

Resolution on Eco-Reformation

WHEREAS, 2017 will mark observances of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, which addressed fundamental threats to human well-being and all of God's creation in theological, social, and political ways; and

WHEREAS, the 1993 ELCA Social Statement *Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice* affirms that, "we are called to care for the earth as God cares for the earth;" and

WHEREAS, in 1993 with *Caring for Creation* we 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, in the 1999 ELCA Social Statement *Economic Life: Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All*, this church declares that "Too often the earth has been treated as a waste receptacle and a limitless storehouse of raw materials to be used up for the sake of economic growth, rather than as a finite, fragile ecological system upon which human and all other life depends;" and

WHEREAS, the Statement of Vision and Expectations for Ordained Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) stipulates that "the people of God are called to the care and redemption of all that God has made. This includes the need to speak on behalf of this earth, its environment and natural resources and its inhabitants. This church expects that its ordained ministers will be exemplary stewards of the earth's resources, and that they will lead this church in the stewardship of God's creation;" and

WHEREAS, Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton wrote in a pastoral letter on September 19, 2014: "Daily we see and hear the evidence of a rapidly changing climate. Glaciers are disappearing, the polar ice cap is melting, and sea levels are rising. Incidents of pollution-created dead zones in seas and the ocean and toxic algae growth in water supplies are occurring with greater frequency. Most disturbingly, the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is rising at an unprecedented rate. At the same time we also witness in too many instances how the earth's natural beauty, a sign of God's wonderful creativity, has been defiled by pollutants and waste... The present moment is a critical one, filled with both challenge and opportunity to act as faithful individuals and churches in solidarity with God's good creation"; and

WHEREAS, the Lutheran World Federation has already, with its three-fold theme "Salvation: Not for sale. Human beings: Not for sale. Creation: Not for sale.", signaled its intention to include creation at the center of global 2017 anniversary commemorations; be it therefore

RESOLVED that the New England Synod search for ways to enact the 2013 Churchwide Assembly action to "support and encourage synods, congregations, members, the churchwide organization, and agencies and institutions of this church to adopt and advocate for policies that reduce energy use, and with it our dependence on fossil fuels, as an expression of this church's commitment to address climate change and to care for God's creation" and "to re-examine lifestyles and environmental footprints as they relate to the climate crisis and to improve their stewardship of energy resources and promote care for God's creation;" and be it further

RESOLVED, that the New England Synod commits itself to participate with the ELCA in becoming even more faithfully a denomination that embraces creation care throughout its life and mission.

Signed,

The Lutherans Restoring Creation “Green Team” of the New England Synod including:

Marcia Gustafson, Ascension Lutheran Church, S. Burlington, VT, marciagus@earthlink.net
Phoebe Morad, House of Prayer Lutheran Church in Hingham, MA, pheebscongo@gmail.com
Pr. Nancy Wright, Ascension Lutheran Church, S. Burlington, VT, pastornancy@alcvt.org
Dr. William Vaughan, St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Harwich, MA
Rev. Tiffany Nicely Holleck, St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Harwich, MA, Calledbyname@comcast.net
Erik Backus, Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity, Saranac Lake and Potsdam, NY, backusec@hotmail.com
Vicar Leah Lawson, serving at House of Prayer Lutheran Church, Hingham, MA, leah.lawson@my.lr.edu
Terry Schoof, House of Prayer Lutheran Church in Hingham, MA
Janet Waters, House of Prayer Lutheran Church in Hingham, MA, janetlee1956@gmail.com
Pastor Jonathan Ahnquist, First Lutheran Church, Barnstable, MA, firstlutheran@comcast.net
Ed Martin, House of Prayer Lutheran Church in Hingham, MA, emartin@fifieldfabrics.com
Nancy Urban, Grace Lutheran Church, Hartford, CT, nlurban@gmail.com
Scott Morad, House of Prayer Lutheran Church in Hingham, MA, smord@beld.net
Naomi Just, House of Prayer Lutheran Church in Hingham, MA, naomijust@aol.com
Pr. Susan Henry, House of Prayer Lutheran Church in Hingham, MA, hoppastorhenry@gmail.com

