



Public Affairs

Episcopal Church, Church of Sweden, ELCA commitment: "Sustaining hope in the face of climate change"

May 2, 2013

By: The Public Affairs Office

The heads of three religious denominations - The Episcopal Church, the Church of Sweden, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) – signed a joint statement “to celebrate our commitment to hope in the face of climate change.”

Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori, Church of Sweden Archbishop Anders Wejryd and ELCA Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson presented the document at the close of the first of a two-day environmental event, "Sustaining hope in the face of climate change" in Washington DC on May 1 and 2.

In the statement the religious leaders vowed, "It is a challenge to commit ourselves to walk a different course and serve as the hands of God in working to heal the brokenness of our hurting world."

The statement follows in full:

A statement to our Churches and to people of faith around the world:

The Episcopal Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, and the Church of Sweden (Lutheran) meet in Washington, DC this Easter season to celebrate our commitment to hope in the face of climate change. As Christians, we do not live in the despair and melancholy of the tomb, but in the light of the Risen Christ. Our resurrection hope is grounded in the promise of renewal and restoration for all of God's Creation, which gives us energy, strength and perseverance in the face of overwhelming challenge. For us, this promise is more than an abstraction. It is a challenge to commit ourselves to walk a different course and serve as the hands of God in working to heal the brokenness of our hurting world.

We must be clear: the scientific data is stark, as even today we experience the effects of climate change with catastrophic floods, lengthy droughts and historic rainfalls. Scientific research shows that climate change affects nearly all aspects of life. This includes the world's food security and humanity's ability to grow crops to feed a growing world population. Likewise, biodiversity is being destroyed and ecosystems undermined in many parts of the world as species become extinct. Water will continue to become scarcer, causing regional conflicts. Indigenous people will be forced to leave their traditional lives, as the poorest among us will bear the greatest burdens of the changing climate.

Our goal as Christians is not to ascribe blame but rather to examine our own actions and how they relate to God's will for us and for the created order, and to challenge our communities to a new way of being. We are painfully aware that those of us living in the northern hemisphere are responsible historically for the majority of greenhouse-gas emissions, the major contributor to climate change. Accordingly, we hold a particular responsibility for the changes in practice that will reverse the trajectory of atmospheric warming and safeguard the sanctity of what our God calls "very good." (Genesis 1)

Accordingly, we confess our own role in the crisis facing our world:

We confess that, even as God has entrusted the care of the world to human hands, we have treated this sacred trust as a license to consume rather than build up, to reap rather than to sow.

We confess that we have placed the interests of our own comfort and lifestyle before the good of creation and the wellbeing of others, particularly the most vulnerable among us.

We confess our own indifference to the wellbeing of the countless future generations who will bear the brunt of the choices we make today.

For these things and all else we have done to contribute to the desecration of the world God so loves, we repent and ask forgiveness. At the same time, we draw hope – and a grounding for amendment of our own lives – in the growing body of evidence that a transition to a low-carbon society is both feasible and economical, and may help foster a good life. We commit to being the voice that challenges our communities to action: in the global community, in our own political contexts, and in our daily lives.

We commit to being the voice and hands that will witness to the Gospel of Jesus Christ and build the moral and political will that prompts action from our elected leaders. As international churches with congregations in many nations, we can and will use our global networks to

promote a political framework to limit climate change, while in a unified voice we speak to the world about the urgency of committed climate work. We commit to leading a conversion of epic scale, a metanoia, or communal spiritual movement away from sin and despair toward the renewal and healing of all creation.

Specifically, we commit to:

- 1) Advocate for national and international policies and regulations that enable a swift transition from dependence on fossil fuels to clean, safe, renewable energy, and for economic systems that are fair and just.
- 2) Sustain an interfaith, international conversation around climate change and social and economic justice while working to keep climate change in the public's attention.
- 3) Encourage our faith communities to deeper theological reflection on the moral and ethical response to climate change, and then to make public witness about climate change through advocacy at the local, national and international levels.
- 4) Invite our communities to prayerfully consider how their own actions, lifestyle choices – particularly our energy consumption -- affect the environment.
- 5) Offer our communities continued opportunities to learn about climate change and the universal church's response to this crisis.

Episcopal Church Presiding Bishop Katharine Jefferts Schori

Church of Sweden Archbishop Anders Wejryd

ELCA Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson

The Episcopal Church: www.episcopalchurch.org

Facebook: www.facebook.com/episcopalian

Twitter: www.twitter.com/iamepiscopalian

YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/user/EpiscopalChurchYT>

Tagged in:

The Public Affairs Office



PUBLIC AFFAIRS

CONTACT:

Nancy Cox Davidge

Public Affairs Officer



Tools and Resources

[Brief Dictionary of Terms](#)

[Episcopal Church Core Beliefs and Doctrines](#)

[Episcopal Church Finances](#)

[Episcopal Church Structure and Organization](#)

[Episcopal Church Style Guide](#)

[Episcopal Church in the Anglican Communion](#)

[Gay Clark Jennings: Biography](#)

