our Common Future," a report of the World Commission on Environment and Development (WCED).

Sustainable development has become a key concept of the organized environmental community with respect to the global issues of aid, debt, trade, investment, technology transfer, population growth, and international cooperation. But has development been reconceived to make it sustainable? Presbyterian General Assemblies have spoken often to the need for appropriate development assistance—to assist the world's poor to achieve economic sufficiency and social participation. With the ecumenical community, we need to think harder about the eco-justice crisis, particularly the ongoing tension between sufficiency and sustainability. Perhaps the moral resolution of this tension will emerge from a sense of solidarity, which insists that all must have access to sustainable sufficiency. Then, our growing

concern for the environment will strengthen our commitment to human justice. We know now that efforts to achieve justice and peace that ignore considerations of sustainability are shortsighted and fragmenting. Similarly, environmental protection efforts that ignore the ecologically destructive consequences of poverty and maldistribution are flawed, if not self-defeating. Faithful people, who see the endangered planet as God's wounded creation and hear the call to restore creation, human and nonhuman, will seek to discover how to make institutions, economic arrangements, and prevailing lifestyles consistent with all the norms of eco-justice.

PART IV.

THE CHURCH'S LIFE AND PROGRAM

The task force has reviewed existing programs of the General Assembly's ministry units and related bodies in light of the eco-justice crisis (see Appendix Three). It has found that a modest amount of program activity related to environmental stewardship and eco-justice is occurring at many points within the denomination-wide mission agencies of the church. This is gratifying. It indicates that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has already begun to respond to the eco-justice crisis. Much more needs to be done, however, to make the church's program commensurate with the seriousness of the environmental problems that face our society and all the peoples of the planet.

Therefore, the 202nd General Assembly (1990) of the PC(USA) declares: The new global reality and our faith call us to make environmental justice and stewardship a central concern of our church's mission and to encourage local congregations and presbyteries to link with existing environmental organizations in order to make the most appropriate lifestyle changes as individuals and as a community of faith, and to mobilize at every level for maximum involvement and influence.

A. Creative Mission Initiative

To implement a focused strategy of creative initiative, the 202nd General Assembly (1990) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) calls for a special emphasis on eco-justice and recommends formation of a General Assembly office or program group on Environmental Justice and Stewardship, coordinated by the Social Justice and Peacemaking Ministry Unit, with enough new staff and budget to cultivate a churchwide network designed to respond to global and local environmental crises and to develop denominational and ecumenical capability for significant eco-justice mission.

A focused program of creative initiative enables the PC(USA) to take appropriate leadership in:

1. Churchwide Education and Leadership Development

Through reflection and action on the eco-justice crisis at congregational and middle governing body levels, the church can deepen theological and ethical analysis of human responsibility and empower church members to take appropriate action.

2. Public Policy Advocacy

There is a compelling need for major social policy advocacy with federal, state, and local government and with private industry. This advocacy would express the church's environmental policy concerns as specified in Section III of this report. The church should approach this task ecumenically and coalitionally where possible, with the goal of enabling grass roots Presbyterians and the Washington-based religious community to give adequate attention to environmental justice and stewardship issues.

3. Global Response

The Presbyterian Church should lead in developing international ecumenical partnerships on issues of environmental stewardship, such as export or dumping of solid and toxic wastes, the destruction of tropical rain forests, implications of global warming for international economic development, and models of integrated rural development. Such initiatives connect with the worldwide ecumenical focus on Justice, Peace and Integrity of Creation and provide a way to coordinate faith and witness.

4. Citizen Participation and Organization in the U.S.A.

Grants made by the church to local and regional projects should strengthen leadership development and support church member and citizen participation and organization to address the environmental crisis. This function includes the development of a body of technical expertise to assist such efforts and provide legal and scientific support as needed.

5. Corporate Responsibility

By encouraging corporations to adopt environmentally responsible practices through dialogues, shareholder resolutions, and, in extreme cases, divestment, the church can assist governmental units as they seek to clean up the environment and press for social justice. Encouragement of environmental responsibility also needs to be directed to governmental units that degrade the environment.

6. Institutional and Individual Lifestyle Integrity

To integrate environmental stewardship fully into the life of the church and the ministry of all members, a creative initiative should build on the experience of the Presbyterian Hunger Program and the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program. In addition to significant liturgical renewal and assessment of daily habits, a focus on lifestyle integrity might include pilot projects on

recycling, tree planting, land trusts, creative programming at camp and conference facilities, new building designs, etc.

7. **Coordination of Program Efforts**

The new office or program group will coordinate program infusion efforts of other ministry units and related bodies and provide linkage for synods and presbyteries in their mission of environmental justice and stewardship.

Adequate staff and budget to accomplish this creative mission initiative as outlined will require both the continued utilization of current staff and budget committed to environmental stewardship and the allocation of new staff and financial resources.

Currently, one member of the staff of the Church and Public Issues Group of the Social Justice and Peacemaking Ministry Unit works half-time on environmental stewardship, with emphasis on its corporate responsibility aspects. In addition, one member of the staff of the Presbyterian Hunger Program works part-time on lifestyle integrity, with emphasis on the relationship between personal and institutional lifestyles and environmental stewardship.

In order to implement this creative initiative fully, additional resources will be required, as follows:

a. One person working part-time in Washington, D.C., to carry out Public Policy Advocacy and Global Response. Estimated cost of salary and benefits is $23,250.

b. One person working full-time in Louisville, to carry out Education and Leadership Development, Citizen Participation and Organization, as well as Program Effort Coordination in the denomination and ecumenically. Estimated cost of salary and benefits is $46,500.

These new positions will require additional support staff at an estimated cost of $44,400.

In addition to the cost of new staff and office space, the financial resources required to foster program development and to cover administration and travel are estimated to be $70,000, if the creative mission initiative is to be implemented.

Note: Since a number of initiatives are already being undertaken by current staff of the Social Justice and Peacemaking Ministry Unit, it is assumed that many of the components of the creative mission initiative will be pursued even without the additional resources. On the other hand, the program cannot be

implemented beyond what is currently being done without these additional resources.

The purpose of creative initiative is to develop concrete focus and extensive involvement in eco-justice mission commensurate with the urgent need to undertake it now.

"Now" has a decade-specific meaning; initiatives taken in the 1990s are crucial to the ecological and social trajectory of the next half century. It is likely that the emerging threat of environmental destruction, coupled with an intensifying struggle for diminishing resources, will occupy center stage in world politics for the next several decades, just as the cold war did for the past forty years. In this new situation it is imperative for the church, working with other major social organizations, to move rapidly to establish a significant and sustained witness to restoring the creation.

B. **Infusion of Existing Programs**

There is a need for accelerated infusion of eco-justice perspectives and concerns at all points of mission program where this may appropriately be accomplished. Therefore, the 202nd General Assembly (1990) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) recommends:

That the various mission units and related bodies of the General Assembly be commended for the initiatives taken or beginning that pertain to the issues of environmental degradation and eco-injustice; and that they expand such efforts to restore creation with appropriate commitments of budget and staff time. Throughout the broad spectrum of the church's program and mission there are ways of responding that are fitting in terms of the ongoing functions of these units. Restoring a healthy environment is essential to human well-being and the fulfillment of the church's mission goals.

With respect to particular program units and related bodies, the General Assembly recommends:

1. **That the Evangelism and Church Development Unit:**

a. Give emphasis to the understanding of evangelism in "New Day Dawning," wherein it is stated that "evangelism is inseparably connected to social responsibility and justice," "challenges persons to call for constructive change of our systems," and "seeks the liberation of people from many types of oppression."

b. Clarify this emphasis to show that: (1) justice in our time means eco-justice, (2) damage to the environment constitutes

an unjust use of the wealth of our planet, and (3) the destruction of forests and land and the pollution of air and water are oppressive of people.

c. Highlight models of congregational life in which environmental stewardship is seen as a witness to God's redeeming activity.

d. In guidelines for construction and renovation of church buildings, and in the criteria for grants or loans for such purposes, set specific standards for fuel conservation and energy efficiency; and in counsel and advice pertaining to church property encourage ecologically sound land use and a responsible relationship to the natural environment.

2. That the Social Justice and Peacemaking Unit:

a. That the Presbyterian Hunger Program:

(1) In considering grants for agricultural development, hunger and lifestyle education, or public policy advocacy, be particularly sensitive to the need for projects that make the connections of environmental responsibility and lifestyle integrity to the ending of hunger.

(2) Continue its emphasis on sustainability in agriculture as this pertains both to domestic agriculture and to agriculture in developing countries and consider questions of sustainability in evaluating proposals for development projects.

(3) Strengthen the Presbyterian Hunger Program's lifestyle emphasis with greater attention to global environmental stewardship through project funding and development of educational resources and strategies, particularly with Hunger Action Enablers.

b. That the World Service Program, including Community Development:

(1) Be commended for and encouraged to continue grants to address eco-justice problems, including grants in support of community response to toxic disasters.

(2) Develop specific guidelines and corresponding budget appropriations in World Service/Disaster Response and Community Development for project funding and education, ecumenical initiatives, and church-based community organizing focused on environmental justice and stewardship.

(3) That the Community Development Office seek to strengthen its relationships with community organizations which

address such problems as toxic waste facility siting, ground water contamination, worker safety, and urban air pollution, which put disproportionate burdens on poor and racial ethnic communities.

(4) Encourage presbyteries and congregations to participate in community organizations that address these problems by advocating equitable sharing of burdens and responsibilities for restoring the environment.

c. That the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI):

(1) Give increased emphasis to the environmental stewardship dimension of the General Assembly investment policies.

(2) Consider the development of specific investment guidelines, including possible use of divestment as a strategy, to address the relationship of corporations to the environment.

d. That the part-time work of the Office of Environmental Stewardship be expanded as part of the model of Creative Program Initiative sketched above.

e. That Self-Development of People make specific reference to eco-justice problems in its guidelines for proposals, and that its project evaluations include criteria of ecological responsibility and sustainability.

f. That the International Justice Program:

(1) Utilize its contacts with networks around the world to learn from peoples in other cultures about appropriate responses to the eco-justice crisis and ways to eliminate its impact upon the poor.

(2) Seek to establish linkages between Third World struggles and domestic struggles for environmental justice and stewardship.

(3) Enhance the church's ongoing consideration of ecojustice issues by providing input from partner churches in developing countries.

g. That the Presbyterian Peacemaking Program be commended for the decision to hold its October 1990 conference at Montreat on the theme Making Peace with the Earth and be requested to emphasize the relevance of eco-justice to peacemaking in subsequent conferences and program materials; and that the PC(USA) United Nations Office

increase its contact with the United Nations Environment Programme and support its educational efforts, including the Environmental Sabbath.

3. That the Women's Unit:

a. Stress eco-justice themes at the numerous points in its work where this would be appropriate: e.g., its work on economic justice, its leadership development, and the 1991 Women's Gathering at Iowa State University.

b. Include in its programming and publications an exploration of the contributions of feminist theology to the church's mission of restoring creation, e.g., the concern of feminist theology for relatedness that does not dominate people and nature.

c. Seek opportunities in its programming and publications to highlight the increasing deprivation of women and children in deteriorating environments and the role of women in sustainable development worldwide. (See *The African Women's Assembly: Women and Sustainable Development,* Washington, D.C.: Worldwide Publications, 1989.)

d. Incorporate eco-justice concerns into the guidelines for its grants and special giving programs.

4. That the Global Mission Ministry Unit:

a. Give increased attention to ecological challenges, because of their implications for mission work on six continents, and because of the need to bring eyewitness accounts of environmental degradation and exploitation to U.S. congregations.

b. Integrate eco-justice concerns into the orientation and continuing education programs of mission personnel; seek opportunities for placement of mission personnel who have special expertise and concern with respect to eco-justice and sustainable development; and itinerate mission personnel and nationals in congregations and middle governing bodies in order to provide first-hand reports of ecological destruction and its links to First World policies, together with responses of partner churches to such concerns.

c. Assign a staff person responsibility for coordinating the church's engagement in the eco-justice dimension of global mission.

5. That the Education and Congregational Nurture Unit:

a. Be commended for the materials already in use or being prepared dealing with creation and eco-justice concerns.

b. Feature a select number of printed and video resources designed to educate the whole church on the eco-justice crisis and the church's response;

c. Continue to build environmental justice and stewardship subject matter into its curriculum materials.

d. Highlight the church's mission to restore creation in agenda of the Youth Triennium.

