

UCC endorses Green New Deal

## **The denomination helped launch the environmental justice movement in the 1980s and more recently was an early leader in divesting from fossil fuels.**

by [Emily McFarlan Miller](#) in the [July 31, 2019](#) issue

The United Church of Christ may be the first Christian denomination to sign on to the Green New Deal, voting 662–30 to endorse the plan at its national gathering in Milwaukee on June 24.

The vote followed endorsements from the UCC’s executive leadership and Council for Climate Justice. The environmental protection legislation was introduced in the US House of Representatives by Rep. Alexandria Ocasio-Cortez (D., N.Y.) in February.

Brooks Berndt, the UCC’s minister for environmental justice, said the 850,000-member denomination helped launch the environmental justice movement in the 1980s and more recently was [an early leader in divesting from fossil fuels](#).

“When the Green New Deal came out, we immediately saw this as reflecting the values and the commitments that we’ve been holding dear for all these many years,” Berndt said.

The Green New Deal aims to achieve net-zero greenhouse gas emissions, build smart power grids, upgrade buildings to be more efficient, and train workers for jobs in a new, greener economy over the next ten years. The UCC resolution supporting it was titled “Let Justice Roll Down—Declaring Support for the Green New Deal and Affirming the Intersectionality of Climate Justice with All Justice Issues.”

Author and environmentalist Bill McKibben, who grew up in the UCC, told the denominational gathering through a video that the Green New Deal “is the first legislation that’s on the same scale as this crisis we face—and so it’s really important to have not just economists and scientists lining up behind it, but people

of faith as well who can remind us what the real bottom line is.” —Religion News Service

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