

Pointers

HOW TO VISIT YOUR LEGISLATOR

Before your visit:

1. Make an appointment
2. Brief yourself about your representative
3. Define the objectives of your visit:
 - To get acquainted?
 - To discuss specific issues? (Limit the number.)
 - To share information? (Be well-versed on your subject matter.)

While you're there

1. Introduce yourself, giving brief information on:
 - Place of residence
 - Church membership
 - Occupation, student status, volunteer involvements
 - Voter/political involvement
 - Group you are representing (if any)
2. Set climate of visit
 - Be on time
 - Be positive and friendly—not argumentative
 - Acknowledge areas of agreement
 - Acknowledge areas of appreciation
 - State reason for visit
 - Be concise and specific
 - Identify your position or that of the group you represent
 - Leave a written summary of your position, reference material and calling card.

During the conversation:

1. Meet and write down names of staff person assigned your issue of concern
2. Don't let questions or comments derail your purpose
3. Admit you need to think more about a new point raised; Ask if they will consider written response later.
4. Ask specific questions; request specific responses.
5. Explore options of attending committee meetings or hearings, visiting galleries, etc.

After your visit:

1. Debrief
 - Talk with members of your group
 - Inform others about what was learned
2. Write a letter:
 - Thank legislator for visit
 - Summarize the visit
 - Identify follow-up steps committed by legislator and self.



R E S O U R C E S

Messages and Social Statements

The ELCA Church Council has adopted eight messages:The Israeli/Palestinian Conflict (1989); A Changing Europe: Peace and the Churches (1990); Homelessness: A Renewal of Commitment (1990); End-of-Life Decisions (1992); Community Violence (1994); Sexuality: Some Common Convictions (1996); and Immigration (1998).

The Churchwide Assembly has adopted seven social statements: Abortion (1991); The Church in Society: A Lutheran Perspective (1991); The Death Penalty (1991); Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice (1993); Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture (1993); For Peace in God's World (1995); and Sufficient, Sustainable Livelihood for All (1999).

Copies of all Resolution, Message and Social Statements can be obtained by contacting the Division for Church in Society or downloaded at www.elca.org/dcs/studies.html

Resources

Division for Church in Society
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
8765 W. Higgins Rd.
Chicago, IL 60631
800-638-3522
www.elca.org/dcs.html

ELCA Advocacy Offices
Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs
122 C St. NW
Suite 125
Washington, DC 20001
202-783-7507
www.loga.org

Lutheran Office for World Community
777 UN Plaza
New York, NY 10017
212-808-5360
www.elca.org/dcs.lowc.html

Corporate Social Responsibility
9625 Perry Highway
Pittsburgh, PA 15237
412-367-7575
www.elca.org/dcs/corp.html

State Public Policy Advocacy Offices
122 C. St. NW, Suite 125
Washington, DC 20001
202-626-7936
www.elca.org/dcs/state.html

For specific resources on issues that may include background sheets, action alerts, education packets and study guides contact the appropriate ELCA advocacy office. Check the web sites for many resources and/or contact the office for recommendations on specific issues.

"Advocacy Sampler" A packet containing brochures, action alerts, bookmarks, and other materials to help congregations to become involved in the ministry of advocacy. Free. Contact the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs.

"Legislative Update" A bi-monthly newsletter that updates congregations on current federal issues and the ELCA's position. Free. Contact the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs for a subscription.

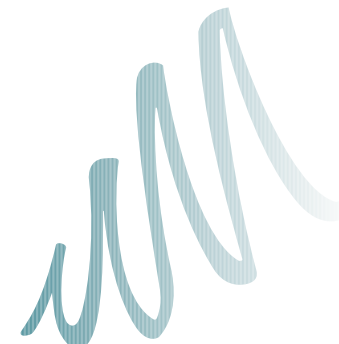
"A Voice in God's World" A 17 minute video that tells the story of advocacy in the ELCA. Includes skill building such as letter writing and visiting your legislator. Includes study guide. Contact Augsburg Fortress 1-800-328-4648. Order code # 67-1250. Cost: Shipping and Handling

"Talking Together as Christians about Tough Social Issues" An introductory guide for congregations to engage in dialog on tough social issues. Can be downloaded at www.elca.org/dcs/studies or Augsburg Fortress at 1-800-328-4648. Order code # 69-8681. Cost \$1.00

"The Giving Market" A hunger resource offering children a hands on opportunity to learn about hunger as they respond to local and global needs. The Market features a Global Deli and a Do It Yourself kit with Step by Step Resource Guide to help set the stage for your very own deli and market. Augsburg Fortress at 1-800-328-4648. Order code #67-3613 for Resource Guide and #67-3611 for the Accessory Pack.

The Study Circles Resource Center offers study materials on a variety of social issues and offers training to congregations wanting to explore community issues with other congregations in which faith perspectives are part of the process. Study Circles, P.O. Box 203, 697 Pomfret Street, Pomfret, Connecticut, 06258, 860-928-2616 www.studyircles.org

To find your nearest Lutheran Social Ministry Organization contact Lutheran Services in America, 2177 Youngman Avenue St. Paul, MN 55116. Phone: 651-696-0324, www.lutheranservices.org/html





That we may speak...
OUR MINISTRY OF ACTION

*A step-by-step guide to help congregations choose
an issue and begin a ministry of advocacy*