6. That the Racial Ethnic Ministry Unit:

a. Lift up the environmental awareness and sensitivity that is built into Native American traditions and show the interplay between the Christian story and the Native American story.

b. Foster mission linkage with poor and minority communities, both urban and rural, which are particularly vulnerable to toxic hazards or face complex policy issues requiring an eco-justice response.

c. Undergird local ministries with minority communities, both urban and rural, where it is necessary to face questions of toxic hazards, air or water pollution, and other eco-justice issues; encourage such ministries to help people to protect themselves from unfair suffering connected with those issues and participate in organized efforts to find solutions.

7. That the Theology and Worship Unit:

a. Support work on the integrity of creation in relation to justice and peace, as informed by the studies and meetings of the World Council of Churches, the World Alliance of Reformed Churches, the National Council of Churches, and various denominations (for example, interdenominational consultations such as the Presbyterian and Lutheran symposium, Responses to the Environmental Challenges, held March 1-3, 1990.)

b. Gather, develop, and make available liturgical resources for celebrating and restoring creation.

c. Include the "Environmental Sabbath" among the special days of the church year, on or near the first Sunday of June, which is immediately prior to World Environment Day. (The United Nations Environment Programme provides packets of materials for Environmental Sabbath observance.)

8. That the Stewardship and Communication Development Unit:

a. Give high priority to video resources and television programming that grapple substantively with the eco-justice crisis and the church's response.

b. Give this subject matter central focus in the Stewardship of Public Life enlistment program that links Presbyterians with the public policy work of the Washington office.

c. Emphasize that Christian disciplines of stewardship include care for creation and the human community, as well as sharing of material resources.

d. Give attention to eco-justice concerns in resources prepared for interpretation of mission.

9. That the Committee on Theological Education:

a. Facilitate the incorporation of reflection on creation and eco-justice concerns into the various theological disciplines and in seminary community life.

b. Call upon theologians to devote serious study and reflection to the theology of creation and to new theological understandings of, and responses to, the eco-justice crisis. (See the papers commissioned for the March 1-3, 1990, Theology and Ethics Symposium: Responses to the Environmental Challenges.)

10. That the Committee on Higher Education:

a. In its various contacts and relationships with church-related colleges and campus ministries, promote and facilitate an understanding of the eco-justice crisis and the call to restore creation.

b. Encourage the introduction of materials and emphases pertaining to these themes into academic courses, into college life, and into the studies and activities sponsored by campus ministries.

The preceding recommendations identify actions to take and build upon projects already under way, while they call for initiatives that are more intentional, require creative thinking and planning, and should inspire further ideas and actions beyond those suggested here. At every level of the church there are reasons for new concern and commitment, together with opportunities for new initiatives.

With respect to the middle-governing bodies and local congregations, the 202nd General Assembly (1990) recommends:

11. That synods and presbyteries assess their current work, witness, and resourcing capability with regard to their response to the eco-justice crisis and the call to restore creation and that they explore and undertake concerted initiatives to strengthen and go beyond what they now are doing. In this connection, the General

Assembly encourages synods and presbyteries to

—designate responsibility to provide focused leadership for eco-justice concerns and environmental stewardship;

—provide and promote resource materials as well as educational opportunities, including continuing education for clergy, to develop eco-justice awareness and expertise;

—develop public policy and advocacy efforts on local, regional, and national issues of eco-justice and environmental stewardship;

—join in and support collaborative and coalitional work with ecumenical partners and with social justice and environmental organizations;

—include in grant-making and mission funding more support for regional and community-based organizations that address eco-justice concerns and specific cases of eco-injustice; and

—in guidelines for construction and renovation of church buildings, and in the criteria for grants or loans for such purposes, sets specific standards for fuel conservation and energy efficiency; and in counsel and advise pertaining to church property encourage ecologically sound land use and a responsible relationship to the natural environment.

12. That local sessions and congregations give serious consideration to their role in restoring creation as this may pertain to worship and preaching; education of children and adults; ministry in the community, including actions to ensure that the church is involved in local efforts to deal with such eco-justice concerns as waste management, pollution problems and threats, recycling programs, energy conservation, land-use planning, and so on, with special attention to impacts upon poor people; possibilities for working ecumenically on such issues; and enabling of environmentally concerned people to find within the fellowship of the church a community of support which will enlist their expertise and help them deal with threatening circumstances, adjustments to change, formidable problems, and questions of conscience, vocation, and faithfulness.

C. Institutional and Personal Integrity

Underlying the church's program and public witness is the church's own identity and integrity: how it functions as an employer, an investor, an organization in a particular community, and whether its institutional life is consistent with a commitment to restoring creation. Such questions can be answered only over time, with continuing sensitivity and self-examination. At this time, however, the General Assembly recom-

mends for its own agencies:

1. That efforts already in evidence be diligently continued to make the national church offices in Louisville a model of institutional response to the eco-justice crisis through measures that include giving vigilant attention to occupational health and safety issues; setting specific standards for maximizing energy efficiency; participating in thorough recycling programs; introducing environmentally acceptable substitutes for throwaway plastics such as styrofoam cups; and using recycled paper products. Moreover, that the church willingly accept the modestly higher costs of such efforts to achieve institutional integrity as a facet of leadership in environmental stewardship.

2. That the Social Justice and Peacemaking Ministry Unit, in consultation with other appropriate entities, undertake a feasibility study of a project to foster the purchase of conservation products throughout the church and to apply income from such a nonprofit service to the development of the Creative Program Initiative in Environmental Justice and Stewardship.

3. That the environmental stewardship dimension of corporate responsibility be given increased emphasis in the investment policies of the General Assembly and in the church's efforts to promote corporate responsibility through the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI) and the various ecumenical arenas in which MRTI participates.

4. Similarly, synods, presbyteries, and local sessions and congregations need to give attention to matters of institutional integrity.

Restoring creation has profound implications for personal integrity as well as institutional responsibility. As Parts I and II of this report make clear, major societal changes lie ahead, and the effort to shape these changes in accordance with God's call for earth-keeping, justice, and community will demand much of faithful people. It is time to give renewed attention to the questions of responsible lifestyle, which were much discussed a decade ago. Now that the imperatives are all the greater, how shall we, individually and together, offer our gifts, organize for justice and stewardship, and relinquish excess claims upon the good things of creation that God intends for the sustenance of all?

That question points to more specific matters of consuming and conserving, sharing and giving, meeting and worshiping, working and celebrating, advocating and empowering. Those were the themes of the manual *Shalom Connections in Personal and Congregational Life,* edited by Dieter Hessel (Ellenwood, GA:

Alternatives, 1986).

The General Assembly requests its agencies, and encourages the synods, presbyteries, and congregations to continue to use such educational resources in order to focus churchwide attention on practices of institutional and personal integrity.

Some of the changes we are called to make in the way we view the world and live our lives may not at first be welcome. But we shall discover that changes in the direction of eco-justice link us with the promise and power of shalom.

Eco-Justice Task Force Occasion and Procedure

A. Occasion for a Major Study

The 199th General Assembly (1987) responded affirmatively to overtures on ecological-social justice from the Synod of the Northeast and the Presbyteries of Elizabeth (New Jersey), Giddings-Lovejoy (Missouri), Susquehanna Valley (New York), and Western New York. These overtures, together with a communication on the environment from the World Council of Churches, were referred to the Committee on Social Witness Policy.

The assembly directed that there be a review of previous General Assembly policy and of churchwide program activity on ecological-social justice and environmental stewardship. General Assembly social policy positions would then be updated or supplemented, as might be found necessary, and presented as a "comprehensive and integrated unity" *(Minutes,* 1987, Part I, p. 54). The overtures also requested that a "comprehensive and integrated approach" to mission program also be proposed for implementing this social witness throughout the church (Ibid.).

The referral from the 1987 General Assembly was summarized as follows in the *Minutes* of the 201st General Assembly (1989), p. 515:

> A. Ecological Justice Issues
>
> ... overture the 199th General Assembly (1987) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to:
>
> 1. Clarify and expand where needed, existing General Assembly policy as well as Presbyterian mission activity regionally, nationally, and internationally that expresses stewardship of creation for the future.
>
> 2. Identify and develop resources and research analysis, study, and action—that will help the church awaken and lead society in concern for the global future *(Minutes,* 1987, Part I, p. 737).
>
> Call for the establishment of an Environmental Stewardship Program .. . the new Social Witness Policy Committee, in particular, be asked to review existing papers as part of its continuing efforts to develop and implement policy (Minutes, 1987, Part I, p. 759).
>
> Request that the Social Witness Policy Committee undertake expeditiously to examine the existing policies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) pertaining to ecological-social justice, and that the Committee initiate new studies and policy development efforts as may be found necessary to provide a firm basis for education, advocacy, and action throughout the church on the issues of ecological wholeness as related to social justice *(Minutes,* 1987, Part I, p. 795).
>
> Establish a task force with representation from the Eco-Justice Working Group (formed by the Presbyterian delegation to the National Council of Churches consultation "For the Love of Earth and People: The Eco-Justice Agenda");

> Direct that the program include analysis, education, advocacy, emergency advocacy, emergency assistance and ongoing support for ecological/social justice activities including community organization and programs to support and enable the development of institutional arrangements which allow for democratic participation in the process of governmental decision-making and action on ecological issues *(Minutes,* 1987, Part I, p. 804). . . .
>
> *Response:* These overtures were referred to the [Committee on Social Witness Policy.

In the first few months of 1988, the Committee on Social Witness Policy (CSWP) adopted a prospectus for, and then formed, a Task Force on Eco-Justice to carry out a major policy study mandated by action of the 199th General Assembly (1987) in response to the overtures on eco-justice (concerned with ecological integrity together with social justice). The task force was asked to;

—make a comprehensive assessment of the environmental peril that the world faces;

—do theological and ethical reflection on the eco-justice task of the church;

—present a "comprehensive and integrated approach" to mission program consistent with its report to the General Assembly;

—report the above (through CSWP) to General Assembly as soon as possible.

The Eco-Justice Task Force appointed by CSWP consists of fourteen members, including theologians, ethicists, staff persons from state environmental agencies, and community-based organizers and activists, with a balance between clergy and lay persons and between men and women. The membership of the task force is as follows: Robert Stivers, Tacoma, Wash., chair; Eva Clayton, Raleigh, N.C.; David Dobler, Anchorage, Alaska; Carol Johnston, Louisville, Ky.; George Kehm, Pittsburgh, Pa.; Lydia Miller, Merced, Ca.; Fern Norris, Walthill, Nebr.; Donna Ogg, Lewiston, N.Y.; Beverly Phillips, Chicago, Ill.; Mack Prichard, Nashville, Tenn.; Holmes Rolston, III, Fort Collins, Colo.; Susan Rush, Dunwoody, Ga.; James W. Thornton, New Castle, Pa.; James M. Thornton, Olympia, Wash.

Staff assistance is provided by Dieter T. Hessel, CSWP director; William Somplatsky-Jarman, associate of Environmental Stewardship, Social Justice and Peacemaking Ministry Unit; David McCreath, associate director, Stewardship and Communications Ministry Unit. Consultants are: William Gibson, Center for Religion, Ethics, and Social Policy, Ithaca, N.Y.; Joan Martin-Brown, U.N. Environment Programme, Washington, D.C.; John C. Cook, associate executive for Indian Ministries, Synod of the Southwest, Phoenix, Ariz.; David Baker, Friends of the Earth, Washington, D.C.; Dennis Testerman, missionary, Decatur, Ga.; and John Stumme, associate for Church and Society Studies, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Chicago, Ill.

B. Procedure of the Task Force

The Task Force on Eco-Justice gathered initially for a week-long seminar and organizing meeting at Ghost Ranch, N.M., August 15-21, 1988, during which the task force reviewed basic material on the state of the world in eco-justice perspective and on what previous Presbyterian General Assemblies had said on the subject. The task force also began to explore particular facets of the subject, commissioned a background paper for review at its second meeting, and adopted a work plan and timeline for a report to the 202nd General Assembly (1990).

The task force met a second time in Washington, D.C., November 17-19, 1988, to review and revise its resource paper designed for early circulation throughout the church to encourage grassroots study and to provide a basis for regional study groups organized by the task force to explore particular social policy aspects of eco-justice.

After careful review and plenary discussion of each section of the resource paper, the Task Force on Eco-Justice recommended that the Committee on Social Witness Policy release the revised resource paper entitled "Keeping and Healing the Creation" for churchwide study and comment, and print it as a study paper with brief study guide. In February 1989, CSWP reviewed "Keeping and Healing the Creation" and released it for the purpose requested.

