

An Environmental Resolution:

Submitted by: The Eastern Synod Director of Public Policy and Service Ministries

Moved

As followers of Christ called to care for the creation (Genesis 2:15), which the Creator pronounced “good” (Genesis 1), we the Eastern Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada assembled in Toronto, Ontario on June 23 – 26, 2016, invite the Synod’s congregations and each of their members to commit themselves anew to such care and to eco-friendly practices, according to their local circumstances.

Congregations:

1. Acquaint ourselves with the ELCIC Resolution on Climate Justice [<http://www.elcic.ca/Documents/documents/ClimateJusticeMotionFINAL.pdf>] and with the ELCIC Stewardship of Creation initiative [<http://www.elcic.ca/Stewardship/Stewardship-of-Creation/>].
2. Commit ourselves to becoming Stewardship of Creation Accredited Congregation [<http://elcic.ca/Stewardship/Stewardship-of-Creation/default.cfm>], with the goal of becoming carbon neutral by 2030.
3. Regularly include care of the earth in worship
 - Hymns (ELW 730-740), preaching, prayers
 - Fifth Sunday of Easter (Rogate Sunday) include a rite of blessing – children can bring bowls of seeds, soil and water forward
 - Give thanks to all who put food on our table – farmers, transporters, temporary foreign workers, supermarket employees. Invite any such members forward for a blessing.
4. Educate ourselves (all ages) through songs and stories (Bible and other) and learn more about creation, our planet, how to calculate our carbon footprint. Follow the periodic reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change for its updates on the rate of climate change. Deepen our understanding of climate change through books such as Naomi Klein’s *This Changes Everything* and the film based on it, or the study guide prepared for the ELCIC by Jana Kelly and Harold Remus “Planet in Peril: God’s Earth/God’s People” [<http://www.elcic.ca/Stewardship/Stewardship-of-Creation/documents/PlanetinPerilStewardshipofCreationInitiative.pdf>], or the very recent book by Stephen A. Jurovics, *Hospitable Planet: Faith, Action, and Climate Change*.
5. Monitor local /proposed changes in landscapes, roads, transportation, waste disposal, management of trees and parks. Commission members to communicate concerns to municipal governments that are not environmentally friendly.

Members of Congregations:

1. Educate ourselves (see pt. 4 in Congregations).
2. Do an energy audit of where we live (see pt.2 in Congregations) [<http://www.elcic.ca/Stewardship/Stewardship-of-Creation/Individuals.cfm>]
3. Communicate with members of municipal, provincial and federal governments thanking them for their efforts in reducing greenhouse gas emissions, in converting buildings and

transportation and utility vehicles to sustainable energy, and urge them to continue/intensify such efforts to move to sustainable energy entirely.

4. Encourage municipal, provincial and federal governments to assist households to move to sustainable energy by providing tax incentives for installing solar panels and connecting with geothermal energy.
5. Urge provincial and federal legislators to ban microbeads, commonly present in personal care products, that end up in our rivers and lakes and resolve to stop using such products [<http://www.ecojustice.ca/time-to-ban-microbeads-entirely/?gclid=CMXMiJG7xMwCFZClQodLp0LZw>]
6. Investigate and sign petitions against trophy hunting, the decimation of rhinos and elephants for their horns, the sheer diversity of wildlife threatened by human habitation, depredation, predation, the effect of human population growth on the survival of wildlife [<http://biodiversitygroup.org/?gclid=COKu1MDj2ssCFQIKaQods30Ajw>] and [<http://www.populationmedia.org/2011/07/15/the-impact-of-population-growth-on-wildlife/>]
7. Be a partner with the Creator in preserving the creation

Rationale:

1. Numerous passages in the Bible celebrate the creation and the sustaining hand of the Creator: Genesis 1 and 2 (with the command to care for creation), Pss 19; 24:1-2; 29; 65; 104; 136:1-9; 148: 1-10. Job 38-41.
2. Luther's explanation of the First Article of the Creed in the *Small Catechism* spells out the many blessings the Creator has bestowed on us in creation and the Creator's continued preservation of creation.
3. News reports and our own observations and experience make clear that global warming is happening:
 - Global temperatures continue to break records.
 - Increasing violence of weather events such as tornadoes, hurricanes, typhoons, severe droughts, raging wildfires, rapidly melting ice north and south, resulting in rising sea levels have been alerting us to global warming. The poorest and most vulnerable on the planet feel the impacts most severely.
 - Increasing acidification and warming of earth's oceans as they absorb so much of the carbon dioxide produced since the industrial revolution, with dire effects on marine life and, ultimately, animals and plants everywhere [<http://ocean.nationalgeographic.com/ocean/explore/pristine-seas/critical-issues-ocean-acidification/>]
 - The overwhelming percentage of climate scientists agree that global warming is caused by humans ("anthropogenic") [<http://www.skepticalscience.com/global-warming-scientific-consensus-intermediate.htm>]