

2021 RMS Resolution

Renewed Relationship: a 21st Century Resolution to Care for Creation

“O Lord, how manifold are your works! In wisdom you have made them all.”

Psalm 104: 24

Whereas: the 1993 ELCA Social Statement “Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope and Justice”¹ called us to action through principles of participation, solidarity, sufficiency and sustainability especially for the poor and most vulnerable, however, due to excessive consumption of fossil fuels (coal, oil and natural gas) and impact of human population, the health of earth is in peril; and

Whereas: the ELCA 2016 Churchwide Assembly passed the resolution “Toward a Responsible Energy Future”² urging all ELCA members to inform, educate and act to reduce energy use, lessen our dependence on fossil fuels and invest in clean sources of energy; and

Whereas: United Nations sponsored reports on Biodiversity³ and Climate Change⁴ make clear the ongoing loss of animal and plant species and effects of Climate Change in the form of extreme weather events, rising seas, changing landscapes and water imbalances across the globe; and

Whereas: “Time is very short.” as stated in the 1993 Social Statement under Section II, The Urgency, and climate science says that we must act to limit the global temperature increase to 1.5 degrees C. above pre-industrial levels by 2030 or risk irreversible negative consequences,

Therefore, Be It Resolved: As people of faith in this 21st century, we are called to commit ourselves and our congregations to a renewed relationship with all of God’s creation:

To: accept that our earthly home is finite and provides a balance of life created by God which we must understand and respect more deeply through regular study, liturgy, preaching and advocacy,

To: join with those in our congregations and communities to take timely action in support of environmental and climate initiatives locally, nationally and globally,

To: participate in ELCA Churchwide sustainability efforts with emphasis on the 2016 Churchwide Assembly Resolution “Toward a Responsible Energy Future”, through non-profit organizations such as “Lutherans Restoring Creation,” and to support those workers whose jobs are impacted by working toward a more just and livable future, as addressed in the ELCA March 2021 document “Just Transition to a Sustainable Future”⁵,

To: reduce consumption of fossil fuels to the maximum extent possible through energy conservation and to encourage the use of clean energy in all Rocky Mountain Synod church and office buildings, and all other ministry facilities and transportation choices, and encourage congregants to do likewise,

To: imbue the importance to prioritize meaningful action in our congregations by having an appointed representative, preferably a council or staff member, advocate and collaborate with relevant ministries, such as the congregational and/or synod creation care team, to fulfill our commitment to care for creation.

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References:

¹Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Social Statement “Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice” Adopted August 1993
<https://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Caring-for-Creation>

²Evangelical Lutheran Church in America Social Policy Resolution “Toward a Responsible Energy Future” Adopted August 2016
https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Toward_Responsible_Energy_Future_SPR16.pdf?_ga=2.34844257.1741807534.1609528126-186238292.1605839730

³IPBES 2019 Global Assessment Report on Biodiversity and Ecosystem Services” May 2019 <https://news.un.org/en/story/2019/05/1037941>

⁴United Nations Special Report on Climate Change “Global Warming of 1.5 Degrees C” 2018
<https://www.un.org/en/sections/issues-depth/climate-change/>

⁵ Just Transition to a Sustainable Future, March 2021
<https://search.elca.org/Pages/Results.aspx?k=Just+Transition>