"Keeping and Healing the Creation" offers insight into possibly the most crucial issue that we face today. It explores ecological issues with depth and clarity and calls Christians to be worthy stewards of God's world. The study paper discusses

—Creation's Agony: A Profile of the Eco-Justice Crisis,

—God's Good Creation: A Theology for Keeping and Healing, —Setting Creation Free: Ethics for Mission.

As stated in this resource booklet, "eco-justice means the well-being of all humankind on a thriving earth. As a goal, it retains and reinforces all of the church's longstanding commitment to justice in the social order, and adds a major new insight of our time: that justice to human beings is inseparable from right relationships with and within the natural order" (Keeping and Healing the Creation," [PC(USA), Office of the General Assembly: Louisville, 1989]. This study paper [DMS #331-89-101] is available from Distribution Management Services, 800/524-2612, for $4.00 per copy or $2.50 each for ten or more copies).

By making this resource paper available in a usable format, CSWP was able

1. to provide a profile of the eco-justice crisis and theological-ethical reflection on the church's responsibility in a form that is accessible to Presbyterians and other Christians. (This document also contributes to ecumenical exploration of "Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation.");

2. to give interested synod and presbytery committees enough time to advise CSWP in the development of its eco-justice report and policy

statement

—by encouraging their comments on the profile, theology, and ethics provided in the resource paper; and

—by encouraging study groups in middle governing bodies to suggest social policy emphases and recommendations for integrated mission program through which the church would become institutionally serious about eco-justice. One example of such input was a day-long seminar held by the Presbytery of Western New York, which invited church members from a wide variety of backgrounds to reflect upon "Keeping and Healing the Creation.";

3. to utilize the resource paper as a basic orienting framework in regional study groups focusing on concrete problems and policy choices.

The task force assigned further work on various sections of its study to regionally based policy study groups organized by members of the task force. These study groups prepared background material and social policy recommendations to be considered for inclusion in the final report.

Presbyterian governing bodies—synods, presbyteries, and sessions—were notified of this procedure through a January 1989 mailing from CSWP. The mailing invited each presbytery to send a representative to participate in a policy study group of the Eco-Justice Task Force. The same mailing encouraged sessions to join in study of the resource paper, "Keeping and Healing the Creation," and to provide feedback to the task force.

The policy study groups proceeded in diverse ways. A group on water quality, with members from the Seattle area, convened a conference on the water quality issues of Puget Sound. Olympia Presbytery and the Synod of Alaska-Northwest cosponsored the conference. The Synod of Alaska-Northwest also did a mailing promoting the event. Another group, also on water quality, cooperated with, and added to, a program by Pittsburgh Theological Seminary's Center for Business, Religion and the Professions on Cleaner Water, which dealt in part with the aftermath of an oil spill on the Monongahela River. The Pittsburgh Presbytery also cosponsored the event, and representatives from eight presbyteries and two synods—the Trinity and the Covenant—attended.

A study group on sustainable agriculture was formed with Presbyterian, Evangelical Lutheran, and United Methodist cosponsor ship. The meeting in Fremont, Nebraska, convened farmers, environmentalists, agricultural research and extension specialists, rural pastors, and church public policy specialists, along with representatives designated by the Synods of Mid-America and Lakes and Prairies, for work on the preparation of a study paper on sustainability in U.S. agriculture.

Still another subcommittee, focusing on issues of a distinctively global character, met in Washington, D.C., to confer with specialists there from environmental organizations, congressional staffs, and church public policy offices. This meeting, which included participation from the

Synod of the Northeast, developed a paper on issues of climate change and sustainable development.

Eco-Justice Task Force members and consultants participated in several events to develop further insights into environmental social policy issues. These included the spring 1989 conference on Creation Enslaved—Creation Free: Appalachia and the Environment, sponsored by the Coalition for Appalachian Ministry. Other members joined representatives from the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment in touring the Champion Paper mill in Canton, N.C., the center of the controversy between North Carolina and Tennessee over pollution of the Pigeon River. Task force representatives also participated in hearings on toxic pollution in minority communities held in Albuquerque, N.M. in the fall of 1989. The hearings, which included testimony by victims of toxic poisoning, were sponsored by the Eco-Justice Working Group of the National Council of Churches and the Southwest Organizing Project. In addition, the task force solicited papers from members and consultants on "Wildlife, Wilderness, and Public Lands"; "Community Response to Toxics"; and "Solid Waste Management."

The study papers that emerged from this process lay out the issues and suggest policy positions with respect to the subjects just mentioned. While these papers as such are supplementary to the task force's final report, many of their policy proposals are incorporated into the report's recommendations. The papers appear together in the March/April, 1990 issue of *Church and Society* Magazine as adjunct background documents available for study purposes.

At its third full meeting in Seattle, August 20-23, 1989, the Eco-Justice Task Force reviewed the policy study papers and suggested revisions before final editing for *Church and Society*. The task force closely examined each paper's proposed social policy recommendations and tentatively approved them as amended for inclusion in the final report.

Meanwhile, a program review subgroup of the task force met at the Presbyterian Center in Louisville, Kentucky, to consider the integration of eco-justice concerns into the programs of the various ministry units of the denomination. In consultation with staff people from the units, the subgroup began work on comprehensive program recommendations—including proposals for permanent staffing and funding of an office specifically charged to provide leadership and resources for programmatic policy initiatives in behalf of environmental justice and stewardship.

At its summer 1989 meeting, the task force reaffirmed a plan to conduct an ecumenical symposium on the implications of the eco-justice crisis for the task of theology. Eight theologians were asked to prepare papers for this event. They were asked to lift up "cutting-edge" ideas pertaining to the theological and ethical dimensions of the eco-justice crisis, especially as it has to do with "the combined oppression of people and nature, and the close links between environmental preservation and social justice." These papers explore not only the implications for the

ongoing reconstruction of theology, but also the contributions to be made by theology for equipping Christians and others to engage faithfully in the work of "keeping and healing the creation." The Theology and Ethics Symposium Responses to the Environmental Challenges took place March 1-3, 1990, with cosponsorship by the Commission for Church in Society of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Questions explored in the symposium included:

1. What in our theology and culture contributes to the present environmental situation?

2. What particular resources of Christian faith enable the church to face and respond to the eco-justice crisis?

3. Where and how should the church focus its new thinking and doing for the sake of environmental stewardship?

These questions, of course, are of considerable ecumenical interest at a time when both the World Alliance of Reformed Churches and the World Council of Churches are concentrating on the theme of Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation. The task force has been helpfully informed by several ecumenical documents (excerpted in Appendix Two).

The Eco-Justice Task Force also took modest steps to join the larger public dialogue about an appropriate posture in response to urgent ecological problems. At the invitation of Gerald 0. Barney, director of the Institute for 21st Century Studies, a summary of "Keeping and Healing the Creation" was presented as a 21st Century Study of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). This presentation occurred in the context of the July 1989 meeting of the World Future Society in Washington, D.C., and was heard by participants from many countries.

A second contribution to public dialogue was offered on behalf of the task force at the Los Angeles Globescope Assembly, November 1, 1989, with particular reference to global warming and sustainable development. Both presentations were based on established policy positions of Presbyterian General Assemblies. Both presentations elicited a positive response of appreciation for serious efforts of the church to engage issues of environmental justice and stewardship.

C. Dimensions of the Report

The preceding report of the task force—[to be] reviewed and approved by CSWP in February, 1990—draws on the resource paper, "Keeping and Healing the Creation," on comments by readers of the resource paper, and on material from the policy study groups and the program review subcommittee in order to

1. summarize the nature of the eco-justice crisis and the church's responsibility stated in theological and ethical terms;

2. provide an overview of the existing General Assembly social policy record on aspects of ecological justice and environmental stewardship;

3. focus on a few urgent eco-justice policy questions and offer

relevant social policy recommendations, growing out of the policy study groups; and

4. report on the capabilities of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) for a "comprehensive and integrated approach" concerned with eco-justice, and recommend new initiatives for the PC(USA) and Presbyterian national agencies, middle governing bodies, congregations, and members to restore the creation *(Minutes,* 1987, Part I, p. 54).

Recent Ecumenical Statements*

A. The Integrity of Creation

1. Background and Intentions

The term "integrity of creation" is new for the Christian churches. It emerged in the Vancouver Assembly deliberations of the World Council of Churches. Several meetings have begun to explore the meaning of the term. The present work is a continuation of this process. The term is not without its difficulties, particularly when it is translated into some other languages. Yet, it is evocative of many meanings and, potentially, an appropriate expression of the gospel for our age.

This document does not aim to give final definitions. Rather, the term is viewed as one which encourages the churches to reflect imaginatively on the whole doctrine of creation and its meaning for our particular moment in history. With this in view, the document presents here several aspects of the term.

2. Dependence Upon the Creator

First and foremost, the integrity of creation causes us to reaffirm the truth that all that exists, visible and invisible, has God for its author. This not only implies the entire dependence of the creation upon its Creator, but also connotes something about the worth and dignity of the creation itself, whose life is thus sustained and held dear.

3. The Interrelatedness of All That Is

The integrity of creation implies that every creature is bound to every other creature in a great community and communion of being. It is particularly important for human beings to learn this truth, for we have thought ourselves apart, above, separate. But we are part of the totality, sharing with all other living beings their creaturehood, with its limitations and its possibilities. Nor are we strangers to the material world; we too are "flesh" (Is. 40:11), we too receive our life, daily, at the hands of our Maker (Ps. 104: 29-30).

4. Wholeness

The term integrity of creation suggests a perspective of wholeness. It militates against narrowness and parochialism. It impels us to search for meaning in our total environment, not only in our local communities, our nations, our regions and continents, but globally—indeed, universally. The term presses toward an inclusiveness that human beings have, perhaps, only just begun to explore.

5. The Stewardship of Creation

In this term, we hear that the human species is called to employ its

wisdom and creative skills in all fields of endeavor—industry, economics, politics, science, art—under the impulse of a strong sense of stewardship. According to the Scriptures, stewardship, far from being a merely utilitarian and managerial metaphor, assumes as its basis a solidarity with all for which the steward is responsible and answerable, and it issues in a life of service and sacrifice. In all that we do and are, we are to offer ourselves sacramentally to God, to one another, and to the world God loves.

'An ecumenical consultation of representatives from various Christian Commissions, other faiths, and Christian Indigenous Peoples met February 25, 1988, in Granvollen, Norway, to explore the meaning of the term "the integrity of creation," and produced this document issued by the World Council of Churches.

6. Commitment

While it has special application to the natural world, the term integrity of creation reminds us of human society as well, which is part of nature in the broadest sense. It reminds us, too, of social evils such as racism, sexism, unfair land distribution, political oppression by dominant groups, and other manifestations of the human sin of separation and pride. Militarism and the prospect of nuclear conflagration simply do not accord with a vision of an integrated creation. As we respond to the groans of creation, we shall find ourselves drawn into a struggle, together with that Spirit which wrestles with our human spirits, for the liberation and transfiguration of the creation in all of its parts. The voiceless, human and others, should find their voice and be heard, the marginalized a place, and endangered species a champion. Our commitment to "the integrity of creation" is a commitment to life in the midst of this world's kingdoms of death.

7. Hope

The integrity of creation is also an expression of Christian hope. This hope is undertaken in the midst of a world that is fragmented, distorted, and threatened daily by many foes of life, visible and invisible. The creation is still in the grasp of sin, still prone to "nothingness." In the pollution of the biosphere, rampant deforestation and decertification, the stockpiling of nuclear wastes, the erosion of arable lands and many other phenomena, we see more than enough evidence of the vulnerability of the world and of human civilization. But the gospel enables us to hope. These tokens of disintegration are not inevitable. Change, while neither automatic nor assured, is possible. And changes are happening. There are so many movements, Christian and other, which bear witness to God's continuing activity and are real signs of hope.

8. Solidarity and Fulfillment

Finally, the integrity of creation speaks to us as members of "the body of Christ." Through the One who loved "the world" (John 3:16), we are enabled to love and to embrace with compassion the whole creation. We are beginning to know the meaning of this love. Like the love of God by which it is enabled, love also involves suffering for "the other"—and the other, understood now as inclusive of other species, not only of our own kind. In this solidarity with the whole, in the love of Christ, we shall find

our own human fulfillment as well.

