

## **The Green Future Endowment Fund<sup>1</sup>**

\_\_\_\_\_ Presbytery overtures the 227th General Assembly (2026) of the Presbyterian Church (USA) to:

1. Declare that expressions of denominational (i.e. corporate) confession and repentance, as well as the Christian witness and example of the PC(USA), require corporate accountability and response.
2. Affirm that as recently as 2022, with the adoption of “Investing in A Green Future: A Vision for a Renewed Creation”, we confessed to our Church’s failure to live up to past commitments to cherish the earth entrusted to our care and expressed our intention to undertake actions involving our “treasure and vision” in the pursuit of restoration and healing.<sup>2</sup>
3. Establish a permanent endowment fund created and held in perpetuity by the Presbyterian Foundation in their Fossil Free Investments on behalf of the General Assembly from which The Foundation will make spending formula payments available to the PCUSA, A Corporation to be disbursed in turn to the Unified Agency or its successor to make grants for the following restricted purposes:
  - a. To support greenhouse gas emission reduction, renewable energy transition, and adaptation to climate change;
  - b. To support restorative processes in and to address harms suffered by marginalized communities and natural habitats within the U.S. and abroad as a result of extractive damage, environmental racism and systemic climate change; and
  - c. To address dislocation and community harms related to the transition to renewable energy sources.
4. Direct the Unified Agency (or its successor), to assign a group of six people to a Green Future Fund Design Team (or simply DT), consisting of three staff representing programmatic, (especially the Center for Repair of Historic Harms), as well as financial components of the Unified Agency, and three at-large persons, meeting virtually over the course of the coming two years to design administrative protocols for a “Green Future Endowment Fund” and report back to the 228th (2028) General Assembly.

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<sup>1</sup> This overture seeks to implement the vision of the 218th and 225th General Assemblies in their adoption of “The Power to Change: U.S. Energy Policy and Global Warming”, recommendation 3.b, and “Investing in a Green Future: A Vision for a Renewed Creation, recommendation 3

<sup>2</sup> IBID. Recommendation #3

- a. Request that the DT explore options for amount and method of capitalization of the fund.<sup>3</sup>
  - b. Request the Design Team, Unified Agency, and Presbyterian Foundation to consult and if feasible, proceed with establishing the fund account or a temporary account if advised, for the purpose of receiving contributions prior to the adoption of the DT report.<sup>4</sup>
    - i. Request the DT consider recommending a “Green Future Grants Committee” housed within the appropriate office of the Unified Agency, composed of five to nine persons, possibly including representatives of the denomination’s Center for the Repair of Historic Harms and the ecumenical “Center for Jubilee Practice.”<sup>5</sup>
5. Direct the Stated Clerk to:
- a. Inform all appropriate Church constituencies and church and public media outlets, and ecumenical partners of the passage of this overture;
  - b. Encourage governing bodies, institutions, congregations, and members to prayerfully consider making financial contributions to the fund; and
  - c. Promote connections with ecumenical and interfaith restorative justice efforts which may enhance the effectiveness of this initiative.

## Rationale

**Repentance is a practice rooted in scripture.** It is more than expressing sorrow for our past actions but includes the kinds of future-oriented changes in direction which John the Baptist called “the fruits of repentance”.<sup>6</sup> Jesus also embraced this. In the

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<sup>3</sup> These sources should include possible contributions from Presbyterian Women, congregations, philanthropies, companies, etc as well as unassigned General Assembly funds and the sale of church properties, with the goal of beginning the granting process within ten (10) years of the fund’s establishment but not before the 228th General Assembly adopts the Green Future Fund Design Team report in 2028

<sup>4</sup> The DT should plan to communicate the existence of the Green Future Endowment Fund initiative immediately following its formation so that potential contributors may begin to participate in its capitalization prior to the official establishment after the receipt of the Green Future Fund Design Team’s report to the next Assembly. The endowment fund will then be officially established by the Foundation upon direction from the Unified Agency that the work of the DT as set forth in this overture is complete.

<sup>5</sup> These individuals should possess the requisite skills for evaluating proposals, making and monitoring the grants and outcomes, and reporting back to the General Assembly in a manner to be determined. Ideally, we would recommend the majority of this committee should be elected members and not PCUSA staff and reflect the demographics of the communities who suffer most from climate change and other forms of environmental injustice, especially the original caretakers of this nation’s lands and wildlife, the Native American community.

