

Resolution on Energy Stewardship

Whereas, We are called to cherish and tend God's creation as a part of our loving and serving God and neighbor; and

Whereas, we in the industrialized world are consuming energy and Earth's resources in a way that is both unsustainable in the future and unfair to those in the developing world; and there are disturbing scientific reports of environmental degradation, global climate change, record rates of species extinction, and a depletion of non-renewable resources that should give us pause; and

Whereas, Human activity, especially the over-consumption of energy and natural resources, appears to be a critical driver in these changes in climate and environmental distress, causing both harm to God's creation and exacerbating already difficult situations for millions living with poverty and hunger, as weather extremes such as flood and drought increase; and

Whereas, The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, recognizing the gravity of these threats, has long been committed to addressing environmental issues as part of our call to justice, sustainability, and solidarity with affected communities and, along with our partners in the Lutheran World Federation and Lutheran World Relief, committed to working to alleviate hunger, poverty, and unsustainable living conditions globally; therefore, be it

Resolved, That the congregations, administrative offices, and outdoor ministry facilities of this synod be encouraged to offer a public witness of energy stewardship by: (1) Measuring the greenhouse gas emissions (i.e., "carbon footprint") of the facilities they own, to establish a baseline starting point; and (2) With the assistance of **(the synod green team name or other coordinating entity)** [see Addendum to this resolution], conduct an energy audit to determine what options there are for reducing energy use; and (3) Make a commitment to decrease their carbon footprint by a certain percentage over a specified period of time through energy conservation, efficiency, or clean energy measures; and be it further

Resolved, That the congregations, administrative offices, and outdoor ministry facilities of this synod be invited to share this information with the **[synod green team]**, synod office and, where applicable, on ELCA congregational reporting forms, and subsequently also share what energy-saving steps were taken, and what measurable energy savings realized, as evidenced in a lower carbon footprint measurement; and be it further

Resolved, That this synod memorialize the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America at its 2011 Churchwide Assembly to challenge all expressions of the ELCA to reduce their energy-related greenhouse gas emissions by at least 5 percent per year with the ultimate goal of reducing these emissions 25-40 percent by 2020, and to share this commitment and steps taken to achieve it in a public way in official publications and communication channels of this church.

Submitted by:

The Vermont and New York Conference, New England Synod