9. The Role of the Churches a. Repentance

The churches can fulfill their vocation to solidarity and compassion only when they begin with repentance. As Christians, we confess that we have failed to realize the breadth of our vocation and have yielded to restrictive visions of our calling. The egocentrism and ethnocentrism of our pursuits have been exposed in our time as, perhaps, never before. By our neglect, if not also in positive ways, we have contributed to the emergence of a consumerist and anthropomorphic world view which denigrates both matter and the extrahuman species. Without knowing it (yet never in total innocence) we have even employed the Bible and our various

traditions of doctrine to support prevailing patterns within triumphalistic and imperialistic societies. If we are to fulfil our prophetic calling, we churches shall have to become more critical of our past than we have tended to be and alter in sometimes drastic ways our present programs and lifestyles.

b. The Common Search

When we are faithful to our calling, the church's testimony to creation is one of gratitude for being, and for the promise of the fullness of being. We are enabled, through faith, to see creation moving toward transfiguration and fulfillment, reflecting the eternal mystery of the Triune God. This is not our own wisdom or insight, it too is a gift. The first article of the creeds can only be confessed truly and proclaimed faithfully in the light of the second and third articles.

It is, however, essential for the churches today to realize, as they have not always done heretofore, the reality and significance of that preliminary but persistent groping after transcendence that is proper to humankind as such, and never absent from the human spirit (Acts 17). Being created in God's image and likeness, the human being, irrespective of creedal commitments, carries within itself a sense of dependency, a quest for wholeness, and a feeling for the inviolable sacredness of life. Humanity can be addressed. It is never quite cut off from its Source and Ground. Thus, in order to achieve a truly integral vision of creation, it is vital that the churches involve themselves in a diaconic service, in whose performance they are prepared to work with all who are concerned for life, for its enhancement.

c. The Liturgy of Creation

The true vocation of the human person is to be the priest of creation —to stand before the Creator on behalf of all creation (intercession), and in turn to interpret the good intention of the Creator to and for all.

For the churches, it is important not only to promote this calling in a general way, but to give it specific form and visibility in worship and in worldly service. In doing this, the church will realize its own vocation as a community of healing.

Authentic liturgy is doxological, recapitulating the destiny of all creation in the praise of the Creator. Likewise, it is sacramental, lifting up the unity of creation, incarnation, sacrament, and service. "The Word became flesh." The Vancouver Assembly of the World Council of Churches (1983) spoke of this as the "eucharistic vision." We are to remember, however, that such expressions ought not to be reduced to mere ecclesial institutions and their practices. The eucharistic vision can be enjoyed only by communities of faith which learn how to bear the cross, to suffer

with a "groaning creation." It is the very life of the world, in all of its mystery and promise, that lies at the heart of our mission today.

10. Conclusion

The integrity of creation provides an effective way to open up new perspectives for seeing issues of justice and peace. This is not to say that the demand for justice and the need to save our world from a nuclear holocaust can wait till the ecological issues are removed. An adequate understanding of the integrity of creation provides a more effective way of dealing with all the crises of humanity, all the global issues of injustice and war, waste and exploitation, nuclear testing and the oppression of women, and a host of other problems which confront humanity.

The Justice, Peace and the Integrity of Creation process is meant to be one in which all the churches and Christians join hands with each other and with all people of goodwill on a resolute advance to work with God in order to make the Integrity of Creation, with Justice and Peace, more of a reality. God is at work. In God is our trust and hope.

B. Covenantal Agreement of European and Canadian Churches**
Regarding the Threat of Global Warming (The Greenhouse Effect)

We celebrate and thank God for the beauty and mystery of all creation, the source of life itself;

We acknowledge and ask God's forgiveness for the polluting of the earth's atmosphere with many destructive gases as a result of -human activity. We now know that a growing blanket of some of these gases (e.g. carbon dioxide mainly from the burning of fossil fuels [coal, oil, gas] for the production of energy; nitrous oxide from fertilizers, power plants and motor vehicles; methane from natural gas and agriculture-related practices; and chlorofluorocarbons [CFC] from various manufacturing practices and consumer products) are trapping heat in the atmosphere, causing a warming of the climate. This "greenhouse effect," if allowed to continue, is expected to cause dramatic changes leading to reduced rainfall in important agricultural areas; increased frequency and intensity of storms; rising sea levels, causing flooding of coastal areas as a result of melting at the poles; and destruction of natural ecological systems. These changes will have a major impact on the quality of life and indeed survival of millions of people as well as nonhuman elements of creation.

We pray for God's Help that we may better understand the causes of the greenhouse effect, that we may assist members of our parishes to recognize the seriousness of the threat it poses, that in conjunction with other concerned groups in society we may discern what actions need to be taken to deal with this threat in ways that ensure the health and long-term sustainability of God's creation particularly in relation to our wasteful use of energy, and that we may individually and collectively commit ourselves to taking such actions.

We, therefore, covenant with brothers and sisters in Christ in Europe and Canada to

a. share information and resources with each other;

b. seek to have our churches adopt a policy statement, giving priority to the greenhouse effect, for study and action;

c. endorse the creation of an informal working group (possibly under the umbrella of the Joint Programme on Helsinki cosponsored by the Conference of European Churches, the Canadian Council of Churches, and the National Council of Churches U.S.A.) with primary contact points in Canada, Switzerland, and the German Democratic Republic); and

explore the possibility of a small meeting on energy issues involving interested churches, environmental groups, and experts to study and develop recommendations for churches regarding the contribution of pollution from fossil-fuel-produced energy, the question of the future of nuclear energy, the potential for energy savings through conservation and improved efficiency, and the development of renewable energy sources.

**This statement reflects, in a liturgical format, the discussion and agreement amongst churches in Europe and Canada to work together to address the greenhouse effect and in particular the role of energy production and consumption. Meetings between representatives of Canadian and European churches took place during the first two weeks of May 1989. Further discussions and the agreement itself occurred during the *Ecumenical Assembly: Peace with Justice for the Whole Creation* held in Basel May 15-21, 1989. Representatives from churches in the following countries participated in the discussions and have expressed their desire to cooperate: Canada, Czechoslovakia, Federal Republic of Germany, France, German Democratic Republic, Great Britain, The Netherlands, Sweden, and Switzerland.

C. An Open Letter to the Children and Young People of the Planet***

Beloved of God, the earth our home is gravely threatened. Humankind must accept the blame for this. We have not acted with the modesty that, as one of earth's many species, we should have shown; nor have we exercised the kind of responsibility of which we are capable. In relation to one another, in our dealings with other forms of life, and in our use of the planet's land and resources, we human beings have behaved in foolish and prideful ways.

Today, in an age of big technology and increased human demand upon earth's limited capacities, we are experiencing some of the dread consequences of human habits that have developed over the centuries. These consequences are to be seen particularly in three kinds of global problems: gross injustice, with many human beings doomed to lives of poverty and oppression; violence, wars, and the threat of nuclear holocaust; and the destruction of nature under the burden of human greed and carelessness. . . . We know that we are part of civilizations that have plundered the earth, squandered its gifts, and engaged in hostilities that continue to haunt the world. Though we ourselves inherited many wrongs, we have done too little to right them . . .

Not only through our deeds and our failure to act, but also through our words and our thoughts, we have contributed to a "futureless future." Even our "Christianity" must be examined again; for we suspect, more than ever now, that we have frequently misunderstood and misrepresented our own "good news," equating Truth with what was most pleasing to us and least demanding of us. Will you one day forgive us for our failure to bequeath to you a more hopeful future?

Yet we cannot and will not accept the conclusion, which too many of our contemporaries silently or openly entertain, that little or nothing can be done to alter the future that so threatens us. It could be different. The world does not have to end with a bang or a whimper. As a Reformed hymn insists, "Earth could be fair . . . . . and all her people one."

We do not base this hope on mere wishful thinking or the fear of facing less optimistic prospects. Without closing our eyes to all that is making for "future shock" in our time, we here in Seoul have tried once more to discover the future that is promised by the God of our Judeo-Christian tradition. There are many ways in which it is possible to describe the future, but for our particular branch of the ecumenical church no language is more important than that of "the covenant." When we think of God, we think of One who is turned towards the whole creation in love. God's covenant is God's determination to fulfill what God began in creation. Against all the forces of chaos and destruction; against injustice, war, and the spoiling of nature; against death in all its forms, God is at work in the world to give us another future. Jesus, in whom we see this covenant made most real and

present, stated the matter in this way: "I came that they might have life, and have it more abundantly."

That, we believe, is where we Christians must begin—begin again—if we are to rethink our faith and our message in the light of the great questions that confront us as we near the end of another millennium. We have for long, with the scriptures that we honor, used the language of God's covenant. But we have been less than clear about its meaning for the destiny of this world. Now we should like to say without any qualifications, and in particular so that you may hear us: Our God has an abiding commitment to the earth. That is the fundamental fact, the reality that we intend to hold to, no matter what may seem to be the case. God will not abandon the world. In whatever ways are open to you, in whatever language is meaningful to you, we want to invite you to make this affirmation your own.

But God calls us to become partners in the creation, re-creation, and redemption of the world. Therefore, we feel it necessary to say to human beings today, "Stop thinking of yourself as if you and your kind were the be-all and end-all of life." Especially in the "Christian" west, we have behaved as if *Homo sapiens* (sapiens) were entirely distinct from every other creature—as if God's covenant were "for humans only." We shall have to learn that we are creatures amongst creatures, with the others, not above them. We are not free to do as we please. Like the other creatures, and with them, we have our particular role to play in the drama of existence. As thinking, willing, working, speaking, praying creatures, we are beckoned into covenant partnership with God. As we have amply shown our capacity to destroy and threaten life, so, with the help of God's own Spirit, it is possible for us to begin to live as keepers of earth. Beyond the affirming of this world, then, which is an act that in your youth it may be easy enough to do, we invite you to become men and women who live out that affirmation, and so seek for and exemplify a glory that is greater than your own ..

***Excerpts from Section III, "Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation," World Alliance of Reformed Churches, General Assembly, Seoul, Korea, August 15-27, 1989.

Re: the Integrity of Creation

In the past, the changes that were constantly occurring within creation—some of them because of us, some mercifully beyond our control—were mostly predictable and normal, though change is never without its shadowside. But we are living at a moment in history when the process of change itself has changed—largely because our human influence within the creation has increased dramatically through science and technology.

One example of this has been named "the greenhouse effect." Some of the gases produced by some human communities are causing great changes in our weather. The earth is getting warmer, the seas are rising, flood and drought are increasing. We do not know as yet what this will mean, concretely, for the future—your future. We do know, however, some of the things that we must do to prevent the worst results of this process: We must protect and replenish our forests; we must learn how to live with and not against nature; we must simplify our lives in first and second world societies, and choose lifestyles that will change the industrial processes that produce these harmful gases . . . .

We want to be good stewards of that which, in earth, sea, and sky, has been committed to our tender care. We can only make good our vocation to such stewardship if we learn how to say yes to the creation . . . but sometimes, and, perhaps now very often, no to our own attempts to manipulate the creation. "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof . . ." The language of possession and of mastery is not appropriate to human being. We believe that we are accountable for what we do with the trees, the way we build our cities, the manner in which we

travel and enjoy ourselves, the way we handle earth's unrenewable resources, what we do with our waste . . . .

We are accountable. We are accountable to God. We are accountable to one another. We are accountable to the myriad creatures with whom we share this beautiful planet. And we are accountable to you, dear children and young people. It is your future for which, under God, we are temporarily responsible. Pray that we may learn better than we have done how to take care of this treasure, so that when we shall turn our accounts over to your keeping we may not be covered with shame, and so that you may learn from us a little wisdom. From our present perspective, we think that you will need much wisdom for your own stewardship—your "temporary responsibility." According to an ancient writing of our tradition, awe before God is "the beginning of wisdom."

Task Force Review of Existing Church Programs

I. Introduction

The Eco-Justice Task Force of the Committee on Social Witness Policy appointed a subcommittee to review existing program initiatives in the area of environmental stewardship. Its purpose was to reveal the extent and manner to which the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) is responding to the eco-justice crisis and to help discover possible initiatives for future programmatic response.

Subcommittee membership consisted of Beverly Phillips (convener), Robert Stivers, Eva Clayton, Donna Ogg, and William Gibson. Staff to the subcommittee were Dieter Hesse] and William Somplatsky-Jarman.

The subcommittee met in Louisville on April 27-28, 1989, to talk with available representatives of each ministry unit and related body about how they address problems of ecological destruction and injustice in their work. In each instance, the discussion focused on what currently is being done, what areas of ministry unit and related body work in the future could include eco-justice concerns, how the task force could assist the program entities in making such future initiatives possible, and what specific recommendations might be made to the 202nd General Assembly (1990) that would support such efforts to contribute to environmental protection and justice.

The subcommittee reported the following information and recommendations to the third full Eco-Justice Task Force meeting in Seattle, August 20-23, 1989. The task force reviewed the report, revised its preliminary recommendations, and asked that this document be shared with ministry units and related bodies for feedback before the last meeting of the task force, January 4-6, 1990.

