

PLEASE PRESENT TO YOUR CHURCH COUNCIL to discuss and vote on and return via scan or mail ASAP:



Our Congregation's Covenant to Care for Creation

As a congregation committed to care for creation, we **affirm** God's creation in all its glory and beauty. We **acknowledge** God as the source of all things. We acknowledge Christ as the redeemer of all things. We acknowledge the Spirit as the sustainer of all things. As a result, we strive to respect all of life as sacred. We **accept** our vocation as Earth-keepers who care for creation. We accept our responsibility to live justly in relation to our fellow human beings in ways that all creatures may mutually thrive together.

Worship: We seek to worship throughout the year so that we express our gratitude and praise to God as creator, redeemer, and sustainer. We are committed to glorify God intentionally together with all creation. In worship, we will celebrate creation, confess our sins against creation, grieve the losses of creation, and commit ourselves to care for Earth.

Education: We seek to learn about the biblical, theological, and ecclesial traditions concerning creation, including the biblical mandate from God for us to care for Earth. We also seek to learn about the present degradations of creation due to human activity, how these degradations are related to human exploitation and oppression, how we as religious people are implicated in these matters, and what we as Christians can do to heal and restore creation for future generations.

Building and Grounds: We agree to assess the impact that our activities and the use and maintenance of our property may have upon creation—in such matters as energy and water use, cleaning products, lawn care, paper use, food choices, recycling and waste, and transportation. We will strive to make choices that lessen our negative impact on Earth and that serve to renew and restore Earth community.

Discipleship at Home and Work: We encourage ourselves as individual members of this congregation—at whatever age, economic level, ethnic group, or walk of life—to care for creation in our personal lifestyle, in our homes, and at our work—knowing that our habits and practices can contribute significantly to care for creation. We seek to foster a closer relationship with nature so that we can live simply and walk lightly upon Earth.

Public Ministry: We seek to change the systems that foster the degradation of creation and to rectify the injustices that result from it. And we seek to alert our members to environmental legislation that protects creation and to encourage their active participation in the development of public policy. We encourage members to engage in civic activities that foster ecological health.

Because we desire to leave Earth a better place for our children, we will promote love and respect for creation among our youth, teach them responsible Earth practices, and engage them in projects that restore creation. We will pursue this mission in a grace-filled manner, seeking to find hope and joy in the commitments and sacrifices these provisions may entail and in the restorations they engender. We seek to let our care for creation be known to others.

Signed by _____ 's Church Council on (Date) _____

Liaison with LRC*: _____ Phone: _____ Email: _____

Signing Council Members:

*You will be contacted within a few weeks of receipt with support materials and connections to others in this critical ministry.

Lutherans Restoring Creation is a grassroots movement promoting care for creation in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. This is accomplished by cultivating a community of dedicated stewards of earth and neighbor who proclaim God's promise of hope and healing for all.

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*Note: affiliation provided for
identification purposes only and
does not signify endorsement.*

Dear church leaders, staff, and members,

It's time to think about what a being reforming church means to us institutionally and individually. Lutherans Restoring Creation (LRC) offers very practical, customizable, and fulfilling tools for the benefit of various committees and ministries of your congregation. Our mission is to promote the care for creation in the full life of ELCA churches. Since the 1993 Social Statement Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice was approved, the larger church has been a beacon of intent, but some grass-roots-based tactics, stories, and encouragement are needed to continue to put this vision into action.

The LRC *Congregational Organizing Guide* can help your congregation decide how to look at every facet of your work through a new lens. This lens offers a re-training to include Earth-keeping as part of our vocation to care for neighbor. All of these materials were created by a cohort of Lutheran theologians led by Rev. David Rhoads, Professor Emeritus at Lutheran Theological Seminary in Chicago.

"LRC grounds the motivation and rationale for creation care in Lutheran theology, and works for change and action through denominational structures and institutions at all levels."

- Peter Bakken, Coordinator for Public Policy at the Wisconsin Council of Churches

If your congregation desires to learn more about this work, a guide can be sent for free to whoever in your church offers to be a liaison with our network (complete form on reverse). We offer monthly conference calls to connect with ideas and updates. There are also more in-depth calls where your facilities and/or financial stewards can participate in personalized support from our EPA Energy Star and U.S. Green Building Association program consultants to save resources.

Please consider joining our network and get your congregation connected to the rising cloud of witnesses who see a need for another page to turn in our history; a time of "eco"-reformation. Just as the church continues to support work towards stronger civil rights, environmental justice is also intrinsically tied to our calling as Christians to love our neighbor. For more information about this and many other topics, please join our "Friends of LRC" list at www.LutheransRestoringCreation.org, "like" us on Facebook, or simply give us a call. All of our materials are offered at no charge, but donations to our non-profit are always encouraged!

Sincerely,

Phoebe Morad, Executive Director
617-599-2722

*Lutherans Restoring Creation is an exempt organization as described in
Section 501(c)(3) of the Internal Revenue Code; EIN # 82-0828984.*