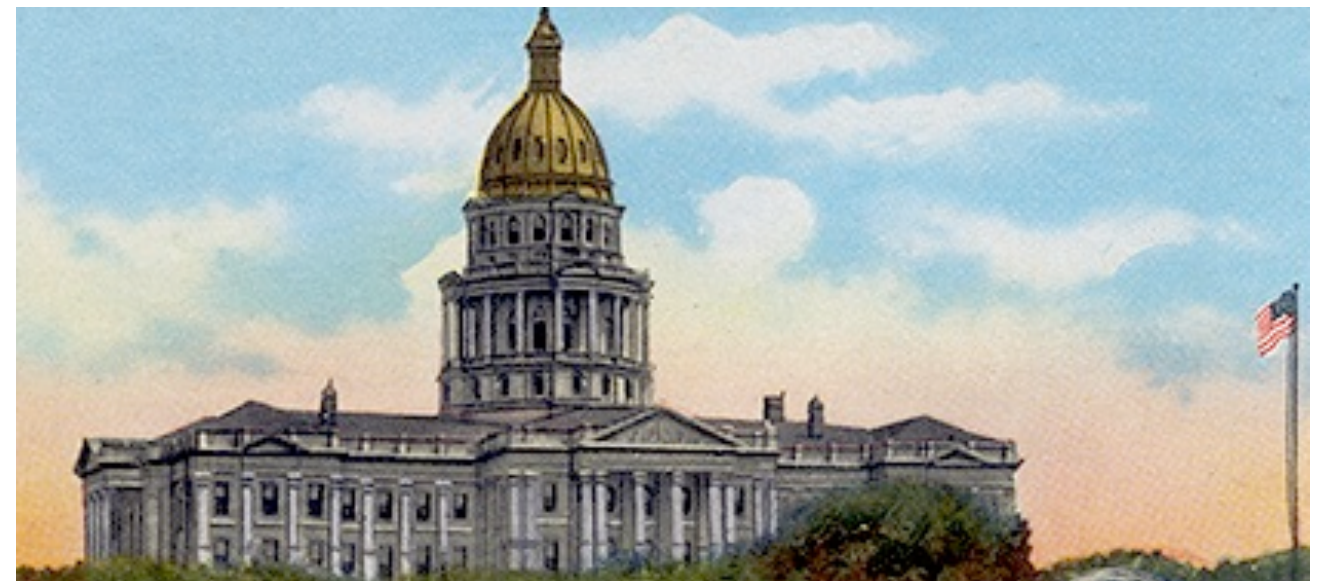


Lutheran Advocacy: The “Why” & The “How”

Our Saviour's Lutheran Church, Fort Collins
January 12, 2020

Lutheran Advocacy Ministry-Colorado
Peter Severson, Director



Advocacy Basics

- Speaking with & on behalf of the needs of another
- Seeking to influence public policy toward justice
- Rooted in Old & New Testament, Lutheran Confessions
- Gospel frees us from pure self-interest and directs us to seek common good



God *frees* us from seeking our own **salvation** so
that we may *love & serve* our **neighbors**

(both materially and spiritually)

So what does it mean to love our neighbor?

Luther's norms for neighbor-love

- ❖ Love manifest in service to the neighbor, *even* if it may bring danger to the self & family
- ❖ Love manifest in *exposing* and theologically *denouncing* oppression or exploitation of the vulnerable
- ❖ Love manifest in ways of living that *counter* prevailing cultural norms when those norms exploit the vulnerable or defy God some other way

Luther's norms for neighbor-love

- ❖ **Justice** is the way we live out neighbor-love
- ❖ We *challenge* injustice by seeking the good / well-being of those suffering systemic injustice
- ❖ We *see* and *name* systemic evil for what it is and we **actively resist evil** through pursuing alternatives

**Advocacy is one way in which we live out our calling
to be a public church grounded in neighbor-love**

Advocacy in the ELCA

“Church in Society: A Lutheran Perspective”
(Social Statement adopted by Churchwide
Assembly, 1991)

“In faithfulness to its calling, this church is committed to defend human dignity, to stand with the poor and powerless people, to advocate for justice, to work for peace, and to care for the earth in the processes and structures of contemporary society.”



ELCA Social Statements

- Church in Society (1991)
- The Death Penalty (1991)
- Abortion (1991)
- Race, Ethnicity and Culture (1993)
- Caring for Creation (1993)
- Peace (1995)
- Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All (1999)
- Caring for Health (2003)
- Education (2007)
- Human Sexuality (2009)
- Genetics (2011)
- Criminal Justice (2013)
- Faith, Sexism and Justice - up for consideration at 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, Milwaukee, WI

Advocacy in the ELCA

- State Public Policy Offices
- ELCA Washington Office
- Office for Corporate Social Responsibility
- Lutheran Office for World Community



Advocacy in the ELCA



How do we advocate?