II. Summary of Discussion

A. Evangelism and Church Development

There are different "understandings" about the definition of evangelism. The most common understanding would not view eco-justice as part of its scope. The unit would welcome a statement that would widen the common understanding and demonstrate how eco-justice is a part of evangelism.

One proposal would be:

"The Underlying Principles of the New Age Dawning Evangelism Emphasis" states that "Evangelism is in separately connected to social responsibility and justice" (p. 21). This statement is expanded with three points: 1. It leads persons to desire to correct social ills as well as evangelize the spiritually ill; 2. It challenges persons to call for constructive change of our systems even as they call for personal conversion; 3. It seeks the liberation of people from oppressions of many types as much as the creation of a climate in which God can liberate individuals and corporate bodies of believers for salvation.

By this definition, eco-justice is part of evangelism. The social ill that is seen in the wanton destruction of our environment will only be changed as Christians ("evangelism agents") see that we need to make constructive changes in the way the wealth of our planet is used. The destruction of forests and land and the pollution of air and water for the profit of the few imposes an oppression on the many that cries out for liberation. Thus, working at

saving our rich natural resources and securing a more just distribution of those resources is a work of evangelism as defined in the New Age Dawning materials.

There was discussion about possible models for congregational life, which would include eco-justice concerns to the extent that they would become an integral part of what the congregation is, and that would be reflected in what is communicated to current and potential members. The unit would welcome such models. (This would be consistent with the churchwide emphasis on the environment adopted by the 201st General Assembly (1989).)

The unit also makes grants and loans for church and congregational program development. Church building projects must meet certain requirements such as soil testing. Funds are made available for refitting older buildings to achieve energy efficiency. It is unclear what the presbyteries are doing in this area. Suggested guidelines on energy efficiency, environmental quality, and food services could be more fully developed. This could include the issue of just and ecologically sound uses of land "bequested" to churches and middle governing bodies. Mission grants could include specific guidelines on issues of ecology and justice.

B. Social Justice and Peacemaking

The subcommittee met with the staff of several offices in this ministry unit. The discussion with the various offices can be summarized as follows:

1. Programs That Make Grants

These include Presbyterian Hunger Program, World Service Program including Community Development, and Self-Development of People.

a. Presbyterian Hunger Program (PHP)

The subcommittee met with the Education and Lifestyle Subcommittee of the Hunger Program. This subcommittee develops strategies for education and lifestyle and recommends funding actions to the Hunger Program Committee. A major facet of education is the support and training of Hunger Action Enablers (HAE) working with middle governing bodies. HAE facilitate local projects that implement lifestyle concerns, including recycling and sustainable agriculture. As educators they would be useful in developing more awareness of eco-justice concerns in their leadership development work. An annual training event for HAE focuses on current issues, such as environmental stewardship, and helps develop skills and strategies.

The PHP funds lifestyle projects, both nationally and internationally, which deal with sustainable agriculture, reforestation, water, and recycling. *The Egg,* a journal on eco-justice issues, is sent to HAEs as are resources from Alternatives, a church-related organization encouraging more responsible living and celebrating. The Hunger Program publishes "HANdles for Action," a quarterly journal that reports on lifestyle issues and projects undertaken by individuals, congregations, and middle governing bodies. Farm and rural issues have been a focus for many years with emphasis on the encouragement of sustainable agriculture. "Rural Community in Crisis," an educational resource, is being reissued, giving special attention to the ecological dimension of the crisis.

b. World Service Program

(1) Disaster Response: The Disaster Response office became active in issues of Environmental Stewardship around the events of Love Canal. Since that time they have remained active in this arena through financial grants to Presbyterian and ecumenical organizations focusing upon environmental issues. A portion of this support has been

through the Church World Service Disaster Response Program (for educational and training films concerning prevention and response to technological disasters) and through the National Council of Church's Eco-Justice Working Group (staff and program support). Additional grants have been made available for documentation and community response to crises including toxic material, industrial and municipal waste, and ground water contamination. In recent years approximately 15 percent of funding for disaster response has been focused on environmental issues.

(2) Community Development Office: This office provides modest grants and leadership training for church-based community organizations and congregations. They seek to develop leadership and build organizations of citizen empowerment. They organize around issues affecting their common life, including environmental concerns. These self-selected issues are then used to expand the power of the organization.

c. Self-Development of People (SDOP)

This program establishes partnerships with groups of poor, oppressed, and disadvantaged people by providing grants for projects, which the direct beneficiaries have proposed and will control. Projects may involve eco-justice concerns; however, there is no direct reference to such concerns in the SDOP criteria. The program has funded projects related to toxics, pesticides, and economic justice. Staff reported that SDOP would be receptive to projects proposed by groups of poor people that are designed to address ecological sustainability.

2. Other Programs and Offices

The subcommittee also met with or received materials from staff of program offices within the unit, including International Justice, Environmental Stewardship, and Peacemaking.

a. International Justice

This office maintains contact with a variety of networks around the world and receives word of struggles by poor, indigenous peoples. Many of these networks work in coalition with regional councils of churches. These reports often stress the international dimensions of the ecological crisis and the resulting impact upon the poor. First-hand testimony can come from the churches and people of the Third World, and linkages with domestic struggles for eco-justice can be made. One example would be the contact made between victims of the Bhopal disaster in India, and residents of Institute, West Virginia, where Union Carbide (now Rhone-Poulanc) manufactured the same chemical. It was suggested that the work of the Inter-Unit Continental Area Staff Teams and future CSWP resolutions pertaining to eco-justice should seek input from churches in the developing countries and that stories of ecological exploitation might be obtained by or from delegates to ecumenical conferences highlighting Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation.

b. Environmental Stewardship

This program has concentrated on liaison work with the Eco-Justice Task Force and efforts to develop the ecumenical vehicle for coordinated work on eco-justice issues. The Eco-Justice Working Group of the National Council of Churches needs to be expanded to include more denominations and to develop a stronger funding base. PC(USA) funds contributed toward such ecumenical work, though modest, have been more substantial than those coming from other denominations.

Currently, this NCC working group has divided into three task forces: theology and education; public policy and corporate responsibility; and community organizing, with a

focus on toxics. Membership includes denominations, environmental groups, and community organizations. Staff support from the National Council of Churches is extremely limited. The Eco-Justice Working Group supports one part-time person in Washington, D.C., to assist with public policy work. The United Methodists are the only denomination with full-time staff in Washington devoted to environmental issues.

c. Mission Responsibility Through Investment (MRTI)

The MRTI Committee and staff implement guidelines for investment responsibility that include environmental stewardship criteria. Most of the environmentally focused shareholder initiatives with corporations involving MRTI deal with issues of energy generation and toxic waste. More attention to this aspect of corporate responsibility is likely.

d. Presbyterian Washington Office

Legislative monitoring and influencing by the Washington Office staff concentrate in other issue areas, dealing with environmental stewardship issues only indirectly.

A new program of enlistment, fostering stewardship of public life, could become more oriented to eco-justice networking. The Washington Interreligious Staff Council does give modest staff attention (through part-time staff assignments by other denominations) to energy and ecology issues.

e. Presbyterian Peacemaking Program

The Presbyterian Peacemaking Program's ninth Peacemaking Conference will be on the theme Making Peace with the Earth. It will be held October 21-24, 1990, at the Montreat Conference Center. The conference will examine fruitful ways of being good stewards of God's creation.

There was discussion about methods of determining the extent of program initiatives on eco-justice by the middle governing bodies. The telephone networking done periodically by the Peacemaking Program provides the most concrete information to date, suggesting that there is growing interest but not yet much specific mission program activity concerning environmental stewardship. Interest in eco-justice issues has been mounting as evidenced by the spring conference on the subject sponsored by the Coalition on Appalachian Ministry, which was attended by nearly 100 people.

The Social Justice and Peacemaking Ministry Unit will submit major proposals to the Bicentennial Fund to foster the Environmental Stewardship Program with U.S. and international dimensions.

C. Women's Ministry Unit

The unit has various committees which encompass its work. For example, the Committee on Justice for Women has economic justice as a central theme, as well as an extensive advocacy network. The unit also maintains regional offices to work as locally as possible, particularly on leadership development. It also maintains a network of enablers through Presbyterian Women who are in contact with congregations for education and program assistance. The unit also sponsors a large Women's Gathering where many themes are lifted up. The next one will be in 1991 at Iowa State University. Communication is assured through *Horizons* magazine, which has included articles on eco-justice themes in the past and would be interested in including such concerns in future issues. Finally, the Women's Ministry Unit has funding mechanisms through the Thank Offering, which concentrates on local projects, and the Birthday Offering, which funds two to three major projects.

In the discussion, it was pointed out that the task force should explore the implications of feminist theology with its concern for relatedness for the theological sections of its report.

Also, several major women's organizations have been stressing environmental concerns, as women and children are frequently victims of toxic poisoning or other ecological disasters. The common concern for "integrated development" or "cooperation for development" is a possible focal point for exchanges between U.S. and international women. Programs around such themes could be developed and resourced by the enabler network.

The 1991 Women's Gathering would be an opportunity to lift up eco-justice concerns as they relate to women and children. Also, grants made through the two offerings might be targeted to reflect attention to environmental issues and justice for the people involved.

E. Global Mission Ministry Unit

Representatives of the unit described areas of the unit's work that relate to eco-justice concerns. The countries are struggling with environmental questions, particularly as they seek models of sustainable development. Many of them are characterized by agricultural policies promoting cash crops rather than food production. Issues such as the destruction of the tropical rain forest or toxic waste dumping affect the Third World, yet are linked to relationships with the First World. All these are ecological challenges for mission work in the Third World.

The subcommittee did not meet with any of the Area Liaisons—staff who relate directly to partner churches and ecumenical councils on other continents. This prevented a thorough discussion of the situations in various regions or of the state of awareness of eco-justice issues among our ecumenical partners and sister churches. However, four themes emerged from the discussion.

1. Eco-justice concerns need to be integrated into the training of overseas personnel as preparation for service in areas where environmental exploitation is occurring.

2. Due to the time constraints of pre-service training, the home assignment time could be used to provide more in-depth study on eco-justice.

3. The placement of personnel specifically trained in sustainable development could be envisioned either on a country or regional basis.

4. The itineration of eyewitnesses to ecological degradation in the congregations of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) could help increase awareness of the issues and linkages with the First World.

E. Education and Congregational Nurture Ministry Unit

The subcommittee reviewed available educational resources with unit representatives. These included a children's video, *Special Places: Taking Care of God's World.* There is also a segment of the five-session adult series The Stewardship of All of Life, entitled *Creation's Delight, Creation's Pain.* This was developed in cooperation with the Stewardship and Communication Development Ministry Unit.

The group noted the opportunity to advise in the development of children's leaflets (Beverly Phillips followed up on this), and the group discussed the elective curriculum in which eco-justice issues could be interwoven more rapidly. Also discussed was the possibility of using the eco-justice study paper as part of the adult *Celebrate* curriculum.

F. Racial Ethnic Ministry Unit

The discussion focused on such issues as ownership of property and who makes decisions as to whether space is communal. This is relevant to current controversy around Native American spirituality, as linked closely to specific geographic locations. Understandings about nature and the universe could be useful for the theological and ethical sections of the policy statement.

The Racial Ethnic Ministry Unit also works with community organizations that concentrate some of their work on the urban environment.

G. Theology and Worship Ministry Unit

Staff from this unit convene the Inter-Unit team on Justice, Peace, and the Integrity of Creation. In the materials developed to date, the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has done most of its work on the "justice" and "peace" themes. Creation, however, may be a more promising starting point for theological exploration than sin and redemption. Discussion centered on what the Reformed tradition would contribute to exploration of the Integrity of Creation theme. The World Council of Churches and the World Alliance of Reformed Churches has been reflecting on the gift-nature of creation and our response to it and also on the givenness of creation and its uniqueness. There was discussion about the new situation where the cumulative effects of misuse of the environment threaten the planet's survival, much as the nuclear weapons have, and how this threat has increased interest in environmental issues by many churches and members.

The proposed Brief Statement of Faith was discussed, since a specific reference to "nature" in the confession of sin was dropped from the original language. There was also discussion about the liturgical dimensions to environmental stewardship and the possibility of a special Sunday devoted to the theme.

H. Support Services

The subcommittee met with management of the Presbyterian Center about how environmental issues affect their work as building managers. It was noted that building management is responsive to General Assembly positions. For example, styrofoam has been banned. Recycling of paper and aluminum cans is done. There has not been an effort to use recycled paper as yet.