Submitted April 16, 2015

Memorial on Eco-Reformation

WHEREAS, 2017 will mark observances of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, which addressed fundamental threats to human well-being and all of God's creation in theological, social, and political ways; and

WHEREAS, the 1993 ELCA Social Statement *Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice* affirms that, "we are called to care for the earth as God cares for the earth;" and

WHEREAS, in 1993 with *Caring for Creation* we 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, in the 1999 ELCA Social Statement *Economic Life: Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All*, this church declares that "Too often the earth has been treated as a waste receptacle and a limitless storehouse of raw materials to be used up for the sake of economic growth, rather than as a finite, fragile ecological system upon which human and all other life depends;" and

WHEREAS, the Statement of Vision and Expectations for Ordained Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) stipulates that "the people of God are called to the care and redemption of all that God has made. This includes the need to speak on behalf of this earth, its environment and natural resources and its inhabitants. This church expects that its ordained ministers will be exemplary stewards of the earth's resources, and that they will lead this church in the stewardship of God's creation;" and

WHEREAS, Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton wrote in a pastoral letter on September 19, 2014: "Daily we see and hear the evidence of a rapidly changing climate. Glaciers are disappearing, the polar ice cap is melting, and sea levels are rising. Incidents of pollution-created dead zones in seas and the ocean and toxic algae growth in water supplies are occurring with greater frequency. Most disturbingly, the concentration of carbon dioxide in the atmosphere is rising at an unprecedented rate. At the same time we also witness in too many instances how the earth's natural beauty, a sign of God's wonderful creativity, has been defiled by pollutants and waste... The present moment is a critical one, filled with both challenge and opportunity to act as faithful individuals and churches in solidarity with God's good creation"; and

WHEREAS, the Lutheran World Federation has already, with its three-fold theme "Salvation: Not for sale. Human beings: Not for sale. Creation: Not for sale.", signaled its intention to include creation at the center of global 2017 anniversary commemorations; be it therefore

RESOLVED, that the New England Synod, recognizing the need for ongoing reformation of the ELCA, memorialize the 2016 Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA to request that climate change and ecological justice be major themes in ELCA planning and activities leading up to and following the observance of the 500th anniversary of the Reformation.

Signed,

The Lutherans Restoring Creation "Green Team" of the New England Synod including:

Marcia Gustafson, Ascension Lutheran Church, S. Burlington, VT, marciagus@earthlink.net
Phoebe Morad, House of Prayer Lutheran Church in Hingham, MA, pheebcongo@gmail.com
Pr. Nancy Wright, Ascension Lutheran Church, S. Burlington, VT, pastornancy@alcvt.org

Dr. William Vaughan, St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Harwich, MA
Rev. Tiffany Nicely Holleck, St. Peter's Lutheran Church, Harwich, MA, Calledbyname@comcast.net
Erik Backus, Lutheran Church of the Holy Trinity, Saranac Lake and Potsdam, NY, backusec@hotmail.com
Vicar Leah Lawson, serving at House of Prayer Lutheran Church, Hingham, MA, leah.lawson@my.lr.edu
Terry Schoof, House of Prayer Lutheran Church in Hingham, MA
Janet Waters, House of Prayer Lutheran Church in Hingham, MA, janetlee1956@gmail.com
Pastor Jonathan Ahnquist, First Lutheran Church, Barnstable, MA, firstlutheran@comcast.net
Ed Martin, House of Prayer Lutheran Church in Hingham, MA, emartin@fielfabrics.com
Nancy Urban, Grace Lutheran Church, Hartford, CT, nlurban@gmail.com
Scott Morad, House of Prayer Lutheran Church in Hingham, MA, smord@beld.net
Naomi Just, House of Prayer Lutheran Church in Hingham, MA, naomijust@aol.com
Pr. Susan Henry, House of Prayer Lutheran Church in Hingham, MA, hoppastorhenry@gmail.com

Submitted April 16, 2015