



**STATEMENT ON DECISION BY PRESIDENT TRUMP TO WITHDRAW UNITED STATES
FROM THE PARIS CLIMATE ACCORD**

WASHINGTON, D.C. (June 2, 2017) - The decision by President Donald Trump to withdraw the United States from the Paris Climate Accord is not only disheartening but also puts God's creation in further crisis. As the Bishops of The United Methodist Church, we issue this statement in defense of creation. It is our responsibility to take care of this planet we live on, this beautiful gift from God, the Creator of all things seen and unseen.

Psalm 115 reminds us that "The highest heaven belongs to the Lord, but God gave the earth to all people." Dejectedly, as human beings, we have misused God's splendid gift to the point of destruction. We believe that God has entrusted the care of this planet to all of us, and that is why we cannot remain silent when human neglect, selfishness and pride threatens to further harm this planet.

The decision by President Trump saddens us and we call upon the leadership of the United States to reconsider the decision. We believe that this decision, if not reconsidered, will contribute to worsening the state of this planet already exacerbated by overconsumption and our misuse of resources. The decision further isolates the United States from critical and essential climate and energy use conversations and negotiations.

We urge President Trump to rejoin the efforts of nearly 200 countries that have agreed to voluntarily reduce their carbon emissions.

As United Methodists, we have long supported action to address the present and growing threat of a changing climate. Our Social Principles state: "We therefore support efforts of all governments to require mandatory reductions in greenhouse gas emissions." (United Methodist Social Principles, ¶160.D)

As Christians, we must stand with our neighbors through the world to address both the impacts and root causes of climate change. The Bible informs us: "The earth dries up and withers, the world languishes and withers; the heavens languish together with the earth. The earth lies polluted under its inhabitants; for they have transgressed laws, violated statutes, broken the everlasting covenant." (Isaiah 24:4-5)

We are especially concerned because many members of our global church live in coastal areas that are particularly vulnerable to climate change. We see God's creation groaning in pain (Romans 8:22) when we see the adverse impacts of global climate change. This impact disproportionately affects individuals and nations least responsible for the emissions. "We therefore support efforts of all governments to require mandatory reductions in greenhouse gas emissions and call on individuals, congregations, businesses, industries, and communities to reduce their emissions." (Social Principles, ¶160.D)

The United Methodist Church will continue to call for bold leadership and advocate for policies rooted in justice and sustainability.

We join with other global and faith leaders to call for a comprehensive response to climate change. By caring for God's people and God's planet, we offer ourselves as instruments of God's renewing Spirit in the world calling for social and environmental holiness. We will do this by challenging those whose policies and practices neglect the poor, exploit the weak and harm the environment.

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