

GOD'S CALL TO CARE FOR CREATION: ADVOCACY

By: Chuck Thomas, NGLS Vice President

It says in Genesis 2:15 *The Lord God took the man and put him in the garden of Eden to till it and keep it.* God gave us this wonderful earth and made us its stewards. Are we adequately responding to the call to keep or nurture creation for future generations?

I had the privilege of attending the 8th EcoFaith Summit at First Lutheran Church in Duluth, Minnesota on April 5, 2025. I was honored to be a co-presenter at one of the Summit's break-out sessions. During the break-out session I highlighted the Marquette-based InterFaith Water Stewards' actions to increase awareness of drinking water issues. And I talked about humankind's failure to answer God's call to care for creation and provided some real-world examples of neglect, especially regarding water resources. Finally, I provided examples of actions people can do to nurture the environment both individually and as a congregation.

Advocacy was a main theme throughout the day. After hearing the Summit's eloquent, inspirational, and informative keynote speakers, I quickly realized that I have not been adequately answering God's call and have not been an active enough advocate. Did you know that our Church, the ELCA encourages advocacy on a variety of social issues, including the environment? Information about environmental advocacy endeavors and what you can do is available at: <https://www.elca.org/our-work/publicly-engaged-church/advocacy/environment>. There is no better time than now to stand up and advocate for creation care!

Our Church also has strong social teachings about our need to answer God's call. The Social Statement ***Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice***, established in 1993, is as relevant today as it was 32 years ago. You can download it from: <https://resources.elca.org/faith-and-society/environment/>. I plan to lead a deep-dive study of this still relevant ELCA Social Teaching. I am not sure during which upcoming Life Long Faith Formation session this class will be offered but watch for it either in the upcoming fall or winter class schedules and sign up to join the discussion and learn more about what you can do to answer God's call.