

General Assembly's Theological Beliefs on the Environment

In 2022 General Assembly adopted an [Environment Policy](#) containing the following theological statements:

1. Theological and biblical basis

- a) As a Church, we affirm that care for Creation, a just and sustainable use of the world's resources, and a concern for the environment are fundamental Gospel commitments.
- b) We believe that:
 - God created, and continues to create, the whole universe, sustains and nurtures Creation, and wills to redeem the whole of Creation (Romans 8:19-22).
 - the reconciliation of all things to God in the life, death and resurrection of Jesus cannot be separated from God's act of creation: that all things have been created through Christ and for Christ – the Word of God incarnate in Jesus of Nazareth – and that, through Christ, God was pleased to reconcile to Godself all things by making peace through the blood of his cross (Colossians 1:16-20).
 - creative and redemptive work also belongs to the work of the Spirit, who swept over the face of the waters in the beginning, and who inspires a groaning Creation as it awaits redemption.

We acknowledge God the Trinity to be the transcendent and immanent source, sustenance and salvation of all Creation.

- c) We acknowledge humanity's interdependence with the rest of Creation, and that the flourishing of humankind cannot be separated from the flourishing of all life. We believe that God calls human beings to live in relationship with the rest of Creation, and to be partners in God's ongoing creative, renewing and redeeming activity; commands us to act justly and in righteousness not only towards our fellow human beings, but to all Creation; and requires us to care for Creation so that future generations, whom God also loves, can enjoy it and benefit from it.
- d) We know that human activity is responsible for the degradation of the earth, increasing climate change, and a frightening acceleration in the loss of biodiversity. This cannot be the will of God. It is harming the web of life and the balance of nature, and imposing most heavily upon the poorest people in the world. We believe that knowingly to continue in such activities is a sin for which highly industrialised nations must repent, seek forgiveness and make restitution.
- e) We acknowledge our complicity in the sinful structures that are causing wanton damage to Creation, perpetuating injustice, and delaying action to change direction.
- f) We affirm that it is part of Christian mission to strive to safeguard the integrity of Creation, and sustain and renew the life of the earth. This involves acknowledging humankind's responsibility, sharing in putting right the relationships within God's Creation that have gone wrong, and working within the Church and with partners outside the Church to pursue justice and sustainability, as envisaged in the biblical vision of the world as it is meant to be. As the Glasgow Multi-Faith Declaration of 2021, to which the United Reformed Church is a signatory, affirms, 'We know that we must change our ways to ensure a quality of life which all can share, and we need to provide hope for people of all ages, everywhere, including future generations.'

g) We commit to:

- listen to and intercede for those threatened by climate change and environmental degradation
- adopt sustainable lifestyles and practices that are consistent with our concern for Creation
- campaign for change in areas where we need governments and corporations to act.

In doing so, we seek to work towards a restoration of relationship between humanity, Creation and the Creator.