

Statement for the Subcommittee on Energy and Air Quality
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June 19, 2008

Climate change is one of the most important moral issues of our time because of the severe implications it has for the future of God's people and for all of God's creation. Already we are seeing impacts at both a local and global level—from melting ice sheets to increased storm events. The impacts of these global changes will continue to affect God's community both at home and abroad.

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), in conjunction with the National Council of Churches of Christ in the USA (NCC) and its 35 member denominations such as the Episcopal Church, the Presbyterian Church USA, and the United Methodist Church, has been working to address climate change for over a decade. Many of the NCC's member communions have taken action to reduce their own carbon emissions and have passed resolutions and developed social policies calling for action from the federal government to prevent catastrophic climate change. These policies and resolutions, combined with many examples of congregant and congregational action, provide ample evidence of the overwhelming concern for global warming within the Christian community. (See Appendix I-III for denominational statements)

Our Faithful Call:

As Christians, we are called to be good stewards of God's creation. In Genesis, humans are called to care for God's good creation (Gen 2:15; 1:31) and to enable the fruitfulness with which God has blessed creation (Gen 1:11, 22) to continue. God made a protective covenant with all life (Gen 9:9-17). As Christians, we remember our responsibility to "provide for the redemption of the land" (Lev 25:24) for we know that the Earth is the Lord's (Ps 24:1). As Christians, we also look forward to the day when God will fulfill the promise to reconcile what God made- bringing a new heaven *a new earth* out of the present state of our planet. (Revelation 21) Our current actions are having devastating ecological consequences; we are not being good stewards of that which God has put into our hands and under our feet (Ps 8; Gen 9:2-3).

As people who take the Scriptures seriously, we also care about social justice and we have a duty to protect vulnerable communities around the world. Christ calls us to protect the vulnerable and minister to those in need (Matthew 25:40-45). The Bible proclaims an unmistakable priority for those living in poverty, and calls for justice for the oppressed and the marginalized. (Leviticus 26:34-35). Especially when we as a nation are contributing more than our fair share to the global warming problem, it is our responsibility to respond faithfully to the demands of God's justice. International agencies, scientific panels, and the evidence of our own work around the world tell us that the effects of global warming are already harming and will continue to have the

greatest impact on those living in poverty. This includes those living in developing countries as well as those in our own communities.

What Science Indicates

Numerous studies, such as the recent reports of the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change (IPCC), highlight how global warming impacts are already being felt around the globe. Oceans are progressively acidifying, which is negatively impacting coral reefs and fish populations. At least 20 percent of the world's species are at increased risk of extinction with a predicted 1.5-2.5 degree Celsius increase in global temperatures over the next century. Sea level rise caused by melting Arctic ice is expected to flood coastal communities, causing severe infrastructure damage that will affect millions of individuals.

Decreasing snow pack in the United States and around the globe will lead to decreased availability of fresh water. Rising sea levels and an increased number of extreme weather events will threaten communities not only globally but also across the United States. Increased incidence of drought will lead to shortages of food not only in countries already experiencing hunger, but also in places where hunger has become less common.

According to the IPCC, global climate change is already affecting communities and people around the world. In 2005, more than 20 million people were negatively affected by changes in agricultural production due to various changes in the climate including increased floods and droughts. As the climate grows warmer, food insecurity will increase in places where food is already scarce, like many countries in Africa, and will also rise in parts of the world that have seen progress in the fight against hunger like Latin America. An additional 90 million people who already live in poverty could be at risk of hunger and malnutrition in this century. One to two billion people will face water scarcity this century and by 2020 approximately 250 million will face water scarcity in Africa. Millions of individuals around the world will be at greater risk of contracting diseases such as malaria, dengue fever, and West Nile virus because of climactic changes and increasing ranges for the insects that carry these disease vectors. Each of these impacts will fall most heavily on those living in poverty and other vulnerable populations who are dependent on their natural environment for their day-to-day survival.

The scientific community, in addition to providing us with a better understanding of climate change, has also provided us with the knowledge to solve this global crisis. In order to prevent catastrophic climate change that will occur if global temperatures continue to increase, we must reduce our greenhouse gas emissions, particularly carbon dioxide, by at least 80 percent by the year 2050. To protect God's creation—both human and nonhuman— now and in the future, we must act now.

Our Response

God's planet and people are already suffering from climate change and it is our duty and call to serve justice and be good stewards of God's creation by acting now to reduce

carbon emissions and provide assistance to those who will be impacted by global warming and climate mitigation.

Since the early 1990s, the ELCA and our partners in the NCC have been working to educate its members about the impacts individuals and society are having on God's Earth. Many individuals of faith, communities, and congregations have been actively changing their lifestyles to reduce their carbon footprint, switching their church buildings to renewable sources of power and calling on their elected officials to take a leadership role on climate change. Prayerful reflection on the consequences of global warming makes it clear that immediate action is required to stop climate change. Our concern is rooted in our Christian call for stewardship and justice. The impacts of global warming highlight how we have failed to be good stewards of God's creation and are failing to provide justice for the most vulnerable among us.

The faith community is also calling on the federal government to take action. We believe we must make economy-wide reductions as well as changes in our personal lifestyles in order to curb greenhouse gas emissions. In addition we must work to conserve the energy we use, make our systems more efficient, and take advantage of renewable sources of energy such as wind and solar power. Congress must implement measures that will prevent the catastrophic impacts that have been predicted if we continue with business as usual. Our actions at both a national, local, and individual level must ensure that we create a bountiful future for our children and grandchildren.

One area of particular concern is the impacts of climate change on low income people and communities of color in the United States who be disproportionately impacted by the effects of climate change. The African American community, in particular, will be adversely affected by both the impacts of climate change and climate change mitigation. African Americans, because they are more likely to live in poverty are more likely to suffer from extreme heat events. Because of predictions of higher energy costs with climate mitigation, African American households, which spend a higher fraction of their income on energy purchases than any other segment of the U.S. population because they are more than twice as likely to live in poverty, will be severely impacted. The burden of both climate change and climate change mitigation will fall most heavily on communities of color and those living in poverty, thus, climate legislation must include mechanisms to reduce the burden on these populations.

It is clear that the U.S. must act now in order to prevent the impacts of climate change from damaging communities and cultures in the U.S. and across the globe. As we have gained a better understanding of the present and future impacts of climate change it has become clear that we cannot address poverty without addressing global warming and we cannot address global warming without addressing poverty.

Faith Principles on Global Warming and Policy Priorities:

In early 2006, the ELCA in conjunction with the NCC and its member denominations developed "Faith Principles on Global Warming" to serve as an educational tool, but

more importantly to provide a lens to examine climate change legislation. These Faith Principles (attached as Appendix IV to this testimony) include four overarching themes: justice, stewardship, sustainability and sufficiency. We believe that each of these principles is critical to the development of public policy that not only prevents catastrophic climate change but also protects the voiceless and the vulnerable.

The “Faith Principles” emphasize justice, reflecting our primary concern for those living in poverty around the world who are least likely to have contributed to global warming and will be most affected by climate change and climate legislation.