The issue of smoking is the most notable. Building design presents some problems as smoke circulates between office spaces. Current policy is to permit smoking in designated areas only—and at one's work space, provided that one uses an air filter. Building management would be assisted by an air balance report done by independent contractors.

I. Stewardship and Communication Development Ministry Unit

The unit had schedule conflicts preventing a meeting with the subcommittee, but it shared written materials with the group. Included in these materials were resources from the 1986-1987 Friendship Press theme Technology and God's Earth. Also cited were two video resources, *The Stewardship of All Life* and *Special Places, Taking Care of God's World,* the latter designed for children.

The unit anticipates that it will give increasing attention to environmental issues in stewardship education and mission interpretation.

The unit is also assisting in the production of a video introduction to the General Assembly report, "Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice."

J. Committee on Social Witness Policy

The report "Restoring Creation" results from two years of work by the task force that the committee appointed, staffed, and financed. The committee is open to doing additional policy work in this field.

K. Committee on Theological Education and Committee on Higher Education

The subcommittee was not able to meet with either body, but staff offered assistance in determining what activities or studies might be under way in the theological institutions, colleges or universities.

III. General Conclusions

Two strategic themes emerged from the work of the subcommittee, which we believe can guide the church's response to the environmental crisis, particularly in light of the 1989 General Assembly action affirming "Cherishing God's Creation" as one of sixteen continuing churchwide goals of the PC(USA).

The first is characterized as infusion. It is apparent that some programmatic activities and initiatives involving environmental stewardship are already under way in many places within the national structure. They are evolving toward more conscious and focused attempts to respond to the environmental crisis and the mandate to be stewards of God's gifts to the world and all its inhabitants. But neither the scale nor the creativity of this program activity matches the eco-justice need of our time. A strategy of infusion affirms current work being done and calls for expansion of such efforts through commitment of budget and staff time. In this way the Eco-Justice Task Force report to CSWP can lift up all that has been done and is being done as examples of faithful response to the eco-justice crisis.

Yet, the crisis we face calls for much more; the present level of programmatic work is insufficient to respond as we must. We need a strategy of creative initiative to strengthen our work on eco-justice at the national level and to undergird it in the congregations and middle governing bodies. This conclusion arises from our assessment of the magnitude of the environmental crisis, and also from our awareness that our work at the General Assembly level has not been as intentional or as coordinated as it could be. Sufficient resources have not been devoted to the massive public policy questions, and most of our grant programs address other issues more directly, or have guidelines that exclude potential project applications from grass roots Presbyterians, their congregations, and middle governing bodies. There is also the potential to direct more of the church's purchasing power toward environmentally sound products through the formation of a nonprofit conservation supply corporation. (A feasibility study is needed as soon as possible.) This would accomplish two things: First, it would benefit the environment, and, second, it would be a visible witness to sustainable economics and a new institutional lifestyle consistent with the demands of eco-justice.

Study Guide

Ideas For Engagement in Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice

Responding to the cry of creation for healing and justice is a daunting task. The environmental crisis adds yet another layer to the complexity of global social problems. Yet eco-justice is more than one more crisis in a long list. God's creation is one whole, and the vision of shalom is a vision of the healing of the whole of creation, with healthy relations restored between God, human beings, human communities, and nature. The worldwide problems of hunger, war, and social injustice all require the development of a sustainable relationship with the natural world, or progress in these areas will continue to be undermined. Thus, ecojustice is fundamental to all other questions of justice.

Eco-justice is also fundamental in a positive sense. The original meaning of stewardship is found in Genesis, in which the first human beings were placed in the garden "to till and to keep" it. To engage in meeting the challenges of the eco-justice crisis can mean rediscovering the fullness of the meaning of our vocations in the stewardship of all of life. It is thus an adventure in faith, difficult, yet also rewarding.

Our challenge is to find ways to inspire and empower everyone to engage the eco-justice crisis with fresh imagination and creativity. God has given each of us various talents and gifts and calls each of us to bring them to the service of life in a variety of ways. Being diverse people, we also have many different views about how to meet the challenge. But everyone is needed. We must learn to wrestle together with the problems facing us—to listen to each other, to argue, and to make our differing responses, but through it all to remember that we are one family in Christ, privileged to work together in response to the healing grace of God at work in us.

Accordingly, this study guide is not meant to be a blueprint for another church study. Suggestions are presented here that come from the creative activities of many churches. But each church context is different, and no church can take on every potential task. You have a responsibility to look for the work the Holy Spirit has for you that is right for your community, and to adapt the material you find here to your needs.

As you read *Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice,* keep notes for yourself: write down questions, insights, and new ideas that arise; indicate comments and opinions you have. Mark the passages you like the best and the least. Then do the same with this study guide. If possible, gather a small planning group to discuss the report and map out a strategy for engaging your church and local community in the "turnaround decade."

A. Engaging the Whole Church

How can you involve everyone in the church and avoid becoming one more special interest group? Here are some suggestions:

1. Include in your planning group one or two key church people who would not ordinarily be thought of as an ecologically oriented person. Make it clear that honest disagreement is welcome, but challenge them to argue the issues with you and help the whole church do the same. Be sure to have session representation.

2. Once the planning group has studied the report, start to think about the kinds of talents members of your congregation have, and think about their specific community ties: for example, in education, business, politics, or government. How can these gifts and sets of relationships be called upon to contribute both to an eco-justice study and to a process of engagement with local eco-justice problems? Start jotting down names and ideas that occur to you.

3. Meet with leaders of each church organization and program to find out what they are already thinking and doing on the eco-justice front, and strategize with them about ways to engage the whole church through worship, education, mission, and celebration.

4. Meet with the session and present your research and proposals. Try to show how a well-planned and integrated approach to eco-justice has the potential to bring together the whole church and infuse new life and meaning in every area of the church's life.

5. Make your plans and get started. Be careful not to attempt too much at first, but be sure to include options for involvement that are geared to people at every level of knowledge and commitment. Like peacemaking, eco-justice is something every Christian is called to engage in, and there is something each person can do. Some will be gung-ho activists, ready to lie down in front of bulldozers, and some will be developers, worried about the environment but also about providing homes for the homeless. These groups need to hear each other. Because of our unity in Christ, the church has a unique role to play in challenging everyone to engage the issues.

6. In addition to an adult education course in eco-justice, there are many other ways to engage the church. For example, one church has a monthly "Peace Picnic" on a regular Sunday evening (monthly or quarterly). Everyone brings food to share, and time is spent singing, eating, getting to know each other better, and playing with the children. Then the smaller children have a separate activity while the adults and youth hear a speaker or see and discuss a film or video, and people are enlisted for some form of follow-up action. The evening ends with the return of the children for a short worship or prayer service. The picnics provide a lift that study and action groups usually do not, and they draw a much wider spectrum of the congregation. Such get-togethers creatively combine celebration, education, and worship, and recharge participants for further action. A comparable program could have speakers on hunger, peacemaking, stewardship, and social justice in the context of eco-justice, and could include segments focused on the family, the church, the community, and the global dimensions of the issues.

Another church has "focus groups" which organize themselves around a specific interest or task. Some are on-going but require limited time, such as sponsoring a live Christmas tree sale each year and seeing that the trees are planted in a local park. Some ask people to make only a one-time commitment, such as attending a local hearing on an environmental issue. Other examples include:

a. ***Recycling:*** Developing a recycling project for the church, with household guides, field trips, projects for children, and so on

b. ***Information Table****:* Establishing an eco-justice information table at church, including contributions for the church library.

c. ***Eco-action****:* Keeping track of local and national policy issues through such sources as IMPACT (see resource list below), and enlisting people for lobbying and other political activities as needed.

d. ***Social Policy Areas****:* Choosing one area to study and work on, such as one of

those in the report—sustainable agriculture, waste management, water quality, wildlife and wildlands, global warming and ozone depletion, animal welfare, sustainable development—or some other problem area.

e. ***Investment:*** Researching and encouraging socially responsible investing for the church and its members (see resource list).

f. ***Lifestyle Change:*** Covenanting together to help each other live in a simpler fashion, with healthier habits and richer relationships, using such resources as *Shalom Connections* and the journal *The EGG* (see resource list).

g. ***Education:*** Helping the church education program to know about and use resources for environmental stewardship, including teaching units on ecojustice in the church school and youth groups. A good resource for further study of the biblical and ethical aspects of eco-justice, as well as an in-depth profile of the crisis is the book *Keeping and Healing the Creation.* (See resource list. Also look in each INFO PAK from Louisville for new resources.)

h. ***Worship:*** Working with the worship committee for the inclusion of environmental stewardship as a vital theme for music, prayer, and preaching. Each focus group would also be enhanced if it included some Bible study and worship in its meetings. A worship focus group could help provide that.

i. ***Food and Fellowship****:* Encouraging all the fellowship activities of the church to become more environmentally responsible. Volunteers can wash dishes, or everyone can bring their own. There could be a contest for the most appealing low-fat or vegetarian dish. Gardeners could be encouraged to bring their surplus produce to sell after church, giving the money to a hunger program.

j. ***Celebrations****:* Enlisting the talents of those who are especially gifted in making music and laughter. These artists and poets have much to contribute to all of the areas of focus above, and they could form their own group with the purpose of resourcing and enhancing all the others in their own creative ways. Sometimes a poetic satire is a more effective form of lobbying than a petition. Music can bring people together and rouse them as nothing else can.

Naturally, large churches could easily have many focus groups at once, while smaller churches would need to choose carefully what they should concentrate on first. Focus groups should meet with the session with their proposed agendas, be prepared with a list of the resources and volunteers they would need, and have a projected time schedule for accomplishing specific goals.

Leaders should not hesitate to ask for help from individuals with needed skills and individuals who have not previously been involved. Those who are reluctant can often be convinced to commit a specific, limited period of time or attend a specific number of meetings if they are assured they will not be expected to continue beyond that one commitment. Eventually, virtually everyone in the church can be included in some fashion through this method.

Study and action programs should also make use of people from the community who can offer valuable insight and testimony about eco-justice issues and ways to respond. Both "experts" and "victims" should be included, and church groups can also sponsor field trips to visit sites and talk with local people and politicians. There is no substitute for going out and looking at a problem first-hand. The church can also provide a forum, in which adversaries can meet to discuss their differences, that goes beyond the polarized debate

format found in so much of today's politics.

Finally, in choosing areas of focus the church should consider what is already being done by people in the community, and it should join forces with them rather than duplicating efforts. Even more important is to consider what is not being done. Most secular environmental groups already have many good projects, but they tend to neglect the social justice side of environmental issues. But the "Not In My Backyard" (or NIMBY) syndrome means that the poor and racial ethnic minorities suffer disproportionately from toxic dumping and other unhealthy practices. The church can play a unique role in working with and speaking up for more vulnerable people by continually reminding environmental groups of the social justice dimension of eco-justice, and by reminding social justice groups of the environmental dimensions.

B. Prioritizing

The possibilities are infinite, so it is important to prioritize your goals. A planning, study and action, or focus group might find the following process helpful:

1. Set up your meeting schedule. Is this to be an on-going group or one limited to a set commitment?

2. Gather names and phone numbers.

3. Make an inventory of the talents, interests, and connections of members within the group.

4. List the issues and problems you want to address. Prioritize them and select the top three for further consideration.

5. List activities and results that can be achieved in (a) one year, (b) six months, and (c) six weeks.

6. Categorize them by (a) essential to do, (b) need doing but can wait, and (c) want to do, but not practical. Remember the time commitments of the group.

7. Decide what money, resources, and people are needed to accomplish the (a) items. What kind of timeline is needed?

8. Set up your study-action plan, finding something for everyone to do.

C. Getting Started: A Study-Action Process in Five Sessions

A fifteen minute video, *Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice,* was designed to help introduce the report (see the resources section below for a full description). Scenes of nature and human relationships with nature provide background as members of the Eco-justice Task Force explain the report and the religious impulse behind it. Vivid and inspiring, the video is an excellent place to begin, and thus is highly recommended for the first session of any eco-justice study process. If you do not use the video, begin with Session Two (below).

Be sure to order enough copies of the report for everyone to have one.

To prepare for Session Four (also below), choose one of the social policy areas to study, or extend the session so you can cover more than one area. If you can use the full reports in *Church and Society* Magazine (see resource list), so much the better. If possible, invite someone from the community to come and present the local dimensions of the issue chosen. Or ask someone in the church to read the full report in the magazine and present it to the group. Perhaps even better, arrange for a field trip to see local examples and talk with

people affected. If you have a field trip before the class session on the issue, ask those who went to tell about the experience.

