

A LONG LEGACY OF RESPONSIBLE INVESTING

The United Church of Christ (UCC) has a long and commendable legacy of applying faith values to its economic practices. This legacy also guides the work of United Church Funds in managing the assets of churches and faith-based institutions.

1967

UCC General Synod declares that **social values and social justice ought to be given consideration**, together with security and yield, in the investments of funds **held by religious organizations**. (1)

Following race riots in Rochester, NY, the UCC **supports local community organizing efforts** and sends an ambassador to Eastman Kodak board meeting to implore the company to maintain its **commitment to hire and train unemployed blacks**. (2)

1970

Economist Milton Friedman writes a famous New York Times Magazine editorial, "**The Social Responsibility of a Business to Increase Its Profits**," which pushes back against shareholder activism of faith communities.

1972-1980

Following unjust imprisonment of UCC minister and nine others, known as **the Wilmington Ten**, the UCC calls for an **end to mass incarceration and a moratorium on new prisons**. (5) (6)

1979

General Synod passes a resolution to leverage the economic power of its investments to **promote and protect human rights, as a gift and a demand of God**. (9)

2005

General Synod (GS) commits to peace in Israel - Palestine and recommends use economic leverage to challenge corporations violating human rights norms in the Occupied Territories. In 2015, GS votes to **divest from** corporations that failed to make meaningful efforts to comply. (11) (12)

2013

GS votes to **divest from fossil fuels** – among other strategies – to **combat climate change**. (13)

2015

General Synod passes a resolution urging five forms of socially responsible investment practices in support of **"a still speaking faith"**. (14)

1969 - 1985

In response to apartheid, the UCC joins other faith-based investors in **divesting from all corporations doing business in South Africa**. Desmond Tutu later notes that this ecumenical effort was an essential driver of regime change in South Africa. (3) (4)

1971

United Church Foundation (later United Church Funds) and the UCC Pension Boards become **founding members of the Interfaith Center on Corporate Responsibility**.

1977

UCC leads calls **for disarmament**, culminating in the UCC's call for **divestment** from publicly held stock in weapon manufacturing businesses. (7) (8)

1985

General Synod adopts pronouncement on **Just Peace Church**, declaring the UCC in opposition to war and supporting principles of non-violence. (10)

2006

UCF becomes a signatory to the United Nations Principles of Responsible Investing (PRI), committed to **adhering to six principles of responsible investing** and focusing on long-term sustainable returns and positive societal impact.

2014

In response to the GS call to divest from fossil fuels, UCF launches **Beyond Fossil Fuels Fund** and **Beyond Fossil Fuels Balanced Fund**.

2025

UCF adds to its Investment Policy Statement (IPS) a **focus on systemic risks, including attention to climate change**.

Citation

(1) 67-GS-5

(2) 67-GS-08

(3) 69-GS-88

(4) 85-GS-65

(5) 73-GS-65

(6) 77-GS-75

(7) 77-GS-49

(8) 83-GS-72

(9) 79-GS-31

(10) 85-GS-50

(11) 05-GS-30

(12) 150GS-30

(13) 13-GS-25

(14) 15-GS-18



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