Stewardship of creation is also an important priority for people of faith and legislation must demonstrate care for all of God’s creation, both human and non-human. Our call to stewardship dictates that we follow the recommendations of leading scientists in order to protect all of God’s creation from present and future harm. The Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change has stated that we must reduce emissions by as much as eighty percent by 2050 with short term goals of up to twenty five percent by 2020 and we will continue to evaluate all legislation for adherence to this critical goal.

The principle of sustainability calls for policies that provide an acceptable quality of life for present generations without compromising that of future generations. In addressing global warming, we must make investments in clean, renewable energy that ensure a good quality of life for humanity while ensuring that the health and well-being of creation and the quality of life for future generations are not compromised by our actions.

Finally, the principle of sufficiency recognizes that we cannot achieve significant reductions in global warming emissions unless we make changes in our lifestyles, and particularly in our energy consumption, through adopting conservation measures and embracing energy saving innovations in our homes, our communities, our businesses and our places of worship as well as in the halls of government and in our transportation systems.

In addition to the principles we have identified three policy elements that must be included in climate legislation in order to protect all of God’s creation and God’s people:

1. **Climate legislation must heed the most up to date recommendations of the scientific community with regard to greenhouse gas emission reductions.** Currently this means legislation must ensure that we do not increase the Earth’s temperature by more than two degrees Celsius and reduce global warming emissions by approximately 15-20 percent by 2020 and by 80 percent by 2050.
2. **Legislation must protect those living in poverty in the U.S. from the impacts of climate change and climate legislation.** Those living in poverty in the U.S. will be the least able to prepare for and adapt to the changes taking place in our climate and our economy. Legislation must hold those living in poverty harmless and ensure that they do not bear the burden of any increases in energy costs. In addition, it must ensure that it is not pushing people into poverty and provides for

those whose jobs are impacted by climate legislation.

3. **Legislation must provide adaptation assistance for those living in poverty abroad.** Those living in the most vulnerable developing nations around the world bear little responsibility for global warming and are already feeling the burden of climate change, with little ability to adapt to these impacts. Through adaptation assistance, the U.S. can prevent the destruction of vulnerable communities around the world and help with climate relief.

Climate Legislation

In recent years various versions of climate legislation have been introduced, each providing a unique look at climate change and the path to solving this moral crisis. Four particular bills have been introduced in the 110th Congress, each of which, when examined through the lens of our Faith Principles, has strengths and weaknesses.

Senate Legislation

The Senate has already addressed climate legislation in the 110th Congress and in preparation for the debate worked with three different bills. The first bill introduced by Senators Lieberman and Warner provided the basis for discussion, with policy elements taken from legislation developed by Senators Bingaman and Specter.

I. America's Climate Security Act (S.2191)

Introduced by Senators Lieberman and Warner with the support of Senator Boxer, America's Climate Security Act provides a step forward for climate policy.

1. Emissions Reductions

The bill calls for emissions reductions of 15 percent by 2020 and 65 percent by 2050 which would provide strong short term reductions and would put the United States on the right path for strong long term reductions. However the bill fails to require sufficient long term greenhouse gas reductions as outlined by the international scientific community and called for by the faith community.

2. Domestic Energy Rebate

In addition, S. 2191 provides financial assistance to low income consumers through established energy programs such as the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program (LIHEAP) and financial assistance to low income utility customers. The funding provided to the energy programs creates two problems; these programs do not reach the vast majority of low income Americans and the funding provided in this bill is not enough to expand the programs in an effective manner.

3. International Adaptation Assistance

Senator Warner worked closely with the faith community in developing the international adaptation assistance language included in S. 2191. The language as developed by the Senator provides assistance to developing countries through USAID that would work to both prevent climate impacts and provide financial relief to those communities and countries devastated by climate change.

However, the funding provided in S. 2191 was inadequate to meet the needs of developing nations around the world, with only five percent of the auction revenue provided for this provision.

II Boxer-Lieberman-Warner Climate Security Act (S. 3036)

This substitute bill introduced by Senator Boxer together with Senators Lieberman and Warner made some crucial changes and would have provided greater financial support for those living in poverty around the world.

1. Emissions Reductions

The greenhouse gas emissions reductions outlined in S. 3036 were the same as those outlined in America's Climate Security Act (S. 2191). (see notes above for ELCA/NCC commentary)

2. Domestic Energy Rebate

S. 3036 provided greater support for those living in poverty than the initial bill (S. 2191). Two primary sections of this legislation provided financial resources to be used to assist U.S. consumers.

First, money was provided (\$800 billion from 2012-2050) to fund tax breaks for consumers to help them offset the cost of increased energy prices that would result from climate change legislation. Though conceptually appropriate, the yearly financial assistance would not be enough to provide for those in the greatest need, nor is there a guarantee that financial assistance would be provided for those living in poverty. The money generated in the early years of the legislation, the time when consumers would be the hardest hit, is far too low to adequately provide for those in need.

The second area where assistance was provided to the consumer was through funds provided to local distribution companies (LDCs). LDCs were required to use these funds to help consumers offset their increased electricity cost while also investing in energy efficiency technology for consumers. Though S. 3036 would provide twelve percent of the carbon allowance value to these companies, they would be required to provide only three percent to assist low income individuals and households, which is again too little to help those in need.

3. International Adaptation Assistance

The international adaptation assistance fund in S. 3036 made substantial improvements to S. 2191. First and foremost, more financial assistance was

provided for eligible countries. Approximately \$324 billion was allocated to this fund over the life of the bill (2012-2050). In addition, small but important language changes were made to the legislation, most importantly the inclusion of “most vulnerable developing nations” as those nations eligible for financial assistance through this fund. Each of these made significant positive changes to the legislation.

III. Low Carbon Economy Act of 2007 (S. 1766)

Introduced by Senators Bingaman and Specter, S. 1766 (as noted below) does not meet many of the requirements laid out by the Faith Principles.

1. Emissions Reductions

The emissions reductions resulting from this legislation would reduce greenhouse gas emissions to 2006 levels by 2020 and to 1990 levels by 2030. These reductions are not strong enough to meet the recommendations outlined by the scientific community, which require, at a minimum, emissions reductions that are 20 percent below 2006 levels by 2020.

2. Domestic Energy Rebate

This legislation provides assistance for those living in poverty through various programs. These programs include support for the Low Income Home Energy Assistance Program, weatherization programs, and rural energy assistance. Though these programs would assist low income households, they do not have the ability to reach the majority of those who may be impacted by climate change legislation.

3. International Adaptation Assistance

This legislation does not include financial assistance for international adaptation in the most vulnerable developing nations.

House Legislation

I. Safe Climate Act – (H.R. 1590)

The Safe Climate Act introduced by Congressman Waxman currently has 152 cosponsors. However, this bill does not provide specific funding to aid those living in poverty around the world in adapting to climate change. It also does not provide specific assistance for low-income Americans in dealing with rising costs of energy and other impacts of climate change and climate change legislation.

