

**AMERICAN BAPTIST  
RESOLUTION ON INDIVIDUAL LIFESTYLE  
FOR ECOLOGICAL RESPONSIBILITY**

"The Creator/Redeemer seeks the renewal of the creation and calls the people of God to participate in saving acts of renewal. We are called to cooperate with God in the transformation of the fallen world that has not fulfilled its divinely given potential for beauty, peace, health, harmony, justice and joy (Isaiah 11:6-9, Micah 4:3-4, Ephesians 2:10, Revelation 21:1-5). Our task is nothing less than to join God in preserving, renewing and fulfilling the creation. It is essential to relate to nature in ways that sustain life on the planet, provide for the essential material and physical needs of all humankind and increase justice and well-being for all life in a peaceful world." (American Baptist Policy Statement on Ecology, page 2.)

"Modern humanity has a critical task before it. Our impact on the environment is disrupting nearly every ecosystem on the planet at a rapidly accelerating rate. Glaciers brought major reshaping and change. Our activities are causing even more drastic changes in a fraction of the time." (Situation Analysis, American Baptist Policy Statement on Ecology: page 1.) This critical task will mean learning of the environmental dangers facing the planet and recognizing that our practices and styles of life have had and will have an effect on the environment. In order to change, we must recognize that our practices and styles of life affect our environment and learn more of the environmental changes caused by their impact.

The General Board of the American Baptist Churches asks American Baptists to look at the way we live, and make the following changes in lifestyle, rejoicing that God in Christ has given us the power to:

1. Conserve: Live simply so that others may simply live. We can consume less energy, plastics, wood products, etc. Using less reduces the impact of our own lives on the environment and other human beings.
2. Enjoy: Be thankful for the saving presence of God in Jesus Christ, receiving with joy daily gifts of life, health, food and vocation. Thus our changes in lifestyle become expressions of delight and wonder.
3. Produce: We should take responsibility for growing as much of our own food as we can. As we do so we should discover how to compost garbage and how to garden and farm organically.
4. Recycle: Bottles, cans, paper goods, and organic materials can be returned to their sources and used again. Recycling reduces waste and keeps the ecological systems healthy.
5. Share: By using less we will save money. We can share what we have with others and be better stewards, and tithers of our money, time and resources.
6. Learn: Read and study to discover where and how we are affecting the ecology of Planet Earth, why we should change our lifestyle, and what we, as individuals, can do to make such changes.
7. Serve: Use our talents for the good of all, becoming publicly active at some point in the life of our communities. We should do what we

can as individuals and in our families and in our community. Join a group which has banded together for conservation. Ask businesses and public bodies to make changes which benefit the environment.

8. Restore: Find out what makes a stream or piece of land healthy, then join or form a group which seeks its regeneration.

These lifestyle changes will help accomplish the directives set out in the American Baptist Policy Statement on Ecology. When we respond to the Spirit of God, we become ministers of God, active with God in caring for the earth and its people.

Adopted by the General Board of the American Baptist Churches - December 1990  
170 For, 0 Against, 0 Abstentions  
Modified by the Executive Committee of the General Board - March 1996  
(General Board Reference # - 8181:6/90)

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**POLICY BASE**

American Baptist Policy Statement on Ecology