

New Business #3

RESOLUTION TOPIC:

Creation Care, Climate Change, Support for Science

What is the financial impact of this resolution on the budget of our Synod?

None

What are the sources of income anticipated to accomplish the resolution's purpose?

N/A

What are the personnel implications within our Synod or Churchwide?

Encouragement from synod staff, particularly the Bishop.

Who will be responsible for implementation of the resolution?

The Bishop with the support of the Public Witness team can encourage rostered leaders; commend, express gratitude as well as declare solidarity with entities named in the resolution such as the ELCA 2016 Churchwide Assembly. The 2017 NT-NL Assembly by adopting this measure also assumes some responsibility for its implementation.

How does this resolution enhance the mission of the Church and our Synod?

The resolution helps the Church fulfill the mission entrusted to humankind to "serve and protect" the creation (Gen. 2:15) and encourages us toward the "acceptance of caregiving responsibility" ("Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope and Justice," ELCA Social Statement, adopted August 28, 1993).

THE RESOLUTION:

RESOLUTION: CREATION CARE, CLIMATE CHANGE, SUPPORT FOR SCIENCE

WHEREAS, God has created us and all that exists, given and preserves our bodies and all the necessities for life [The First Article: On Creation, Luther's Small Catechism]; and

WHEREAS, in 1993 with the "Caring for Creation" social statement, the ELCA realized the urgency was already "widespread and serious, according to the preponderance of evidence from scientists worldwide [of] dangerous global warming, caused by the buildup of greenhouse gases, especially carbon dioxide" from the burning of fossil fuels, and that "action to counter degradation, especially within this decade, is essential to the future of our children and our children's children. Time is very short;" and

WHEREAS, the ELCA's 2017 Advocacy Priorities that address key policy concerns of ministries across the U.S. begin with caring for God's creation, namely working "to protect God's creation from the impacts of climate change by encouraging policies that reduce greenhouse gas emissions while ensuring a just transition to renewable energy occurs and necessary steps are taken to make sure all Americans have access to clean water," and also focusing on long-term solutions that create safe, sufficient and sustainable livelihoods for all;" and

WHEREAS attitudes in some government entities currently demonstrate skepticism and seek to undermine the integrity and work of climatologists, geophysicists, and other scientists; and

WHEREAS the NT-NL Public Witness Team has made a start by presenting a workshop, "Creation Care and Climate Change: It's About the Kids"

RESOLVED that NT-NL rostered leaders and congregations be encouraged, as they preach and teach the gospel, to affirm the responsibility of the church in its imperative to care for creation, especially in regard to global warming; and that

RESOLVED that the 2017 NT-NL Synod in Assembly strive to encourage and equip congregations and members to take part in awareness raising and advocacy in their communities about responsible husbandry of creation, practices that will reduce greenhouse gases, and the benefits of transition to energy usage across the spectrum from fossil fuels to clean, renewable energy (wind, water, solar, tidal, etc.), while protecting marginalized and vulnerable people; and that

~~RESOLVED that the NT-NL Synod will stand in solidarity with scientists, including more than 97 percent of climate scientists*, who say that climate change is caused by humans, and be prepared to write, speak and advocate on their behalf; and that~~

RESOLVED that the 2017 NT-NL Synod in Assembly express gratitude and agreement with a) Lutheran World Federation General Secretary, the Rev. Dr Martin Junge, who told our 2017 Tri-Synodical Theological Conference "Salvation is not for sale; humans are not for sale; and creation is not for sale" (the 2017 LWF Assembly sub-themes), and b) the ELCA's 2016 Churchwide Assembly action "Toward a Responsible Energy Future" which commits the church : "to advocate for policies that reduce energy use and our dependence on fossil fuels and encourage development of renewable energy sources as an expression of our commitment to address climate change and caring for God's creation." and urges NT-NL leaders and congregations to study that action and the ELCA statement "Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope and Justice" and

RESOLVED that the 2017 NT-NL Synod in Assembly encourages congregations and rostered leaders to support commends ELCA World Hunger, Lutheran Disaster Response, Lutheran World Relief, Lutherans Restoring Creation, Texas Impact, the Lutheran World Federation and Action by Churches Together for their ongoing efforts to serve the needs of people adversely affected by environmental degradation, educate churches and the public about the implications of climate change and weather-related catastrophes, and to advocate to stem the undermining of environmental protection.; furthermore, urging strong support for these ministries from NT-NL congregations.

PRESENTER OF THE RESOLUTION:

The Rev. Suzanne Guinn; co-sponsored: the Rev. Charles Hubbard, the Rev. Franz Schemmel, Ann Hafften, Len Avecilla

CONGREGATION:

Baylor Medical Center, Grapevine

LOCATION:

Grapevine, TX