1. Emissions Reductions

This legislation calls on the Environmental Protection Agency to address climate change mandating the U.S. to reduce its emissions by 20 percent by 2020 and then by 80 percent by 2050. We are supportive of the emissions reductions that would

be required under this legislation as it meets the call for stewardship for all of God's creation in our Faith Principles.

2. Domestic Climate Rebate

This legislation simply requires that the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) address the issue of climate change. It does not address consumer protection through energy rebates leaving the EPA to design this element.

3. International Adaptation Assistance

Again, the Safe Climate Act does not call for international adaptation assistance. The structure of the bill simply requires the EPA to ensure that the United States' emissions reductions are appropriate for preventing catastrophic climate change.

II. Investing in Climate Action and Protection Act (ICap) (H.R. 6186)

Introduced in June by Congressman Markey, ICap also works through the EPA but establishes a larger and more comprehensive program for addressing climate change than H.R. 1590

1. Emission Reductions

The bill calls for strong emissions reductions requiring the U.S. to reduce its greenhouse gas emissions to eighty five percent below 2005 levels by 2050. This, as noted before, meets the standards set forth in the Faith Principles document.

2. Domestic Energy Rebates

ICap includes tax refunds and rebates for middle and low income households to offset any increase in electricity/energy costs associated with climate change legislation. In total, more than half of the revenue generated by the auction goes back to U.S. consumers to help them maintain their purchasing power.

This bill provides rebates through an electronic transfer benefits card to the lowest income Americans, many of whom do not earn enough income to file taxes. According to studies by the Congressional Budget Office and the Center on Budget and Policy Priorities, the 7 percent allocated for rebates to low income individuals and families is enough to help those in the bottom quintile of our economy.

In addition, the bill provides tax refunds for 80 percent of the American public. These refunds are designed to hold consumers harmless by offsetting the increases in costs experienced under climate legislation.

3. International Adaptation Assistance

This legislation provides support for those in the most vulnerable developing nations, noting that climate change is a threat multiplier and may lead to increased migration, floods, droughts, and community impacts. In the early years this legislation provides 2 percent of the auction proceeds for this purpose increasing

to 2.5 percent after 2020. This funding would provide \$4 billion a year from 2012-2019 and \$5 billion a year from 2020 until 2050 to help developing and impoverished nations mitigate climate change impacts.

III. Climate MATTERS

Introduced on June 17th by Congressman Doggett, this bill would also provide a strong base for climate legislation.

1. Emission Reductions

This legislation calls for emissions reductions that are 80 percent below 1990 levels by 2050, reductions that are in line with both scientific recommendations as well as the Faith Principles.

2. Domestic Energy Rebates

Similar to the legislation introduced by Congressman Markey, This bill provides funding for rebates to low income consumers that effectively identifies those with the greatest need and uses effective tools such as the electronic benefits transfer card to get these benefits to consumers in an efficient and timely manner.

Financial assistance is provided in the form of rebates and tax relief to the consumer. While the rebate program has the ability to cover the poorest of the poor in the U.S. (similar to the Markey bill) the tax relief would not be as extensive as the tax relief provided in the Markey legislation, covering up to the second quintile of the U.S. economy (approximately). With the inclusion of the rebate and tax relief program, this legislation sets a high standard and protects those living in poverty and on the edge of poverty in the U.S..

3. International Adaptation assistance

Funding for international adaptation assistance is included in this bill and requires funding to be distributed through the U.S. Agency for International Development program for the most vulnerable developing nations. The legislation is not specific about how distribution will occur but leaves these decisions to the administrator of USAID. The faith community feels this is a crucial part of any climate legislation and would like to see more specificity in the language.

Appendix I

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice

This social statement was adopted by a more than two-thirds majority vote as a social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the third Churchwide Assembly on August 28, 1993, at Kansas City, Missouri.

Prologue

Christian concern for the environment is shaped by the Word of God spoken in creation, the Love of God hanging on a cross, the Breath of God daily renewing the face of the earth.

We of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America are deeply concerned about the environment, locally and globally, as members of this church and as members of society. Even as we join the political, economic, and scientific discussion, we know care for the earth to be a profoundly spiritual matter.

As Lutheran Christians, we confess that both our witness to God's goodness in creation and our acceptance of caregiving responsibility have often been weak and uncertain. This statement:

- offers a vision of God's intention for creation and for humanity as creation's caregivers;
- acknowledges humanity's separation from God and from the rest of creation as the central cause of the environmental crisis;
- recognizes the severity of the crisis; and
- expresses hope and heeds the call to justice and commitment.

This statement summons us, in particular, to a faithful return to the biblical vision.

I. The Church's Vision of Creation

A. God, Earth and All Creatures

We see the despoiling of the environment as nothing less than the degradation of God's gracious gift of creation.

Scripture witnesses to God as creator of the earth and all that dwells therein (Pss 24:1). The creeds, which guide our reading of Scripture, proclaim God the Father of Jesus Christ as "maker of heaven and earth," Jesus Christ as the one "through [whom] all things were made," and the Holy Spirit as "the Lord, the giver of life" ([Nicene Creed](#)).

God blesses the world and sees it as "good," even before humankind comes on the scene. All creation, not just humankind, is viewed as "very good" in God's eyes (Gen 1:31). God continues to bless the world: "When you send forth your spirit, they are created; and you renew the face of the ground" (Pss 104:30). By faith we understand God to be deeply, mysteriously, and unceasingly involved in what happens in all creation. God showers care upon sparrows and lilies (Mat 6:26-30), and brings "rain on a land where no one lives, on the desert, which is empty of human life" (Job 38:26).

Central to our vision of God's profound involvement with the world is the Incarnation. In Christ, the Word is made flesh, with saving significance for an entire creation that longs for fulfillment (Rom 8:18-25). The Word still comes to us in the waters of baptism, and in, with, and under the bread and wine, fruits of the earth and the work of human hands. God consistently meets us where we live, through earthy matter.

B. Our Place in Creation

Humanity is intimately related to the rest of creation. We, like other creatures, are formed from the earth (Gen 2:7, 9, 19). Scripture speaks of humanity's kinship with other creatures (Job 38-39; Pss 104). God cares faithfully for us, and together we join in singing the "hymn of all creation" (*Lutheran Book of Worship*, page 61; Pss 148). We look forward to a redemption that includes all creation (Eph 1:10).

Humans, in service to God, have special roles on behalf of the whole of creation. Made in the image of God, we are called to care for the earth as God cares for the earth. God's command to have dominion and subdue the earth is not a license to dominate and exploit. Human dominion (Gen 1:28; Pss 8), a special responsibility, should reflect God's way of ruling as a shepherd king who takes the form of a servant (Phil 2:7), wearing a crown of thorns.

According to Gen 2:15, our role within creation is to serve and to keep God's garden, the earth. "To serve," often translated "to till," invites us again to envision ourselves as servants, while "to keep" invites us to take care of the earth as God keeps and cares for us (Num 6:24-26).

