

The following resolution was adopted by the 2010 Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod Assembly during its Spring Session on May 7-8 at the National Conference Center in Landsdowne, Virginia. “Whereas” clauses are listed as background for voting members. The Assembly votes on “resolved” clauses only.

Energy Stewardship

- Whereas, the created world is a gracious gift from God to all living beings, and to every generation, and to us; and God’s people have a Biblical calling to act as responsible stewards of this gift of creation; and
- Whereas, human activity, especially our use of energy and resources, affects the gift of creation in significant and sometimes harmful ways and is a driver in changes in climate and environmental distress,^a causing both harm to God’s creation and exacerbating already difficult situations for many people and for other non-human life; and
- Whereas, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), recognizes the gravity of these issues, and has a history of commitment in addressing environmental issues as part of our call to justice, sustainability, and solidarity with affected communities,^b along with our partners in the Lutheran World Federation and Lutheran World Relief who are committed to working to alleviate hunger, poverty, and unsustainable living conditions globally;^c and
- Whereas, the ELCA’s Washington Office is advocating at the Federal level a goal of 25-40% reduction in greenhouse gas emissions by 2020; and
- Whereas, there are many low cost tools and resources available to assess and reduce a congregation’s greenhouse gas emissions through organizations such as the ELCA’s Caring for Creation,^d Lutherans Restoring Creation,^e the Greater Washington Interfaith Power and Light,^f and The Pew Center on Global Climate Change;^g

^a <http://climate.nasa.gov/>

^b ELCA 1993: Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope and Justice www.elca.org/socialstatements

^c www.elca.org/hunger/toolkit for educational materials that show how hunger and climate change are connected

^d www.elca.org/caringforcreation

^e www.lutheransrestoringcreation.org (Anticipated launch date: September 2010 – if not sooner)

^f www.gwipl.org

^g www.pewclimate.org and www.pewclimate.org/WhatYouCanDo/tips (non-partisan; sound science)

therefore, be it

Resolved, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod in Assembly encourage its congregations, administrative offices, campus ministries and associated outdoor ministry facilities to offer a public witness of energy stewardship by: (1) Measuring the greenhouse gas emissions (i.e., “carbon footprint”) associated with the energy use of facilities they own or use to establish a baseline starting point; and (2) With the assistance and/or support of our Synod Creation Care Team,^h 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 Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod in Assembly invite its congregations, administrative offices, and outdoor ministry facilities to share this information with the Synod Creation Care 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 the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod in Assembly encourage each congregation to establish a “Congregational Creation Care Team” that, with the support of the Synod Creation Care Team, would be responsible for implementing this resolution, providing educational opportunities to its members about our calling as stewards of creation, and further guiding the congregation and its members to be better stewards of energy in all aspects of its shared life; and be it further

Resolved, that the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod in Assembly memorialize the 2011 Churchwide Assembly to encourage all expressions of the ELCA to reduce their energy-related greenhouse gas emissions incrementally per year with the ultimate goal of reducing these emissions 25-40% 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.

^h Our Synod Creation Care Team, with the help of Lutherans Restoring Creation (LRC), stands ready to offer assistance and guidance on the implementation of this resolution and in the sharing of your congregation’s results with others. Our Synod Team will be in contact with LRC and others that are joining in this effort in a collaborative, coordinated initiative across the ELCA