

Polar Explorer Inspires Lutherans to Climate Action

He has spent his life leading some of the most significant polar expeditions in history. Now Minnesotan Will Steger is working for the preservation of the Arctic and the earth through the Will Steger Foundation. As a part of his preservation efforts, Steger worked with the Lutheran Coalition for Public Policy (LCPP) in Minnesota to offer Global Warming Solutions forums throughout the state. Communities participated enthusiastically, often with 500-1000 people turning out to hear Steger speak. This attendance was particularly remarkable because of the LCPP's target audience. "The goal was not to go where the choir lived," according to LCPP Executive Director, Rev. Mark Peters. "Our goal was to talk with the skeptics and bring a message that might resonate with them," he said. Steger attracted people who might not otherwise attend a global warming presentation because he is a local celebrity. "He's almost bigger than life here because he connects with the frontier spirit of Minnesota," said Steger. "When people attend, they find his global warming claims to be credible because he brings photos of what he has seen."

Peters along with the local bishop connected Steger's talks to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's Social Principles. After addressing questions, participants signed postcards addressed to the state legislature concerning global warning legislation.

Now the LCPP is beginning a new phase of earthkeeping events featuring training by Professor David Rhoads, theologian from the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago and founder of the Web of Creation, the premier Lutheran web-based creation care resource. They are actively recruiting teams of people from local churches to attend, with plans to equip them to bring creation care into their congregations. For more information, visit www.lcpp.org.