We are called to name the animals (Gen 2:19-20). As God names Israel and all creation (Pss 147:4; Isa 40:26, 43:1) and as the shepherd calls by name each sheep (John 10:3), naming unites us in a caring relationship. Further, we are to live within the covenant God makes with every living thing (Gen 9:12-17; Hos 2:18), and even with the day and night (Jer 33:20). We are to love the earth as God loves us.

We are called to live according to God's wisdom in creation (Prov 8), which brings together God's truth and goodness. Wisdom, God's way of governing creation, is discerned in every culture and era in various ways. In our time, science and technology can help us to discover how to live according to God's creative wisdom.

Such caring, serving, keeping, loving, and living by wisdom sum up what is meant by acting as God's stewards of the earth. God's gift of responsibility for the earth dignifies

humanity without debasing the rest of creation. We depend upon God, who places us in a web of life with one another and with all creation.

II. The Urgency

A. Sin and Captivity

Not content to be made in the image of God (Gen 3:5; Ezek 28:1-10), we have rebelled and disrupted creation. As did the people of ancient Israel, we experience nature as an instrument of God's judgment (cf., Deut 11:13-17; Jer 4:23-28). A disrupted nature is a judgment on our unfaithfulness as stewards.

Alienated from God and from creation, and driven to make a name for ourselves (Gen 11:4), we become captives to demonic powers and unjust institutions (Gal 4:9; Eph 6:12; Rev 13:1-4). In our captivity, we treat the earth as a boundless warehouse and allow the powerful to exploit its bounties to their own ends (Amos 5:6-15). Our sin and captivity lie at the roots of the current crisis.

B. The Current Crisis

The earth is a planet of beauty and abundance; the earth system is wonderfully intricate and incredibly complex. But today living creatures, and the air, soil, and water that support them, face unprecedented threats. Many threats are global; most stem directly from human activity. Our current practices may so alter the living world that it will be unable to sustain life in the manner we know.

Twin problems--excessive consumption by industrialized nations, and relentless growth of human population worldwide--jeopardize efforts to achieve a sustainable future. These problems spring from and intensify social injustices. Global population growth, for example, relates to the lack of access by women to family planning and health care, quality education, fulfilling employment, and equal rights.

Processes of environmental degradation feed on one another. Decisions affecting an immediate locale often affect the entire planet. The resulting damages to environmental systems are frightening:

- depletion of non-renewable resources, especially oil;
- loss of the variety of life through rapid destruction of habitats;
- erosion of topsoil through unsustainable agriculture and forestry practices;
- pollution of air by toxic emissions from industries and vehicles, and pollution of water by wastes;
- increasing volumes of wastes; and
- prevalence of acid rain, which damages forests, lakes, and streams.

Even more widespread and serious, according to the preponderance of evidence from scientists worldwide, are:

- the depletion of the protective ozone layer, resulting from the use of volatile compounds containing chlorine and bromine; and
- dangerous global warming, caused by the buildup of greenhouse gases, especially carbon dioxide.

The idea of the earth as a boundless warehouse has proven both false and dangerous. Damage to the environment eventually will affect most people through increased conflict over scarce resources, decline in food security, and greater vulnerability to disease.

Indeed, our church already ministers with and to people:

- who know firsthand the effects of environmental deterioration because they work for polluting industries or live near incinerators or waste dumps;
- who make choices between preserving the environment and damaging it further in order to live wastefully or merely to survive; and
- who can no longer make their living from forests, seas, or soils that are either depleted or protected by law.

In our ministry, we learn about the extent of the environmental crisis, its complexities, and the suffering it entails. Meeting the needs of today's generations for food, clothing, and shelter requires a sound environment. Action to counter degradation, especially within this decade, is essential to the future of our children and our children's children. Time is very short.

III. The Hope

A. The Gift of Hope

Sin and captivity, manifest in threats to the environment, are not the last word. God addresses our predicament with gifts of "forgiveness of sins, life, and salvation" (Luther, *Small Catechism*). By the cross and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God frees us from our sin and captivity, and empowers us to be loving servants to creation.

Although we remain sinners, we are freed from our old captivity to sin. We are now driven to God's promise of blessings yet to come. Only by God's promise are we no longer captives of demonic powers or unjust institutions. We are captives of hope (Zech 9:11-12). Captured by hope, we proclaim that God has made peace with all things through the blood of the cross (Col 1:15-20), and that the Spirit of God, "the giver of life," renews the face of the earth.

Captured by hope, we dream dreams and look forward to a new creation. God does not just heal this creation wounded by human sin. God will one day consummate all things in "new heavens and a new earth, where righteousness is at home" (2Pet 3:13). Creation--now in captivity to disruption and death--will know the freedom it awaits.

B. Hope in Action

We testify to the hope that inspires and encourages us. We announce this hope to every

people, and witness to the renewing work of the Spirit of God. We are to be a herald here and now to the new creation yet to come, a living model.

Our tradition offers many glimpses of hope triumphant over despair. In ancient Israel, as Jerusalem was under siege and people were on the verge of exile, Jeremiah purchased a plot of land (Jer 32). When Martin Luther was asked what he would do if the world were to end tomorrow, he reportedly answered, "I would plant an apple tree today." When we face today's crisis, we do not despair. We act.

IV. THE CALL TO JUSTICE

Caring, serving, keeping, loving, and living by wisdom--these translate into justice in political, economic, social, and environmental relationships. Justice in these relationships means honoring the integrity of creation, and striving for fairness within the human family.

It is in hope of God's promised fulfillment that we hear the call to justice; it is in hope that we take action. When we act interdependently and in solidarity with creation, we do justice. We serve and keep the earth, trusting its bounty can be sufficient for all, and sustainable.

A. Justice Through Participation

We live within the covenant God makes with all living things, and are in relationship with them. *The principle of participation means they are entitled to be heard and to have their interests considered when decisions are made.*

Creation must be given voice, present generations and those to come. We must listen to the people who fish the sea, harvest the forest, till the soil, and mine the earth, as well as to those who advance the conservation, protection, and preservation of the environment.

We recognize numerous obstacles to participation. People often lack the political or economic power to participate fully. They are bombarded with manipulated information, and are prey to the pressures of special interests. The interests of the rest of creation are inadequately represented in human decisions.

We pray, therefore, that our church may be a place where differing groups can be brought together, tough issues considered, and a common good pursued.

B. Justice Through Solidarity

Creation depends on the Creator, and is interdependent within itself. *The principle of solidarity means that we stand together as God's creation.*

We are called to acknowledge this interdependence with other creatures and to act locally and globally on behalf of all creation. Furthermore, solidarity also asks us to stand with the victims of fire, floods, earthquakes, storms, and other natural disasters.

We recognize, however, the many ways we have broken ranks with creation. The land and its inhabitants are often disenfranchised by the rich and powerful. The degradation of the environment occurs where people have little or no voice in decisions -- because of racial, gender, or economic discrimination. This degradation aggravates their situation and swells the numbers of those trapped in urban or rural poverty.

We pray, therefore, for the humility and wisdom to stand with and for creation, and the fortitude to support advocates whose efforts are made at personal risk.