<sup>6</sup> Matthew 3:8

Background Analysis for the Church's policy document titled, "The Power to Speak Truth to Power", Robert Stivers addressed Jesus' statement about repentance found in Mark 1:14-15:

"Repentance in this situation means: 1) taking this confession seriously; 2) sensitivity to the world's 800 million malnourished and impoverished; 3) awareness of the delicacy of ecosystems; and 4) a change of direction to more frugal energy consumption, justice, and greater sharing in community."<sup>7</sup>

**The 225th (2022) General Assembly confessed the need for denominational repentance related to our complicity with climate change.**<sup>8</sup> Reflecting upon the failed efforts of the church in the two decades since the adoption of "Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice" they declared:

[We] "Confess that we have not sufficiently "responded to the cry of creation" and hereby recommit to a "turnaround decade" for restoring creation. We have failed to place the intrinsic value of God's creation above the idols of the world, such as wealth, power, acquisition and status. We have failed to fully embrace the principles of stewardship and sustainability, of God's concern for those experiencing poverty and their participation in processes and policies, of accepting for our own lives that which is sufficient (rather than the constant accumulation of more), and of solidarity with all creation. **We recommit our energy, our treasure and our vision to a future in which God's creation is restored**, the human family lives together in balance and justice with each other, and the social and ecological destruction that our society inflicts on the world is reversed and repaired. (emphasis added)<sup>9</sup>

**We should invest in a green future.** Beyond seeking out investments in renewable energy projects, Investing in a Green Future calls upon us to recommit to the "Polluter Pays" principle first lifted up in "Restoring Creation for Ecology and Justice."<sup>10</sup> As we begin to take seriously our culpability for the harms our investments in fossil fuels and

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<sup>7</sup> The Power to Speak Truth to Power: A Public Policy Statement on Energy, Its Production and Use, Adopted by the 121st (1981) General Assembly, Presbyterian Church in the U.S., and by the 193rd (1981) General Assembly, United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.; with a Background Analysis, by Robert L. Stivers, Commended for Study in Connection with the Public Policy Statement. Section II, Theology.

<sup>8</sup> Investing in A Green Future: A Vision for a Renewed Creation; Recommendation 3

<sup>9</sup> IBID

<sup>10</sup> IBID. 8.e

addiction to careless patterns of living have inflicted, we commit to use our financial resources to right these harms by establishing a fund from which grants would be made to address them in restorative and redemptive ways in accordance with the broadened vision of the “Green Future” document – ways which may represent a truly just transition.

Writing in the ACT Alliance Final Reflection on COP 30, November 26th, 2025, Elena Cedillo, Lutheran World Federation Program Executive for Climate Justice writes:

“A just transition is not just a technical change to energy systems, but a comprehensive transformation grounded in equity, participation, and human rights.” [A Just Transition will] “ensure that the transition to a low-carbon, climate-resilient future is truly just and leaves no one behind.”

In “The Power to Change: U.S. Energy Policy and Global Warming”, the 218th General Assembly (2008) urged “the ‘Restoring Creation’ program to establish a Presbyterian Green Energy Fund, which would help congregations and other organizations in our church reduce their carbon footprint through investments in energy efficiency, renewable energy production, and Green-certified carbon offsets.” (Recommendation 3.b) So far as we are aware, no such fund was ever established. The Green Future Fund we are proposing, inspired by the broad vision of a just transition for society as well as the church, would be much broader than the one envisioned by the 218th General Assembly and would therefore require substantial investment of time, energy, contributions, and publicity for the realization of its purposes.

**What we do as a denomination matters.** To those who might complain regarding the use of scarce financial resources for such an undertaking, we would quote once more from “Investing in a Green Future”:

“Instead of focusing on the difficulties or expense, we must lift up our vision and actions to create a revived environment, better health outcomes, employment opportunities that provide a living wage, clean air and water, wilderness preserved for its own sake, universal access to healthy food and the reconciliation of broken relationships.”<sup>11</sup>

May this action become a small step toward the “fruits” which John the Baptist said all true repentance requires.

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<sup>11</sup> “Green Future” Rationale conclusion.