[History of the Episcopal Church](#)

[Michael Curry: Biography](#)

[Michael Curry: Official Photos](#)

[Media Application Form](#)

[Social Justice Policies of the Episcopal Church](#)

Archive

YEAR

-Year

-
- ▶ *May 2020*
 - ▶ *April 2020*
 - ▶ *March 2020*
 - ▶ *February 2020*
 - ▶ *January 2020*
 - ▶ *December 2019*
 - ▶ *November 2019*
 - ▶ *October 2019*
 - ▶ *September 2019*
 - ▶ *August 2019*
 - ▶ *July 2019*
 - ▶ *June 2019*
 - ▶ *May 2019*
 - ▶ *April 2019*
 - ▶ *March 2019*
 - ▶ *February 2019*
 - ▶ *January 2019*
 - ▶ *December 2018*
 - ▶ *November 2018*
 - ▶ *October 2018*
 - ▶ *September 2018*
 - ▶ *August 2018*
 - ▶ *July 2018*
 - ▶ *June 2018*
 - ▶ *May 2018*
 - ▶ *April 2018*
 - ▶ *March 2018*
 - ▶ *February 2018*
 - ▶ *January 2018*
 - ▶ *December 2017*
 - ▶ *November 2017*
 - ▶ *October 2017*
 - ▶ *September 2017*
 - ▶ *August 2017*
 - ▶ *July 2017*
 - ▶ *June 2017*
 - ▶ *May 2017*
 - ▶ *April 2017*
 - ▶ *March 2017*

- ▶ *February 2017*
- ▶ *January 2017*
- ▶ *December 2016*
- ▶ *November 2016*
- ▶ *October 2016*
- ▶ *September 2016*
- ▶ *August 2016*
- ▶ *July 2016*
- ▶ *June 2016*
- ▶ *May 2016*
- ▶ *April 2016*
- ▶ *March 2016*
- ▶ *February 2016*
- ▶ *January 2016*
- ▶ *December 2015*
- ▶ *November 2015*
- ▶ *October 2015*
- ▶ *September 2015*
- ▶ *August 2015*
- ▶ *July 2015*
- ▶ *June 2015*
- ▶ *May 2015*
- ▶ *April 2015*
- ▶ *March 2015*
- ▶ *February 2015*
- ▶ *January 2015*
- ▶ *December 2014*
- ▶ *November 2014*
- ▶ *October 2014*
- ▶ *September 2014*
- ▶ *August 2014*
- ▶ *July 2014*
- ▶ *June 2014*
- ▶ *May 2014*
- ▶ *April 2014*
- ▶ *March 2014*
- ▶ *February 2014*
- ▶ *January 2014*
- ▶ *December 2013*
- ▶ *November 2013*
- ▶ *October 2013*
- ▶ *September 2013*
- ▶ *August 2013*
- ▶ *July 2013*
- ▶ *June 2013*
- ▶ *May 2013*
- ▶ *April 2013*
- ▶ *March 2013*
- ▶ *February 2013*
- ▶ *January 2013*
- ▶ *December 2012*
- ▶ *November 2012*
- ▶ *October 2012*
- ▶ *September 2012*
- ▶ *August 2012*
- ▶ *July 2012*
- ▶ *June 2012*
- ▶ *May 2012*
- ▶ *April 2012*
- ▶ *March 2012*

- ▶ *February 2012*
- ▶ *January 2012*
- ▶ *December 2011*
- ▶ *November 2011*
- ▶ *October 2011*
- ▶ *September 2011*
- ▶ *August 2011*
- ▶ *July 2011*
- ▶ *June 2011*
- ▶ *May 2011*
- ▶ *April 2011*
- ▶ *March 2011*
- ▶ *February 2011*
- ▶ *January 2011*
- ▶ *December 2010*
- ▶ *November 2010*
- ▶ *October 2010*
- ▶ *September 2010*
- ▶ *August 2010*
- ▶ *July 2010*
- ▶ *June 2010*
- ▶ *May 2010*
- ▶ *April 2010*
- ▶ *March 2010*
- ▶ *February 2010*
- ▶ *January 2010*
- ▶ *December 2009*
- ▶ *November 2009*
- ▶ *October 2009*
- ▶ *September 2009*
- ▶ *August 2009*
- ▶ *July 2009*
- ▶ *June 2009*
- ▶ *May 2009*
- ▶ *April 2009*
- ▶ *March 2009*
- ▶ *February 2009*
- ▶ *November 2007*
- ▶ *February 2007*
- ▶ *Undated*



**PUBLIC
AFFAIRS**

CONTACT:

Nancy Cox Davidge

Public Affairs Officer

□
**Give to The
Episcopal
Church**



NEWS SERVICE
GENERAL CONVENTION
CAREERS
CONTACT US



© 2020 The Domestic and Foreign Missionary Society
The Episcopal Church, 815 Second Avenue, New York, NY 10017 [212-716-6000](tel:212-716-6000) | [800-334-7626](tel:800-334-7626) | [Privacy Policy](#)