C. Justice Through Sufficiency

The earth and its fullness belong to the Lord. No person or group has absolute claim to the earth or its products. *The principle of sufficiency means meeting the basic needs of all humanity and all creation.*

In a world of finite resources, for all to have enough means that those with more than enough will have to change their patterns of acquisition and consumption. Sufficiency charges us to work with each other and the environment to meet needs without causing undue burdens elsewhere.

Sufficiency also urges us to care for arable land so that sufficient food and fiber continue to be available to meet human needs. We affirm, therefore, the many stewards of the land who have been and are conserving the good earth that the Lord has given us.

We recognize many forces that run counter to sufficiency. We often seek personal fulfillment in acquisition. We anchor our political and economic structures in greed and unequal distribution of goods and services. Predictably, many are left without resources for a decent and dignified life.

We pray, therefore, for the strength to change our personal and public lives, to the end that there may be enough.

D. Justice Through Sustainability

The sabbath and jubilee laws of the Hebrew tradition remind us that we may not press creation relentlessly in an effort to maximize productivity (Exod 20:8-11; Lev 25). *The principle of sustainability means providing an acceptable quality of life for present generations without compromising that of future generations.*

Protection of species and their habitats, preservation of clean land and water, reduction of wastes, care of the land--these are priorities. But production of basic goods and services, equitable distribution, accessible markets, stabilization of population, quality education, full employment--these are priorities as well.

We recognize the obstacles to sustainability. Neither economic growth that ignores environmental cost nor conservation of nature that ignores human cost is sustainable. Both will result in injustice and, eventually, environmental degradation. We know that a

healthy economy can exist only within a healthy environment, but that it is difficult to promote both in our decisions.

The principle of sustainability summons our church, in its global work with poor people, to pursue sustainable development strategies. It summons our church to support U.S. farmers who are turning to sustainable methods, and to encourage industries to produce sustainably. It summons each of us, in every aspect of our lives, to behave in ways that are consistent with the long-term sustainability of our planet.

We pray, therefore, for the creativity and dedication to live more gently with the earth.

V. COMMITMENTS OF THIS CHURCH

We of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America answer the call to justice and commit ourselves to its principles--participation, solidarity, sufficiency, and sustainability. In applying the principles to specific situations, we face decisions made difficult by human limitation and sin. We act, not because we are certain of the outcome but because we are confident of our salvation in Christ.

Human behavior may change through economic incentive, guilt about the past, or fear about the future. But as people of biblical faith, who live together in trust and hope, our primary motivation is the call to be God's caregivers and to do justice.

We celebrate the vision of hope and justice for creation, and dedicate ourselves anew. We will act out of the conviction that, as the Holy Spirit renews our minds and hearts, we also must reform our habits and social structures.

A. As Individual Christians

As members of this church, we commit ourselves to personal life styles that contribute to the health of the environment. Many organizations provide materials to guide us in examining possibilities and making changes appropriate to our circumstances.

We challenge ourselves, particularly the economically secure, to tithe environmentally. Tithers would reduce their burden on the earth's bounty by producing ten percent less in waste, consuming ten percent less in non-renewable resources, and contributing the savings to earthcare efforts. Environmental tithing also entails giving time to learn about environmental problems and to work with others toward solutions.

B. As a Worshipping and Learning Community

1. The Congregation as a Creation Awareness Center Each congregation should see itself as a center for exploring scriptural and theological foundations for caring for creation.

Awareness can be furthered by many already in our midst, for example: Native people, who often have a special understanding of human intimacy with the earth; scientists, engineers, and technicians, who help us to live by the wisdom of God in creation; experts

in conservation and protection of the environment; and those who tend the land and sea. We also will learn from people suffering the severe impact of environmental degradation.

2. *Creation Emphases in the Church Year* Congregations have various opportunities during the year to focus on creation. Among these are Thanksgiving, harvest festivals, and blessings of fields, waters, and plants and animals. Many congregations observe Earth Day or Soil and Water Stewardship Week. As a church body, we designate the Second Sunday after Pentecost as Stewardship of Creation Sunday, with appropriate readings (as a development of the traditional Rogationtide).

3. *Education and Communication* This church will encourage those who develop liturgical, preaching, and educational materials that celebrate God's creation. Expanded curricula, for use in the many contexts of Christian education, will draw upon existing materials. We will promote reporting on the environment by church publications, and encourage coverage of this church's environmental concerns in public media.

4. *Programs Throughout this Church* This church commends the environmental education taking place through synodical and regional efforts; [camps and outdoor ministries](#); [colleges, seminaries, and continuing education events](#); and the churchwide [Hunger Program](#). We especially commend this church's Department for Environmental Stewardship in the Division for Church in Society, for its network of caregivers, its advice to church members and institutions on innovative caregiving, and its materials for use in environmental auditing.

C. As a Committed Community

As congregations and other expressions of this church, we will seek to incorporate the principles of sufficiency and sustainability in our life. We will advocate the environmental tithe, and we will take other measures that work to limit consumption and reduce wastes. We will, in our budgeting and investment of church funds, demonstrate our care for creation. We will undertake environmental audits and follow through with checkups to ensure our continued commitment.

D. As a Community of Moral Deliberation

As congregations and other expressions of this church, we will model the principle of participation. We will welcome the interaction of differing views and experiences in our discussion of environmental issues such as:

- nuclear and toxic waste dumps;
- logging in ancient growth forests;
- personal habits in food consumption;
- farming practices;
- treatment of animals in livestock production, laboratory research, and hunting;
- land-use planning; and
- global food, development, and population questions.

We will examine how environmental damage is influenced by racism, sexism, and classism, and how the environmental crisis in turn exacerbates racial, gender, and class discrimination. We will include in our deliberation people who feel and suffer with issues, whose economic security is at stake, or who have expertise in the natural and social sciences.

We will play a role in bringing together parties in conflict, not only members of this church but also members of society at large. This church's widespread presence and credibility provide us a unique opportunity to mediate, to resolve conflict, and to move toward consensus.

E. As an Advocate

The principles of participation, solidarity, sufficiency, and sustainability will shape our advocacy--in neighborhoods and regions, nationally and internationally. Our advocacy will continue in partnership, ecumenically and with others who share our concern for the environment.

Advocacy on behalf of creation is most compelling when done by informed individuals or local groups. We will encourage their communication with governments and private entities, attendance at public hearings, selective buying and investing, and voting.

We will support those designated by this church to advocate at state, national, and international levels. We will stand with those among us whose personal struggles for justice put them in lonely and vulnerable positions.

1. Private Sector This church will engage in dialogue with corporations on how to promote justice for creation. We will converse with business leadership regarding the health of workers, consumers, and the environment. We will invite the insights and concerns of business leadership regarding responsible environmental actions. We will urge businesses to implement comprehensive environmental principles.

Government can use both regulations and market incentives to seek sustainability. We will foster genuine cooperation between the private and public sector in developing them.

2. Public Sector This church will favor proposals and actions that address environmental issues in a manner consistent with the principles of participation, solidarity, sufficiency, and sustainability.