- **Witness** through direct advocacy in the legislature and state executive branch
- **Equip** congregations and ELCA members to be advocates
- **Collaborate** with ecumenical groups, coalitions, other organizations



Organizing for Effective Advocacy

- **Ask:** Who cares about the issues I care about?
 - Friends, family, neighbors, coworkers, interest groups
 - Are there already organized groups working on these issues?
 - If not, can I/we start one?
- *Advocacy is always more effective when you work together!*

Organizing for Effective Advocacy

- **Find out** who your elected officials are
 - Municipal, county, state, national (and others)
- **Find out** what your elected officials believe about the issues you care about
 - E-mail updates, websites, social media, Google alerts
 - Voting history and campaign contributions

What can you do?

- **Pray** - For advocates, government officials, vulnerable people
- **Study and learn** - Follow issues, share stories, organize educational opportunities
 - Follow bills at leg.colorado.gov
- **Communicate** with policymakers on bills (both LAM-CO and otherwise)

What can you do?

- **Connect** with LAM-CO
- **Lutheran Day at the Legislature:** February 27, 2020
- Sign up for & respond to e-mail Action Alerts
- Follow our work



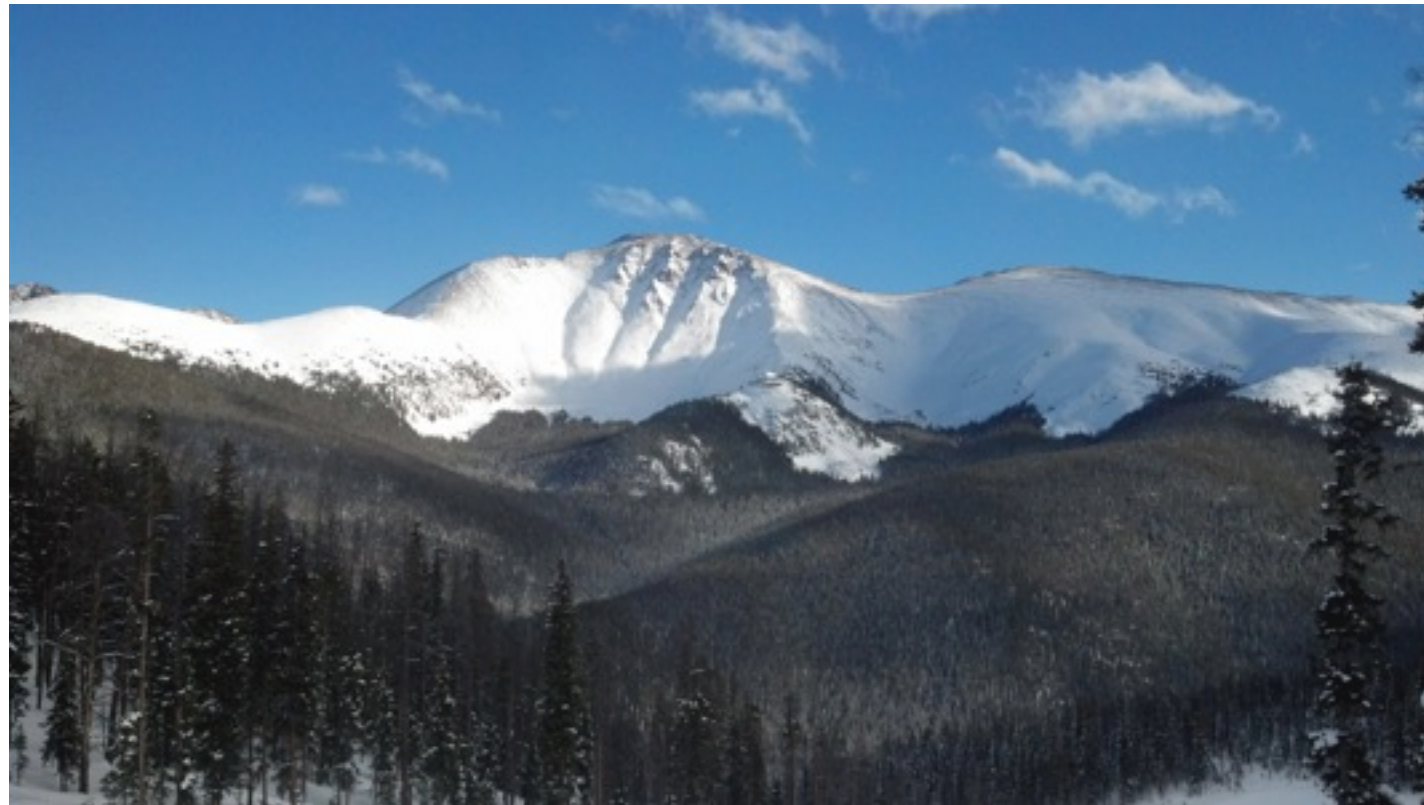
Lutheran Advocacy Ministry-Colorado



@LutheranAdvoCO

You can make a difference!

- Advocacy is exciting, challenging, and critical
- It takes a long-term vision
- God's grace gives us strength to carry on



Question & Answer

Thank You!

