

Resolutions

R-1 Season of Creation

WHEREAS, Genesis states that all creation is “good;” and

WHEREAS, as Christians we begin our confession with praise for God as the creator of all things; and

WHEREAS, Luther teaches us in the explanation to the first article of the creed that we ought to thank and praise, serve and obey this creator God; and

WHEREAS, worship is our primary forum for giving thanks and praise to God; and

WHEREAS, prominent Lutheran theologians have provided a liturgical and homiletical framework to offer thanks and praise to God for the goodness of creation (see resource examples below):

- Habel, Rhoads and Santmire, eds. *The Season of Creation: A Preaching Commentary*. Minneapolis: Fortress Press, 2011.
- <http://www.letallcreationpraise.org/season-of-creation>
- <https://seasonofcreation.com>
- <http://www.lutheransrestoringcreation.org>
- <http://www.bibleandecology.org>
- <http://www.webofcreation.org>

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Northern Illinois Synod encourage each of its member congregations to observe a “Season of Creation” as a regular part of the liturgical year; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Northern Illinois Synod provide resources and learning opportunities to facilitate congregations in conducting a “Season of Creation.”

Submitted by: Northern Illinois Synod Climate Change Sub-Committee

Contact person: The Rev. Jeff Schlesinger - Heart of Illinois Lutheran Parish, Compton & Lee

Date Submitted: January 31, 2018

Action of the Resolution Committee

Action Taken: Recommend adoption of the resolution

Date of Action: April 29, 2018

R-2 Stewardship of Creation

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 recognizes that “action to counter degradation, especially within this decade, is essential to the future of our children and our children's children;” and declares that “each congregation should see itself as a center for exploring scriptural and theological foundations for caring for creation;”

and that “as congregations and other expressions of this church, we will seek to incorporate the principles of sufficiency and sustainability in our life;” and

WHEREAS, we are united as Christian leaders in our concern for the well-being of our neighbors and of God’s good creation that provides life and livelihood for all God’s creatures. Daily we see and hear the evidence of a rapidly changing climate. Glaciers are disappearing, the polar ice cap is melting, increasing temperatures, increased frequency and intensity of storms and wildfires, 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; (adapted from A Pastoral Message on Climate Change, September 19, 2014); and

WHEREAS, the Statement of Vision and Expectations for Ordained Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America 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;”

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Northern Illinois Synod, its congregations, committees, and boards are encouraged to:

1. become stronger advocates for the creation that God has made;
2. utilize available tools and partnerships to establish greening programs for their respective bodies;
3. begin dialogue within and outside their respective walls about actively increasing awareness of the present planetary concerns;
4. reconnect the faithful people of the synod and our communities to the rich diversity of life on earth;
5. guide restoration as it is within their means to do so; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the aforementioned parties be encouraged to host a community environment-centered event (such as community tree planting, community garden development, recycling events) at least once a year, to be God’s hands and feet and make a difference in restoring this beautiful creation.

Submitted by: Northern Illinois Synod Sub-Committee on Climate Change

Contact person: Pastor Scott Ralston - Faith Lutheran Church, Forreston

Date Submitted: February 1, 2018

Action of the Resolution Committee

Action Taken: Recommend adoption of the resolution

Date of Action: April 29, 2018

R-3 Budgeting for World Hunger

WHEREAS, reaching out to the world through addressing hunger is central to our mission as Christians; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), its members and congregations, do that most effectively together through ELCA World Hunger; and

WHEREAS, ELCA World Hunger will be able to most effectively plan its mission and respond in crisis when it has a consistent and predictable stream of contributions; and

WHEREAS, our own faith and commitment to mission is strengthened through regular giving;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Northern Illinois Synod encourage each member congregation to make ELCA World Hunger a regular line item in their budget; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that congregations submit this budgetary item on a monthly or quarterly basis.

Submitted by: Northern Illinois Synod World Hunger Sub-Committee

Contact person: The Rev. Jeff Schlesinger - Heart of Illinois Lutheran Parish, Compton & Lee

Date Submitted: March 22, 2018

Action of the Resolution Committee

Action Taken: Recommend Adoption

Date of Action: April 29, 2018

R-4 Bread for the World

WHEREAS, God calls us both individually and corporately in Holy Baptism: “to strive for peace and justice in all the earth.” (“Affirmation by Assembly”, p. 237 ELW); and

WHEREAS, individuals and local congregations need to be made aware of opportunities to fulfill this promise; and

WHEREAS, Bread for the World is a collective Christian voice urging our nation’s decision makers to end hunger at home and abroad. By changing policies, programs, and conditions that allow hunger and poverty to persist, we provide help and opportunity far beyond the communities where we live (www.bread.org); and

WHEREAS, our Synod has a generous record of ELCA World Hunger Program offerings that continues to grow; and

WHEREAS, members of our congregations and Synod Assembly can be faithful to their Baptismal promises by being effective advocates for the relief of hunger;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Assembly, congregations and congregants be encouraged to:

1. support local anti-hunger efforts and ELCA’s World Hunger Program; and

2. integrate hunger concerns in prayer, worship, stewardship and educational activities;
and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Northern Illinois Synod World Hunger Sub-Committee be encouraged to:

- a. educate congregations on the work of Bread for the World and how it acts in tandem with work done by ELCA World Hunger; and
- b. invite participation in Bread for the World's annual Offering of Letters at each Synod Assembly; and
- c. provide congregations with resources regarding Bread for the World, encouraging them to become Covenant Congregations.

Submitted by: Northern Illinois Synod World Hunger Sub-Committee

(Rev. Kenneth R. Storck, Ms. Carol Erickson, Ms. Carol Burmeister, Rev. Rick Meier & Rev. Jeff Schlesinger)

Contact person: Rev. Kenneth R. Storck (retired) - Gloria Dei, Rockford, IL

Date Submitted: March 26, 2018

Action of the Resolution Committee

Action Taken: Recommend adoption of the resolution

Date of Action: April 29, 2018