These proposals and actions will address: excessive consumption and human population pressures; international development, trade, and debt; ozone depletion; and climate change. They will seek: to protect species and their habitats; to protect and assure proper use of marine species; and to protect portions of the planet that are held in common, including the oceans and the atmosphere.

This church will support proposals and actions to protect and restore, in the United States and Caribbean, the quality of:

- natural and human habitats, including seas, wetlands, forests, wilderness, and urban areas;
- air, with special concern for inhabitants of urban areas;
- water, especially drinking water, groundwater, polluted runoff, and industrial and municipal waste; and
- soil, with special attention to land use, toxic waste disposal, wind and water erosion, and preservation of farmland amid urban development.

This church will seek public policies that allow people to participate fully in decisions affecting their own health and livelihood. We will be in solidarity with people who directly face environmental hazards from toxic materials, whether in industry, agriculture, or the home. We will insist on an equitable sharing of the costs of maintaining a healthy environment.

This church will advance international acceptance of the principles of participation, solidarity, sufficiency, and sustainability, and encourage the United Nations in its caregiving role. We will collaborate with partners in the global church community, and learn from them in our commitment to care for God's creation.

Claiming the Promise

Given the power of sin and evil in this world, as well as the complexity of environmental problems, we know we can find no "quick fix"--whether technological, economic, or spiritual. A sustainable environment requires a sustained effort from everyone.

The prospect of doing too little too late leads many people to despair. But as people of faith, captives of hope, and vehicles of God's promise, we face the crisis.

We claim the promise of "a new heaven and a new earth" (Rev 21:1), and join in the offertory prayer (*Lutheran Book of Worship*, page 109): "Blessed are you, O Lord our God, maker of all things. Through your goodness you have blessed us with these gifts. With them we offer ourselves to your service and dedicate our lives to the care and redemption of all that you have made, for the sake of him who gave himself for us, Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen."

Appendix II

Proposed Resolution for the 2006 General Assembly Resolution on Global Warming

Approved by the Justice and Advocacy Commission, the NCC Governing Board, and the NCC and Church World Service General Assembly

TITLE: Resolution on Global Warming

POLICY

BASE: Christian Concern and Responsibility for Economic Life in a Rapidly Changing Technological Society, adopted by the General Board of the National Council of Churches USA Governing Board, February 24, 1966

The Ethical Implications of Energy Production and Use, adopted by the National Council of Churches USA Governing Board, May 11, 1979

RATIONALE: Prominent scientists and major, respected scientific bodies are in agreement that the Earth is warming because of human-induced carbon emissions. Global warming threatens the very fabric of God's creation and will hit those who are least able to adapt—both human and nonhuman—the hardest. Because the Christian community is called to justice, to be good “neighbors” with our brothers and sisters across the globe, and to steward God's creation, addressing global warming is a moral imperative and a Christian call.

RESOLUTION: The National Council of Churches has stated:

The rapidly expanding dimensions of (human) “dominion” over the earth and its physical resources call for new and deeper commitment to the Christian doctrine of stewardship . . . Natural resources, human techniques and institutions all together constitute an interlocking and interacting system of amazing complexity, precision and balance.¹

An ecologically just society will be guided by the values of sustainability, fairness, and participation. Sustainability refers to the earth's limited capacity to provide resources and to absorb the pollution resulting from their use. Sustainability requires that biological and social systems which nurture and support life not be depleted or poisoned. Fairness refers to . . . an equitable distribution of the total benefits and costs.²

Whereas the impacts of global warming, as currently predicted and understood by leading scientists and scientific bodies around the world including the National

Aeronautics and Space Administration, the National Academy of Sciences, and the Intergovernmental Panel on Climate Change, will dramatically and negatively alter God's gracious gift of creation and

Whereas the predicted impacts of global warming will have a disproportionate impact on those living in poverty and hunger, the elderly and infants, and those least responsible for the emissions of green house gases.

BE IT THEREFORE RESOLVED THAT THE NATIONAL COUNCIL OF CHURCHES IN CHRIST:

- 1) Expresses its deep concern for the pending environmental, economic, and social tragedies threatened by global warming to creation, human communities, and traditional sacred spaces
- 2) Urges the Federal Government to respond to global warming with greater urgency and leadership and gives support for mandatory measures that reduce the absolute amount of greenhouse gas emissions, and in particular emissions of carbon dioxide, to levels recommended by nationally and internationally recognized and respected scientific bodies.
- 3) Urges the Federal, State and Local Governments to support and invest in energy conservation and efficiency, sustainable and renewable, and affordable and sustainable transportation
- 4) Calls for business and industry to respond to global warming with increased investment in conservation and more efficient and sustainable energy technologies that are accessible, sustainable, and democratic.
- 5) Stands firmly with all of God's children by urging that adaptive measures and financial support be forthcoming from government and industry to aid those directly impacted by global warming and in particular those least able to relocate, reconstruct, or cope with the current and pending impacts of climate change
- 6) Calls on all Christians, people of faith and people of good will the world over to lead by example and seek active means whereby they may, individually and in community, quickly reduce their emissions of green house gas emissions and speak out for engagement by their elected officials on matters of global warming.

Appendix III

Orthodox Perspectives on Creation

Report of the WCC Inter-Orthodox Consultation, Sofia, Bulgaria, October 1987 (Extracts)

Creation and Holy Trinity

1. We believe that the created world itself is a ‘mystery’ originating in the sovereign will of God accomplished by the action (*energia*) of the Holy Trinity. We confess in the Nicene Constantinopolitan creed (325/381) that the Father is the “Creator of heaven and earth and of all things visible and invisible”, the Son “He through whom all things were made”, and the Holy Spirit, the “Creator of life” (*zoopion*). Thus, the three persons created together the world, which is the fruit of the common action of the Holy Trinity issuing out of the one essence.

2. As St. Basil the Great said, “We should understand in the creation the original cause of the Father as a founding cause, the cause of the Son as a creative, and the cause of the Spirit as an implementing one.” Thus the Father is the “Creator of all things”, the Son is the one “through whom all things were made”, and the Holy Spirit is the one “in whom are all things”. Everything that he (God the Creator) had made ... was very good” (Gen. 1:31), because “first He conceived, and His conception was a work carried out by His Word, and perfectly by His Spirit.

3. Thus, the action of the Holy Spirit, rooted in the Father, is presented as the ‘economy’ of the Son and the Spirit: the former bringing God’s desire into existence and the latter perfecting it in goodness and beauty; the one calling the creation and leading it to the Father, and the other helping the creation to respond to His call and communicating perfection to it. Thus, the creation is the result of the communion (*koinonia*), close relationship and cooperation of the Holy Trinity. The community of three Persons participates actively in the execution of the whole of God’s plan. Creation “out of nothing”

4. “In the beginning” the Holy Trinity created the world (heaven and earth) “out of nothing” (*ex nihilo*) and not out of preexistent matter. The world is a production of God’s free will, goodness, wisdom, love and omnipotence. God did not create the world in order to satisfy some need of His. Rather he created it without compulsion and without force in order that it might enjoy His blessings and share in His goodness. God then brought all things into being out of nothing, creating both the visible and the invisible.