Before the sessions begin, pick three or four members of the congregation and ask them to read the report carefully and participate in the sessions. Include at least two who have not been very active in these issues, and try to have a spectrum of voices. This will broaden participation and deepen the attention given to the actual content of the report.

1. Session One: "Restoring Creation": Responding to the Call

The video includes a leader's guide. We suggest you use the "Ideas for Viewing and Discussion" section on page 3 of the guide as the basis for this first session.

Begin with prayer, and then make sure everyone knows each other. After that, introduce the video and the course. Divide into small groups and watch the video, and prepare to discuss the items from page 3 of the video leader's guide.

After sharing your small-group conclusions with the whole group, read the "Call to Restore the Creation" and discuss this proposition: "The eco-justice crisis is central to the life and mission of the church, and not just one more issue among many others."

Before closing with prayer, ask the group to read Part I of the report for the next session: "Creation's Cry: The Crisis of Ecology and Justice".

You may wish to close using the litany of Creation's Agony and Hope that is printed in the back of the video leader's guide.

2. Session Two: Creation's Glory, Creation's Cry

Begin with prayer and read Psalm 104, preferably by responsive reading or in parts. (If this is your first session, introduce the report and the planned process, and make sure everyone knows everyone else.)

Divide into groups of three and share with each other a time when you felt closest to God. Come back together, and count up how many of these times took place outdoors.

Now discuss the definition of eco-justice in paragraphs 589 and 590. Do you agree that "justice and peace among human beings are inseparable from right relationships with and within the natural order?" Why or why not?

Does the description of stewardship as "tilling and keeping" the earth (paragraph 591 to 595) broaden your understanding of Christian stewardship? How?

What are the "major components of the crisis" (paragraphs 597 to 624)? How is your local community affected? Make a list of these local concerns.

What are the two key problems with modern development (paragraphs 626 to 627)? Do you agree?

Close by reading Deuteronomy 8:7-18 and 29:22-25. God gives to the people a good and rich land, but when they break the covenant and "serve other gods," the land itself will die. How can this be said to be happening today? What "other gods" do we serve to oppress people and to degrade the environment?

Ask everyone to read Part II for the next session, "Response to an Endangered Planet."

3. Session Three: Response to an Endangered Planet: God's New Doing

Begin with prayer, then read Hosea 4:1-3 and Romans 8:18-23. If creation is really one and mourns together or rejoices together, how does this change our image of salvation?

flow is the Creator also the redeemer of creation (paragraphs 644, 648, and 649), and how are we called to respond (paragraphs 645 to 647, and 650 to 651)?

Divide into four groups and have each group discuss one of the four norms for keeping and healing the creation. Then report back on these norms:

a. ***Sustainability:*** What is sustainability (paragraphs 657 and 659)? Why is it a foundation for our economic and social systems (paragraph 658)? Make a list of unsustainable practices that are common in your community: for example, the use of fossil fuels, agriculture, transportation patterns, work and housing arrangements. What changes would lead toward more sustainable practices?

b. ***Participation:*** Discuss participation (paragraphs 671 to 674). In what ways are you excluded from participation in matters that affect your lives? What about your community? Is it dependent on decisions made elsewhere? Do you think this is healthy?

c. ***Sufficiency:*** Why is sustainability not enough for eco-justice (paragraph 675)? Think of a time when you or someone in your family history did not have access to a "sufficient" life. How was the situation improved? Did anyone help? Who?

d. ***Solidarity:*** What are the three sets of companions in solidarity (paragraph 682)? What is the vision of "adventurous faithfulness," and how is it nurtured in the church community (paragraph 684)? For each of the three types of solidarity, list ways in which your church has these types of relationships. How might they be improved?

Close the session by reading Philippians 4:4-13. If your life were richer in relationships and deeper in faith, would you, like Paul, find it easier to live without so many things?

Ask the group to read the social policy section of Part III that has been chosen for Session Four, and to bring in newspaper articles about local examples of the issue.

4. Session Four: Social Policies to Preserve the Environment

Begin with prayer, then introduce your speaker. Be sure to ask how the local situation reflects the global problem. How is your local government responding to the issue, if it is? What other groups are working on it, and how are they doing? How are poor and vulnerable people affected, and is anyone working to help them? What are the social policy positions of the local government on this issue, and how do they compare with those recommended in the report? Read the latter and discuss them with your speaker. Who do you agree with? Do these policies reflect the four norms discussed last week?

Close by reading Matthew 6:25-33. If we seek first God's kingdom and righteousness (justice), we are promised to receive all we need. Can you share an example from personal experience?

For the fifth session, it might be useful for the group to read the first part of this study guide, "Ideas for Engagement," and come with suggestions.

5. **Session Five: Engaging in the "Turnaround Decade": The Church's Life and Program for Restoring Creation**

Begin with prayer and read 1 Corinthians 8:1-7 and 2 Kings 4:1-7. Make a list of the ways working together as a community of believers is more effective and sustaining than working with a secular special interest group, and ways it is more difficult.

Make an inventory of your congregation's life and program:

a. How is eco-justice and environmental stewardship already included in your church's worship and preaching? In its education? In it mission in the local community and the surrounding area? In ecumenical relations? In celebrations?

b. What is missing? Where would you start to improve your congregation's understanding and engagement?

c. Take suggestions for engaging the whole congregation, not just a small group.

Make a list of members' talents and gifts, with suggestions for ways to draw upon them.

Now follow the same process for your local community, but this time focus on local eco-justice problems and how they are being addressed already.

Find out who in the group wants to follow-up on these sessions and choose your next steps. Appoint a follow-up planning group to keep the process going, and leave everyone with suggestions for further study and actions they can take. Close with prayer.

D. Suggested Resources for Further Study and Action

(The first three resources listed below can be ordered from Distribution Management Service, 100 Witherspoon Street, Louisville, KY 40202-1396, or by phoning (800)227-2872.)

1. ***Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice*** is a fifteen-minute video that presents the crisis of ecology and justice in terms of Christian faith. The urgency of the environmental crisis is framed within a context of affirmation: Healing and restoring the suffering creation is God's work. There is much we can do as we respond to God's grace by joining with others to restore creation within the context of justice for all. It is meant to inform, inspire, and empower people for a response of "adventurous faithfulness;' not to overwhelm them with the difficulty of the task.

In addition to serving as a good general introduction to the environmental crisis, the video also introduces the report of the Eco-Justice Task Force. Footage of the diversity and beauty of nature, and of what human beings are doing both to destroy and to restore creation, is interwoven with commentary by members of the task force. The selections of background music—Bach, the Shaker Hymn, and "Will the Circle Be Unbroken"—reinforce the themes of grace and the interconnection of all life.

(DMS #331-90-001; $15. Also available at resource centers.)

2. *Keeping and Healing the Creation* is a background paper to the report that provides a more comprehensive discussion of the environmental crisis and a biblical theology and ethics that responds to "God's new doing" in our time. Includes a study guide.

(DMS #033-89-101; $4, or $2.50 each for 10 or more.)

3. ***"While the Earth Remains ... ,"*** an issue of *Church and Society* Magazine, contains the reports of the Eco-Justice Task Force on the five new policy areas: Sustainable Agriculture, Water Quality, Protecting Wildlife and Wildlands, Reducing and Managing Our Waste, and Overcoming Atmospheric Instability.

(Vol. 80, No. 4, March/April 1990; DMS #258-90-602; $1.50 each, plus $.50 for postage.)

4. ***Shalom Connections In Personal and Congregational Life*** is a workbook

designed to help groups covenant together to change their lifestyle and broaden their stewardship towards more sustainable and just ways of living. Edited by Dieter T. Hessel. (Ellenwood, GA: Alternatives, 1986. To order, call (404)961-0102; written by the Presbyterian Program Agency).

5. ***The EGG*** is a quarterly journal filled with practical stories and suggestions for action and lifestyle change published by the Eco-Justice Project. To order, write Anabel Taylor Hall, Cornell University, Ithaca, NY 14853, or call (607)255-4225.

6. ***Socially Responsible Investments Directory*** **is a nonpartisan** directory that contains information on various investment opportunities. Prepared by the Committee on Mission Responsibility Through Investment, Social Justice and Peacemaking Ministry Unit. April 1989. To order, call (502)569-5809.

7. ***IMPACT*** is an Interfaith Coalition that works on social policy education and advocacy. Their newsletter can be obtained from 110 Maryland Avenue NE, Washington, D.C.

"Restoring Creation For Ecology and Justice"

Highlights of the Report

PART I. CREATION'S CRY: THE ECO-JUSTICE CRISIS

The term "eco-justice"—ecology and justice—means ecological health and wholeness together with social and economic justice. It means the well-being of all humankind on a thriving earth. The vision of ecojustice, as a goal toward which to move, lifts up and affirms the church's longstanding commitment to justice and peace and adds a major new insight for our time: that justice and peace among human beings are inseparable from right relationship to the natural order.

Creation's cry rises from the "eco-justice crisis" that marks the extraordinary time in which we live. We stand at a historic turning point: Abuse of nature and injustice to people place the future in grave jeopardy. This planetary crisis, however, is not a moment of doom, as though a catastrophic fate were sealed. Our time of turning is an opening to a new era. Its shape will be determined by the responses of nations and people to unprecedented dangers and to constructive possibilities. The ultimate "glorious liberty," to which Paul looks forward (Rom. 8:21) may be partially realized in our time as the children of God say YES to the Creator-Redeemer's call to restore the creation.

The creation stories in Genesis 1 and 2 illumine the right relationship of human beings to their Creator and the nonhuman creation. God put man and woman, created in God's own image, in the garden "to till it and to keep it."

"Tilling" exemplifies everything we humans do to draw sustenance from nature. It requires individuals to form communities of cooperation and to establish systematic arrangements (economies) for satisfying their needs. Tilling includes not only agriculture but mining and manufacturing and exchanging, all of which depend necessarily on taking and using the stuff of God's creation.

"Keeping" the creation means tilling with care—maintaining the capacity of

the creation to provide the sustenance for which the tilling is done. This, we now realize, means making sure that the world of nature may flourish, with all its intricate, interacting, life-sustaining systems.

But humans have failed to till with care. The eco-justice crisis is the consequence of tilling without keeping, together with the unfair distribution of the fruits of tilling. The Creator's gifts for sustenance have not been taken carefully and shared equitably.

In this century science, technology, and industry provided the means to gain material benefits previously unimaginable. This was a great achievement. Now, however, we see that it was marred in two ways that pose life-or-death questions for creation's future:

—First, the material benefits did not accrue to all members of the human family. Structures of power were used to feed the excessive demands of a minority, leaving unsatisfied the legitimate but ineffective demands of half the human family. The gap between rich and poor grew wider.

—Second, the mobilization of knowledge and power to gain material goods was not carried out with respect for the integrity of the created order. The capacity of basic biological systems to regenerate themselves was severely impaired. Finite minerals were pumped and mined as if inexhaustible. The wastes and poisons generated by many more people and a very expansive global economy exceeded the capacity of earth, air, and water to absorb them safely.

We stand at the beginning of the last decade of the Second Millennium. The authors of the Worldwatch Institute report on the *State of the World 1989* declare that the decade of the nineties is the time for societies to turn around—"to reestablish a stable relationship with the earth's natural support systems" (p. 192). The choice to do so must not be postponed. If business as usual persists, the point will be reached when the problems of a degraded, overcrowded, unsharing planet become so all-consuming that it may not be possible to reclaim the future. "By the end of the next decade," say the Worldwatch authors, "the die will pretty well be cast. As the world enters the twenty-first century, the community of nations either will have rallied and turned back the threatening trends, or environmental deterioration and social disintegration will be feeding on each other" (p. 194).

In response to the environmental crisis the 202nd General Assembly (1990) calls the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to

—respond to the cry of creation, human and nonhuman;

—engage in the "turnaround decade," not only for reasons of prudence or survival, but because the endangered planet is God's creation; and

—draw upon all the resources of biblical faith and the Reformed tradition for empowerment and guidance in this adventure.

PART II. RESPONSE TO AN ENDANGERED PLANET

A. God's New Doing

The leading player in the biblical story is the gracious God who creates, judges, and delivers. The creation is the theater of God's grace—the arena of God's gifts for life, beauty, and enjoyment. The high points of the story are God's acts of deliverance: the exodus, the return from exile, the Christ event, and Pentecost. At such points of peril, challenge, and promise, God's self-disclosure comes with special power and brilliance.

