



## Center our spiritual life in God and God's creation.

- ◆ Create a spiritual discipline of prayer that includes nature and an expanded environmental awareness.
- ◆ Hold Bible study sessions on Genesis 1-2, Psalm 104, Isaiah 11:1-9, Deuteronomy 30:15-20, and other creation-centered passages.
- ◆ Subscribe to the UCC Daily Devotional at [ucc.org/feed\\_your\\_spirit](http://ucc.org/feed_your_spirit).
- ◆ During Lent, subscribe to the Ecumenical Lenten Carbon Fast: [macucc.org/carbonfast](http://macucc.org/carbonfast).
- ◆ Celebrate Earth Day in worship—maybe even multiple times a year!

## Become a Green Justice Congregation.

- ◆ Gather a team of people in your congregation willing to address these issues together.
- ◆ Create a plan of action. See [ucc.org/environmental-ministries\\_just-green-congregations](http://ucc.org/environmental-ministries_just-green-congregations) for ideas.
- ◆ Let us know what you're doing!

## Help end mountaintop removal and other forms of coal mining.

Coal is the dirtiest fossil fuel. Mining endangers the health of all living in proximity; worse, it wipes out whole ecosystems.

- ◆ Find out where your electricity comes from. If it comes from coal, investigate cleaner alternatives. The Environmental Protection Agency's Green Power Locator lists renewable energy alternatives for each state: [epa.gov/greenpower/pubs/gplocator](http://epa.gov/greenpower/pubs/gplocator).
- ◆ Tell your elected officials your concern about coal mining and your support of efforts to transition to renewable forms of energy.
- ◆ Tell your national legislators that you support the Appalachian Community Health Emergency (ACHE) Act, HR 912, which takes health impacts into account in Appalachian mining communities. See [acheact.org](http://acheact.org) for more details.

## Reduce our use of fossil fuels as individuals and as congregations.

- ◆ Schedule an energy audit of home, office, and church buildings to find energy inefficiencies. There are many resources for sustainable building or renovating. Some include government rebates.
- ◆ Figure out your carbon footprint and target a few ways to make changes. Don't try to change everything at once.
- ◆ All states offer sustainable forms of energy. Find out what your options are at [epa.gov/greenpower/pubs/gplocator.htm](http://epa.gov/greenpower/pubs/gplocator.htm).
- ◆ For links to all of this information online, visit: [http://www.ucc.org/carbon\\_neutral\\_web\\_resources\\_for\\_congregations](http://www.ucc.org/carbon_neutral_web_resources_for_congregations).
- ◆ Celebrate progress. Let everyone know what you're doing!



## Tell fossil fuel companies that ‘business as usual’ is not all right.

Scientists concluded in 2012 that humans could emit 565 gigatons more of fossil fuels before reaching a 2°C rise in global temperature—the absolute maximum that scientists think the planet could tolerate and still support life as we know it. (Some scientists are convinced that even a 2°C rise is too much.) Yet fossil fuel companies plan to extract all their reserves, which in 2012 were estimated at 2,795 gigatons of coal, oil, and gas.

In 2013, the UCC became the first mainline denomination to pass a resolution calling for divestment from or shareholder activism against fossil fuel companies. Both of these strategies send a clear message to these companies that ‘business as usual’ must stop.

### To divest from fossil fuel companies:

- ◆ Learn what you own—as an individual or as a congregation.
- ◆ Decide what you want to exclude, and sell your fossil-fuel assets.
- ◆ Identify and invest in fossil-fuel-free investments. You may wish to focus on investments that promote renewable energy.

### For more information, see these websites:

- ◆ *United Church Funds “Beyond Fossil Fuels”*: [ucfunds.org/beyond-fossil-fuels](http://ucfunds.org/beyond-fossil-fuels)
- ◆ *Fossil Free, a project of 350.org*: [gofossilfree.org](http://gofossilfree.org)
- ◆ *“Extracting Fossil Fuels from Your Portfolio”*: [trilliuminvest.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/ExtractingFossilFuels.pdf](http://trilliuminvest.com/wp-content/uploads/2013/10/ExtractingFossilFuels.pdf)
- ◆ *“Investing to Curb Climate Change”*: [ussif.org/files/Publications/SRI\\_Climate\\_Guide.pdf](http://ussif.org/files/Publications/SRI_Climate_Guide.pdf)

**OR** keep your shares in fossil fuel companies and take action at shareholder meetings. Ask how the companies plan to account for stranded assets (reserves left in the ground). What are their plans to diversify from fossil fuels? Require transparency regarding their lobbying efforts.

**Thank you** for working to create God’s realm, where all can live happy, healthy, just and peaceful lives!

Environmental Ministries, Justice and Witness Ministries, United Church of Christ  
[ucc.org/environmental-ministries](http://ucc.org/environmental-ministries)

# Responsible Use of Energy in the UCC

*Resources for lowering our planet’s carbon footprint*

*As people of faith, we are called to be good stewards of creation and to live in harmony with other creatures. In recent years, scientists have discovered that our use of fossil fuels is warming the planet and creating climate change, pushing many species to extinction and threatening life as we know it. We must make some big changes quickly.*

*What can we do? We can take action at many levels.*