5. “Out of nothing” (*ex nihilo*) finds its first expression in the Bible. “Beholding the heavens and the earth, and seeing all that is there, you will understand that God has created it all from nothing” (2 Macc. 7:28). Thus, the creation springs into being or passes into being out of non-being. As St. Gregory of Nyssa affirms, “It begins to be, and the very substance of the creation owes its beginning to change”. This transition from non-existence is a change brought about by God’s creative Word “who has established the world so that it shall not be moved” (Ps.93:1).

Creation of the cosmos- integrity of the world

6. God is the Creator of the world. The world as cosmos, i.e. a created order with its own integrity, is a positive reality. It is the good work of the good God (Gen. 1), made by God for the blessed existence of humanity. The Cappadocian Fathers teach that God first creates the world and beautifies it like a palace, and then leads humanity into it. The genesis of the cosmos, being in becoming, is a mystery (*mysterion*) for the human mind, a genesis produced by the Word of God. As such, the world is a revelation of God (Rom. 1:19-20). Thus, when its intelligent inhabitants see it as cosmos, they come to learn about the Divine wisdom and the Divine energies. The cosmos is a coherent whole, a created synthesis, because all its elements are united and interrelated in time and space. A serious study of the mystery of creation, through faith, prayer, meditation and science, will make a positive contribution to the recognition of the integrity of creation. The daily office of the Church (vespers) begins with a psalm which exalts the beauty of this mystery (Ps. 103), while the Fathers of the Church often comment on the various biblical passages which describe the integrity of the creation.

Value of the creation

7. The value of the creation is seen not only in the fact that it is intrinsically good, but also in the fact that it is appointed by God to be the home for living beings. The value of the natural creation is revealed in the fact that it was made for God (something which is beautifully expressed in Orthodox iconography), i.e. to be the context for God's Incarnation and humankind's deification, and as such, the beginning of the actualization of the Kingdom of God. We may say that the cosmos provides the stage upon which humankind moves from creation to deification.

Ultimately, however, the whole of the creation is destined to become a transfigured world, since the salvation of humankind necessarily involves the salvation of its natural home, the cosmos. Human being as a microcosm

8. The fact that Adam and Eve were created by God last of all the other created beings and in a different way - not just by the utterance of a Divine Word but by the direct involvement and action of God - indicates not only the outstanding position of the human in the whole of the creation, but also its special relation to God. According to the Church Fathers, Genesis 1:26 ff, "...Let us make man ...(poiesomen anthropon) shows that the creation of the human being was the result of a Trinitarian act. Particularly significant in this connection is the statement that "man was made according to the image and the likeness of God". The reference to "the image of God" is to be understood in terms of Jesus Christ, since he is explicitly identified with it (2 Cor.4:4; Col. 1:15; Heb. 1:3 ff). Thus for mankind to be in the image of God means to be in, or assimilated to, Christ. This is a matter of grace and act and not a matter of nature, because only Christ is by nature God's image as God's eternal and natural offspring, his only begotten Son. The "likeness of God" is often connected with the grace of the Spirit who assimilates us to Christ.

9. In the created world only the human being combines material and spiritual elements. Human existence is thus differentiated from non-human creation in a qualitative way. In light of this fact, the Church Fathers often speak of the human being as a "little world", a "microcosm" of the whole of the creation. Using this notion, the Church Fathers teach that the human body contains in it all levels of existence of the natural world which preceded it in order of the creation, and considered the physical elements which make up the human body as in no way different from those which constitute the physical world. This means that the natural world is fully integrated with the human being and the whole of the creation.

10. At the same time, the Fathers' use of the notion of microcosm means that humanity, created in God's image and likeness, transcends the material world because it participates in God spiritually and consciously, unlike the rest of the creation. Humankind then stands on the boundary (*methorion*) between the material and the spiritual worlds as a connecting link. It is directly related to the earthly aspect of created existence as well as to the untreated existence of the Creator. As such, on the one hand, it directly influences our thinking about the integrity of creation, and on the other hand it gives to human nature a dynamic spiritual dimension.

11. St. Gregory the Theologian says that we are fully involved with the material creation by virtue of our physical existence, and that the material created reality is deeply involved with us. If we move to the direction of deification, our human nature, progressing towards God, will somehow carry the created material world with it. If, however, we move to the opposite direction, the created world will suffer with us as well (cf. Rom. 8:19-22). This means that we are called to exercise dominion over all creatures on earth (cf. Gen. 1:28), i.e. to be stewards (*oikonomoi*) of God's material world, caring for it, maintaining it in its integrity and perfecting it by opening it up to God through our own deification.

The Incarnation as the renewal of the creation

12. God's will, wisdom and love for the creation in general and for humankind in particular are revealed in the Incarnation in an inexpressible way. The Son of God, as the one through whom the process of creation was fulfilled, came down from heaven into the world and became fully man, i.e. assumed human nature in its integrity and led it to the fulfillment of its God-given destiny, deification. The Orthodox Church teaches that the Virgin Mother of God, the Theotokos, is the model of the renewal of humankind and the creation in Christ. In her receiving of the Son

of God, the whole humankind and the whole of the creation participate. In the Incarnate God the Father “made known. His will ... as a plan for the fullness of time, to unite all things in Him (Christ), things in heaven and things on earth” (Eph. 1:10). In other words, Jesus Christ, the Son of God became man, restored and renewed humanity and the whole of the creation, uniting both of them with the Creator in and through Himself. One of the Trinity, thus, became Incarnate, became man, revealing his Lordship over the whole of the creation, and showing humanity a Lordship in stewardship and service.

II. Disintegrated creation

The human fall and the disintegration of creation

13. Before their fall the first human beings experienced the creation as one harmonious whole. It was like a beautiful garden (*paradeisos*, Gen. 2:8) which they tended with care and love. The human fall, however, which was essentially a sinful exercising of human freedom, introduced forces of disintegration into the body of creation. Humanity experienced a two-fold alienation. On the one hand, it was estranged from the Creator, since Adam and Eve tended to hide themselves away from the sight of God (cf. Gen. 3:8) as their communion with the source of life and light was broken. On the other hand, humanity lost its capacity to enter into a proper relation with nature and with the body of the creation. Enmity between the natural world and human beings replaced the relationship of harmony and care. Domination and exploitation of the creation for selfish ends by greedy human beings became the order of history. Thus, manifold forms of disintegration set in which converged in the fact of death and corruption. Fear of death instilled anxiety, acquisitiveness, greed, hatred and despair in human beings. Modern forms of economic exploitation, racial oppression, social inequalities, war, genocide, etc. are all consequences of the fear of death and collective signs of death.

The environmental crisis (...)

