



Lutheran Office for Public Policy in Wisconsin (LOPPW) Annual Report

www.loppw.org (Search LOPPW on Facebook)

Submitted by Rev. Cindy Crane, Director cynthia.crane@elca.org

Thank you for supporting your ELCA advocacy ministry in Wisconsin with support to the UP! We especially express gratitude for Bishop Paul Erickson, the synod staff, and Rev. Jonathan Barker, who serves as your faithful GMS representative on our policy council.

During the last year, in response to God's grace and our life in holy community, we engaged our members and worked with legislators on the following priorities:

- Calling for an End to Hunger
- Addressing the Crisis of Human Trafficking
- Caring for God's Creation
- Supporting Immigration Reform
- Calling for Youth Justice Reform

Outreach: We involve our members via online action alerts, resources, weekly reflections, monthly updates with special interviews, and online and in-person trainings.

Young Adults and Youth: LOPPW has worked at creating space for youth voices. In 2022, LOPPW facilitated several meetings with youth workers from all six synods. We are very thankful to Gretchen Haugse, Youth and Sunday School Ministries at St. Matthew's Lutheran Church in Wauwatosa, for her steady involvement with our team. We have added a Youth Advocacy page to our website under Resources, Reflections & Tools.

LOPPW Priorities and Types of Advocacy

Calling for an End to Hunger: LOPPW participated in several of the WI/UP Hunger Leaders meetings and presented at two of the events they organized online. LOPPW also had several meetings with our national office to prepare advocacy on the Farm Bill. We view all our priorities through the lens of how people experiencing poverty are impacted by policies.

Addressing the Crisis of Human Trafficking: LOPPW built awareness on human trafficking, and we were in dialogue with legislators on upcoming bills.

Caring for God's Creation: Building upon our last online advocacy day that focused on climate change, we began co-organizing a 2023 in-person advocacy day with Faith in Place, a regional interfaith group that focuses on environmental justice. We planned our 2023 advocacy day to focus on climate and water. We also advocated on bills related to pollution of our land, which impacts water quality. In a letter, Governor Ever's office recognized LOPPW's support for a bill that offered grants to farmers to optimize nitrates for the purpose of conserving the soil and helping farmers, after the bill was passed into law.

Supporting Juvenile Justice Reform: We supported returning youth 17 years old to the youth justice system via education and advocacy. Wisconsin is one of three (likely soon to be two)

states that automatically sends 17-year-old youth through the adult court system regardless of the crime committed. Members of a Michigan coalition, which helped to get this law passed in Michigan, consulted with our Raise the Age Coalition.

Immigration: We continued to support driver's licenses for people who do not qualify for a license only because they are ineligible for a Real ID. We advocated for this to help our immigrant neighbors, support farmers and others who employ immigrant workers, and to make our roads safer. We also continued to support the federal Afghan Adjustment Act to enable refugees from Afghanistan have more stability in their status.

Other Advocacy: Even if an issue is not one of our priorities, we can give guidance on how to organize and advocate. We led virtual trainings on advocacy in 2022. We also worked with a member of the Women of the ELCA to hold a workshop on engaging with the news event, and we have made the detailed bibliography available on our website.

Wednesday Noon Live: In 2022, our monthly FB live updates have included interviews with WI Secretary of State Doug La Follette on the importance of his office; Cindy Dobberke and Deb Martin on hunger in our region; Giovana Oaxaca, ELCA Migration Policies Program Director on immigration policies; Rev. Peter Jonas, a hunter on the problems with cities and counties deciding to becoming 2nd Amendment Sanctuaries and how to advocate; Rev. Lanny Westphal on his sister living in Ukraine; Rev. Jonathan Barker on Care for God's Creation, Representative Kathy Bernier on elections; Seminarian and former Hunger Advocacy Fellow Rachel Wyffels on her journey as a faith-based advocate.

Partners

LOPPW's director is on the steering team of the Wisconsin Climate Table and Raise the Age Coalition. LOPPW is also involved with coalitions related to hunger, anti-sex trafficking and immigration.

Join the Advocacy Network



Please consider going to loppw.org and click on to *Join the Advocacy Network* at the bottom right of our Home page. We'd love to share our Monday reflections, monthly updates, and action alerts with you.

Thank you again for your support as we continue working on our five priorities, broadening our outreach to adults, and creating more opportunities for youth. God's blessings!