1. God Comes to Judge . . .

> Let the heavens be glad, and let the earth rejoice;
>
> let the sea roar and all that fills it;
>
> let the field exult, and everything in it!
>
> Then shall all the trees of wood sing for joy before the Lord, for [God] comes,
>
> for [God] comes to judge the earth.
>
> for [God] will judge the world with righteousness,
>
> and the peoples with God's truth.
>
> (Ps. 96:11-13)

In our time can nature turn from mourning to rejoicing because its deliverance from abuse and neglect is at hand? God comes to restore the joy of creation—to deliver a vulnerable earth from the same powerful forces of greed and carelessness that have oppressed vulnerable people. Deliverance begins with judgment that, in the context of God's grace, is instrumental to repentance, forgiveness, renewal, and restoration.

The church receives as judgment—as an indication of broken covenant—the evidence of tilling without keeping and of failing to share equitably the fruits of tilling. Especially those of us who have been managers or beneficiaries of modern economic development confess that habits of carelessness, motivations of greed, and corruptions of power have stood in the way of tilling carefully and sharing fairly.

> The Lord is good to all,
>
> and has compassion over all that [God] has made. All thy works shall give thanks to thee, 0 Lord, and all thy saints shall bless thee!
>
> The Lord upholds all who are falling,
>
> and raises up all who are bowed down.
>
> The eyes of all look to thee,
>
> and thou givest them their food in due season.
>
> Thou openest thy hand,
>
> thou satisfiest the desire of every living thing. [God] fulfills the desire of all who fear [God], and hears their cry, and saves them.
>
> (Ps. 145:8-10,15,16,19)

The biblical-theological basis for restoring creation is very simple: The Creator is always also the Redeemer, and the Redeemer is always also the Creator. The God "who made heaven and earth, the sea and all that is in them" is the one "who executes justice for the oppressed" (Ps. 146:6f.). Because God the Creator loves the whole creation, God the Redeemer acts to save the creation when it is bowed down and cries out. As Colossians 1:15-19 affirms, the crucified and risen Christ "reconciles all things."

Those who acknowledge the claim that the earth is God's creation are bound to relate to the natural world with respect and care." "God saw everything that [God] had made, and behold, it was very good." (Gen. 1:31) The creation has value simply because it is God's creation. And people who understand themselves as God's people cannot treat carelessly or destructively God's world, in which God delights.

The biblical story expresses God's concern to execute justice and to extend compassion to the hungry, the stranger, the blind, the widowed, the orphaned, and the imprisoned. But now nature also presents innumerable points of great agony and need. This realization comes to us like a revelation in the eco-justice crisis. Nature has become co-victim with the poor; the vulnerable earth and the vulnerable people are oppressed together.

Theologically, then, we believe that God who redeems and liberates, executes justice, and acts with revelatory power in special times, moves at this turning point in history not only to judge but to restore. God hears creation's cry. God calls human beings, especially followers of Jesus Christ, to accept stewardship as servanthood. In faith we discern God's new doing, and hear the call to participate with God in restoring creation, human and nonhuman.

B. Norms for Keeping and Healing

The Creator-Redeemer's love for the world remains constant. God's will for the salvation of humankind and the fulfillment of creation does not vacillate. In response the church prays, "Your kingdom come, your will be done on earth. . . ." The response of faith to the gospel is always a matter of trust and faithfulness. And the content of faithfulness is love inclusive of justice.

More concretely, faithfulness takes shape at "each time and place" in response to "particular problems and crises through which God calls. . . ." (Confession of 1967, 9.43). The church discerns some ethical norms or guidelines peculiarly appropriate to our own time to help us bridge the distance between the all-encompassing claim of the love command and the specific decisions of our daily lives. These norms keep faithful people rooted in their own believing community, while encouraging collaborative action with others who share concern for restoring creation.

In the present statement we distinguish four norms. The first two, sustainability and sufficiency, may be in tension with each other. If so, it is necessary to hold to both, because both are essential to eco-justice. Sufficiency, together with a third norm, participation, expresses the distinctive meaning of justice for our time. We add a fourth norm, solidarity,

to give concrete and forceful expression to the value of community. All four norms suggest something of the content of God's call in the eco-justice crisis—to earthkeeping, to justice, and to community.

Responding theologically and ethically to the endangered planet, we, the 202nd General Assembly (1990), find powerful reasons for engagement in restoring God's creation

—God's works in creation are too wonderful, too ancient, too beautiful, too good to be desecrated.

—Restoring creation is God's own work in our time, in which God comes both to judge and to restore.

—The Creator-Redeemer calls faithful people to become engaged with God in keeping and healing the creation, human and nonhuman.

—Human life and well-being depend upon the flourishing of other life and the integrity of the life-supporting processes that God has ordained.

—The love of neighbor, particularly "the least" of Christ's brothers and sisters, requires action to stop the poisoning, the erosion, the wastefulness that are causing suffering and death.

—The future of our children and their children and all who come after is at stake.

—In this critical time of transition to a new era, God's new doing may be discerned as a call to earth-keeping, to justice, and to community.

Therefore, we affirm that:

—Response to God's call requires a new faithfulness, for which guidance may be found in norms that illuminate the contemporary meaning of God's steadfast love for the world.

—Earth-keeping today means insisting on sustainability—the ongoing capacity of natural and social systems to thrive together—which requires human beings to practice wise, humble, responsible stewardship, after the model of servanthood that we have in Jesus.

—Justice today requires participation, the inclusion of all members of the human family in obtaining and enjoying the Creator's gifts for sustenance.

—Justice also means sufficiency, a standard upholding the claim of all to have enough—to be met through equitable sharing and organized efforts to achieve that end.

—Community in our time requires the nurture of solidarity, leading to steadfastness in standing with companions, victims, and allies and to the realization of the church's potential as a community of support for adventurous faithfulness.

These ethical norms are a guide to political decisions,

economic practice, and daily lifestyles that contribute to restoring planetary health.

Taking account of these findings, affirmations, and developments, and building upon existing policy, noting particularly the action of the 201st General Assembly (1989) affirming "Cherishing God's Creation" as one of sixteen continuing Churchwide Goals, the 202nd General Assembly (1990) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)

—recognizes and accepts restoring creation as a central concern of the church, to be incorporated into its life and mission at every level;

—understands this to be a new focus for initiative in mission program and a concern with major implications for infusion into theological work, evangelism, education, justice and peacemaking, worship and liturgy, public witness, global mission, and congregational service and action at the local community level;

—recognizes that restoring creation is not a short-term concern to be handled in a few years, but a continuing task to which the nation and the world must give attention and commitment, and that has profound implications for the life, work, and witness of Christian people and church agencies;

—approaches the task with covenant seriousness—"If you obey the commandments of the Lord your God . . . then you shall live" (Dent. 30:16)—and with practical awareness that cherishing God's creation enhances the ability of the church to achieve its other goals.

The 202nd General Assembly (1990) believes God calls the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to engage in the tasks of restoring creation in the "turnaround decade" now beginning and for as long as God continues to call people of faith to undertake these tasks.

PART III. SOCIAL POLICIES TO PRESERVE THE ENVIRONMENT

A. Existing General Assembly Policy: An Overview

(See the full report for an overview of Presbyterian social policies adopted by General Assemblies prior to 1990 in response to the need for environmental preservation and renewal. The overview covers statements focusing primarily on environmental concerns, notably the 1971 statement on "Christian Responsibility for Environmental Renewal." It also lifts up the environmental dimensions of the church's concern for energy policy, hunger action, and economic justice. It notes a consistent effort to relate the church's concern for justice to its exploration of the issues of environmental stewardship.)

B. Mission in the Public Arena: Five Areas of Social Policy

Various forms of eco-INjustice distort or threaten to destroy creation. They call for a human response of stewardship through policies and practices that promote earth-keeping, justice and community. . . .

This section of the current report focuses on five new areas of social policy concern that deserve priority attention. . . .

(See the full report for explanation of these areas of concern and the important recommendations adopted by the General Assembly in each case. The five areas are: (1) Sustainable Agriculture; (2) Water Quality; (3) Wildlife and Wildlands; (4) Reducing and Managing Our Wastes (both Solid Waste and Hazardous Waste); and (5) Overcoming Atmospheric Instability: Global Warming and Ozone Depletion.

As described in Appendix One of the report, the five areas of social policy were explored in depth through regional study groups and commissioned papers. These study papers were published together in the March/April 1990 issue of *Church and Society* Magazine.

Recommendations for social policy in each of the five areas of concern appear in three groupings. These are

—basic policies,

—implementation of policies, and

—church support of policies.

This section concludes by acknowledging that the Eco-Justice Task Force could not address all of the current urgent issues of environmental stewardship and justice. Two issues are singled out as deserving further explanation and policy development: Animal Well-Being and Sustainable Development.)

PART IV. THE CHURCH'S LIFE AND PROGRAM

The task force reviewed existing programs of the General Assembly's ministry units and related bodies in light of the eco-justice crisis. It found that a modest amount of program activity related to environmental stewardship and eco-justice is occurring at many points within the denomination-wide mission agencies of the church. This is gratifying. It indicates that the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has already begun to respond to the eco-justice crisis. Much more needs to be done, however, to make the church's program commensurate with the seriousness of the environmental problems that face our society and all the peoples of the planet.

Therefore, the 202nd General Assembly (1990) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) declares: The new global reality and our faith call us to make environmental justice and stewardship a central concern of our church's mission and to encourage local congregations and presbyteries to link with existing environmental organizations in order to make the most appropriate lifestyle changes as individuals and as a community of faith, and to mobilize at every level for maximum involvement and influence.

A. Creative Mission Initiative

To implement a focused strategy of creative initiative, the 202nd General Assembly (1990) of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) calls for a special emphasis on eco-justice and recommends formation of a General Assembly Office and Program Group on Environmental Justice and Stewardship, coordinated by the Social Justice and Peacemaking Unit, with enough new staff and budget to cultivate a churchwide network designed to respond to global and local environmental crises and to develop denominational and ecumenical capability for significant eco-justice mission.

A focused program of creative initiative enables the PC(USA) to take appropriate leadership in (the following components of mission for restoring creation, as explained in the full report):

1. **Churchwide Education and Leadership Development**
2. **Public Policy Advocacy**
3. **Global Response**
4. **Citizen Participation and Organization in the U.S.A**.
5. **Corporate Responsibility**
6. **Institutional and Individual Lifestyle Integrity**
7. **Coordination of Program Efforts**

The purpose of creative initiative is to develop concrete focus and extensive involvement in eco-justice mission commensurate with the urgent need to undertake it now.

"Now" has a decade-specific meaning; initiatives taken in the 1990s are crucial to the ecological and social trajectory of the next half century. It is likely that the emerging threat of environmental destruction, coupled with an intensifying struggle for diminishing resources, will occupy center stage in world politics for the next several decades, just as the cold war did for the past forty years. In this new situation it is imperative for the church, working with other major social organizations, to move rapidly to establish a significant and sustained witness to restoring the creation.

B. Infusion of Existing Programs

There is a need for accelerated infusion of eco-justice perspectives and concerns at all points of mission program where this may appropriately be accomplished.

Therefore the 202nd General Assembly (1990) of the PC(USA) recommends:

That the various mission units and related bodies of the General Assembly be commended for the initiatives taken or

beginning that pertain to the issues of environmental degradation and eco-injustice; and that they expand such efforts to restore creation with appropriate commitments of budget and staff time. Throughout the broad spectrum of the church's program and mission there are ways of responding that are fitting in terms of the ongoing functions of these units. Restoring a healthy environment is essential to human well-being and the fulfillment of the church's mission goals.

With respect to particular program units and related bodies, the 202nd General Assembly (1990) recommends (that program units and related bodies undertake concrete efforts to further the restoration of creation).

With respect to the middle-governing bodies and local congregations, the 202nd General Assembly recommends:

That synods and presbyteries assess their current work, witness, and resourcing capability with regard to their response to the eco-justice crisis and the call to restore creation and that they explore and undertake concerted initiatives to strengthen and go beyond what they now are doing.

That local sessions and congregations give serious consideration to their role in restoring creation as this may pertain to worship and preaching; education of children and adults; ministry in the community, including actions to ensure that the church is involved in local efforts to deal with such eco-justice concerns as waste management, pollution problems and threats, recycling programs, energy conservation, land-use planning, and so on, with special attention to impacts upon poor people; possibilities for working ecumenically on such issues; and enabling of environmentally concerned people to find within the fellowship of the church a community of support which will enlist their expertise and help them deal with threatening circumstances, adjustments to change, formidable problems, and questions of conscience, vocation, and faithfulness.