18. Environmental issues like air and water pollution, depletion of non-renewable resources, destruction of the ozone layer, increasing nuclear radiation, deforestation and desertification of vast areas, etc. threaten the life itself on this planet. The gifts of science and technology are being misused by human beings to the extent of abusing nature and turning today's life on earth into a hell, not only for the many millions of existing people but also for the generations to come. The voice of those who call for a just development, equal distribution of resources and ecological lifestyles is being systematically suppressed. Advances in bio-technology and genetic engineering need to be seen in the light of the Holy Spirit because without adequate knowledge of the transcendent (divine) vocation and spiritual nature of humanity, these new techniques run the risk of initiating biological disruption leading to a disastrous mutations that are extremely dangerous for the true life on earth. While human creativity and freedom can be armed as supreme gifts of God, it should also be emphasized that they should be rooted in divine wisdom and in human spiritual maturity. A reintegrated environment (...)

37. The environmental crisis is a sin and a judgment upon humanity. We need to find ways, as churches, to support sound programs which seek to preserve from pollution air, water and land. To speak of the reintegration of creation today is first to speak words of repentance and to make commitments toward the formation of a new way of living for the whole of humanity. The contemporary world must repent for the abuses which we have imposed upon the natural world, seeing it in the same kind of relationship to us as we see the unity of our human nature in both body and soul. We must begin to undo the pollution we have caused, which brings death and destruction to the mineral, vegetable and animal dimensions of the world environment. We must work and lobby in every way possible to us in our different situations to encourage the scientific community to dedicate the good potentials of science and technology to the restoration of the earth's integrity. For ourselves, this means a recommitment to the simple life which is content with necessities and - with the Church Fathers – sees unnecessary luxuriousness as the deprivation of necessities owed to the poor. In all of its aspects, concern for the reintegration of the creation calls Christians to a new affirmation of self-discipline, a renewal of the spirit of

asceticism appropriate to Christians, regardless of their status, position or condition. In short, we must see the created world as our own home, and every person in it as our brother and sister whom Christ loves.

Conclusions

(...) 45. We confess that God is the creator of all that exists, beautifully and wonderfully made, a fitting manifestation of His glory (cf. Ps. 103). But we stand today before a wounded creation which suffers under distorted conditions which are the result of the sin of humanity. In our selfishness and greed we have used our otherwise good technological abilities to exploit God's creation, to destroy the balance of nature and to deform what God originally made to be in wholesome communion with us and with Him. Creation is no longer integrated with humanity nor is it in harmony with God. In fact, it stands in danger of conflagration, in the face of nuclear war.

46. The creation needs to be reintegrated, but this can happen only as it is brought once again into communion with the Lord, so that it may find its fullness of purpose and its transfiguration. Humanity can no longer ignore its responsibility to protect it and preserve it. In order to do this, however, humanity must learn to treat the creation as a sacred offering to God, an oblation, a vehicle of grace, an incarnation of our most noble aspirations and prayers.

47. Just as bread and wine are likened up as an offering for the sanctification of the world and all people in the

Eucharist, a sacramental approach to the creation is needed for its reintegration.

49. The Lord God created His universe and all that is in it as an integrated whole. Today, we have brought about disintegration in what God intended to be integrated. We call upon individuals, nations and churches to give effect to a vision of the rightful harmony between the human dimension and the mineral, plant and animal dimensions of the creation. In spirit and in body, we are called to offer the whole of God's creation back to Him as a sacrament and as an offering cleansed, purified, restored for His sanctification of it.

50. O God, "the things that are Yours, we offer them to You according to all things and for all things. Amen." May this be our prayer for the "integrity of God's creation."

Copyright: Printed by Orthdruks Orthodox Printing House, Bialystok, Poland, 1996.

Source: The Orthodoxy and Ecology Resource Book is produced by SYNDESMOS, The World Fellowship of Orthodox Youth.

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Appendix IV

FAITH PRINCIPLES ON GLOBAL WARMING

Justice: Strive for justice and acknowledge that global warming's societal impact already falls, and will continue to fall, most heavily on the people around the world who are least able to mitigate the impacts—poor and vulnerable populations in the U.S. and in developing countries. As a leading industrialized nation that has disproportionately contributed to greenhouse gas emissions, it is incumbent upon us to rectify this injustice. To reach our goal of justice, we require that legislation:

- Include mechanisms that mitigate the impacts of global warming particularly for vulnerable populations in the U.S. and abroad.
- Prevent further harm to human health and all of God's creation by utilizing clean energy sources when addressing global warming and carbon pollution.
- Focus on a fair and equitable distribution of total benefits and costs among people, communities, and nations, and in particular rectify the disproportionate impact that low-income communities have and will experience as the climate continues to change.
- Enable our brothers and sisters now living in poverty to have both economic independence and stability and to eliminate the devastating impacts that global warming has and will continue to have on those people in the U.S. and around the world living in poverty.
- Take action now to avoid placing the burden of carbon reduction unduly on our children's children.
- Endorse policies that place a high priority on allowing all people to live in God's abundance and with dignity by ensuring that basic human needs and worker justice are not adversely impacted by the effects of global warming or future efforts to address global warming.

Stewardship: Heed the call to be faithful stewards and caretakers of God's creation by limiting the future impacts of global warming on God's Earth. Already, global warming has damaged the precious balance of God's creation, including increasing the number of threatened species, causing long-term drought, and melting Arctic ice. To reach our goal of stewardship, we require that legislation:

- Follow recognized scientific guidelines and recommendations in order to protect all of God's creation and prevent catastrophic damage to God's Earth and God's people. Following their recommendations, legislation must include comprehensive, mandatory, and aggressive emission reductions that aim to limit the increase in Earth's temperature to 2 degrees Celsius or less. Legislation should focus on the short term goal of reducing U.S. carbon emissions to reach a 15-20 percent reduction in carbon by 2020 with a long term vision to achieve carbon emissions that are 80 percent below 2000 levels by the year 2050.
- Avoid catastrophic global warming, which would devastate God's creation, put more pressure on disaster and relief responses, and endanger the future of the planet. Although global warming impacts are already being felt, we must ensure that God's people and planet are protected from the catastrophic effects that may occur if we fail to significantly curb our carbon emissions.

- Call on major emitters to take responsibility for their actions and work to significantly reduce their carbon emissions.

Sustainability: Ensure that efforts to curb global warming prevent further environmental and societal tragedies. As people of faith we are guided by the value of sustainability. Sustainability requires that we enable biological and social systems that nurture and support life not be depleted or poisoned. To reach our goal of sustainability, we require that legislation:

- Maintain God's good creation by preventing policies that place the burden of our lifestyles on one aspect of creation and encouraging policies that sustain and restore vibrant eco-systems with economic justice so that communities of life can flourish for generations to come.
- Respond to global warming in a way that reflects the interdependence of all of God's creation.
- Support energy sources that are renewable, clean, and avoid destruction of God's creation.

Sufficiency: In a world of finite resources, for all to have enough requires that those among us who have more than enough will need to address our patterns of acquisition and consumption. We can not achieve significant reductions in global warming emissions unless we make changes in our lifestyles and particularly in our energy consumption. To support the goal of sufficiency, legislation must:

- Encourage energy conservation in our homes, our communities, and our places of worship.
- Encourage energy conservation in national transportation and distribution systems and commercial enterprises.
- Encourage the federal government to lead through research and example in the practice and implementation of energy conservation.

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