

**RESOLUTION FOR THE CREATION OF A CLIMATE MOBILIZATION ACTION PLAN AT
UNION THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY IN THE CITY OF NEW YORK**

WHEREAS, In October 2018, the United Nations International Panel on Climate Change released a special report stating that limiting global warming to 1.5°C by 2100 demands the immediate and unprecedented transformation of every global economic sector by 2030;

WHEREAS, The ecological and climate crisis has been the ongoing result of industrialized human activity, which has led to the designation of a new geological age known as the Anthropocene;

WHEREAS, The climate crisis and its causes have resulted in contemporary and intergenerational trauma compounding the risks disproportionately faced by communities made marginal and leading to climate apartheid, displacement, premature death, exacerbated discriminatory violence, and a drastically declining quality of life;

WHEREAS, We acknowledge the historical complicity of theology in the subjugation and exploitation of human beings and the natural world and, recognizing the moral authority and ethical responsibility of this institution, we deem our urgent restorative and protective action to be necessary;

WHEREAS, Union Theological Seminary has made significant preliminary steps to respond to the climate crisis, including divesting its endowment from fossil fuels, establishing the Center for Earth Ethics, pursuing LEED sustainability certification, transitioning from oil to natural gas for heating, and the planned purchase of renewable ‘green power’ from ConEdison;

NOW BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED, Union Theological Seminary declares that a climate and ecological emergency threatens our seminary, our communities, our city, region, state, nations, humanity, and the natural world;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, Union Theological Seminary hereby commits to an institution-wide mobilization with the support of the President’s Office and the Student Affairs Office who will jointly establish within 90 days a Community Assembly (CA) to deliberate on the seminary’s climate response. The CA will be endowed with all necessary powers to draft, coordinate, and plan climate and environmental programs including the development of a 10-year “Climate Mobilization Action Plan” to guide the climate emergency response, as well as all climate mitigation, resilience, adaptation, engagement, education, advocacy, and research and development programs. The CA will be informed by an expert advisory panel comprising executive administrative staff and relevant experts from community, academic, and religious institutions. The goals of the Climate Mobilization Plan include: developing practical and pedagogical partnerships with Indigenous communities, zero-emissions by 2030, Green Seminary certification through the Green Seminary Initiative, institutional resilience to the effects of climate change, and a yearly CA to assess progress in the 10-year plan. The CA will be composed of a representative cohort of non-executive administrative staff, faculty and adjuncts, and students;

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, In furtherance of this resolution, with the intention of maintaining active dialogue and strategic partnerships, Union Theological Seminary shall submit a copy of this resolution to the City of New York, Manhattan Community Board 9, Columbia University, WE Act Harlem, the AAR, SBL, New York Theological Consortium, GreenFaith, and all other relevant partners.

Submitted by:

The Eco-Justice Caucus of Union Theological Seminary

December 9, 2020