

Join Us

____ *Yes!* I would like to be more involved in the *Ezekiel 34 Initiative*.

Name

Address

City State Zip

Telephone _____

email _____

____ *Yes!* I would like my congregation to participate. Please send the *Ezekiel 34 Initiative* kit.

Tear off and send or email to the following:

Commission on Stewardship of the Environment

Louisiana Interchurch Conference

660 N. Foster Drive Suite A-225
Baton Rouge, LA 70806
(225) 924-0213
lainterchurch@aol.com

About this Initiative

There are few biblical images used more frequently than water. It is the moral responsibility of religious congregations to take a leadership role in the stewardship of Louisiana's community waters. In February 2003 the *Ezekiel 34 Initiative* was launched to promote the passage of a comprehensive, statewide water policy for Louisiana. We invite you to participate in this prophetic environmental stewardship program to protect our clean water supply in Louisiana for generations to come.



The Commission on Stewardship of the Environment was formed in 1987 as part of the Louisiana Interchurch Conference (LIC), a nonprofit, tax-exempt (501c3) organization. The LIC holds that providing clean, safe water is a fundamental moral responsibility both from an environmental stewardship perspective and as a matter of social justice to ensure the health and safety of citizens, especially our poorest people.

The Commission conducted a series of workshops around the state in 2001 entitled: Stewardship of Louisiana's Community Waters in churches in Lafayette, West Monroe, Larose and Baton Rouge. Over 450 people attended these workshops with presentations by scientists, elected officials, agency experts and clergy from different religious denominations.

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WATER

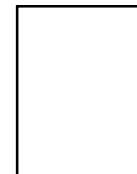
EZEKIEL 34 INITIATIVE

*Is it not enough for you to drink clear water?
Must you muddy the rest with your feet?
Ezekiel 34: 17-18*



STEWARDSHIP OF
LOUISIANA'S COMMUNITY WATERS

LOUISIANA INTERCHURCH CONFERENCE



Important Points for Water Legislation

EZEKIEL 34

Caring for our neighbor.

Write...

Governor Murphy J. Foster (P.O. Box 94004 Baton Rouge, LA 70804) and your State Senator and Representative. Let them know that you are part of the *Ezekiel 34 Initiative*, and urge them to pass water legislation in 2003 that includes these points:

- ◆ Declare safe, clean drinking water the highest priority.
- ◆ Create a Water Management Commission.
- ◆ Regulate critical ground and surface waters.
- ◆ Test, register or permit wells based on daily pumping capacity.
- ◆ Limit withdrawal from critical ground water areas with penalties for violations.
- ◆ Prevent the contamination of groundwater recharge areas and surface waters used for drinking.
- ◆ Develop incentives to encourage water stewardship.
- ◆ Implement a public outreach and education program.
- ◆ Fully fund and implement Louisiana's coastal restoration plan.
- ◆ Test drinking wells for safety.
- ◆ Certify state waters as safe for other uses (e.g. recreation).
- ◆ Direct (DEQ) to clean up water bodies that fail to meet clean water standards for their designated uses.
- ◆ Mitigate, through various types of public support, the impacts of water projects on poor people, especially those who will have to relocate homes or jobs (e.g. family fishermen and family farmers).
- ◆ Develop programs to ensure that children, especially poor children, have access to safe, clean water and are protected from water borne diseases and other hazards.

Moral Guidelines

For the Stewardship of Louisiana's Community Waters

The Lord our God has brought us "into a good land, a land with flowing streams, with springs and underground waters welling up in valleys and hills..." (Deuteronomy 8:7).

Covenantal Relationship.

Gen. 9:9-10: "Behold, I establish my covenant with you and your descendants after you, and with every living creature . . ." The biblical covenant requires us to not take for granted the precious resource of water, but to appreciate it, conserve it, and share it with those others who also need it for their refreshment and survival.

Stewardship.

Gen. 2:15: "The Lord God took and placed the first human in the garden of Eden to till and to keep it." God calls upon humankind to act as *stewards* of God's creation. We are to practice prudent management of our water resources with the goal of continued sustainability.

Mark 28:31: "You shall love your neighbor as yourself." Matthew 25:40: "Truly, I say to you, as you did it to one of the least of these my brethren, you did it to me." We are to love our neighbor, which includes the "least of these," meaning the poor, children, strangers and all those without an influential voice in society. To truly care for our neighbor we must consider the effects that our everyday practices have upon others. In terms of water, we must come to understand how our stewardship (or lack thereof) of this precious resource affects *others*, including all of God's creatures without a voice.

Creation Reveals God's Presence & Blessings.

Psalms 24: "The earth is the Lord's and the fullness thereof, the world and those who dwell therein; for he has founded it upon the seas, and established it upon the rivers ... And who shall stand in his holy place?" As water and the other resources of creation point to the goodness and wisdom of our Creator, our proper response should entail rejoicing in them and respecting our relationship with them. Squandering the blessings of God's creation amounts to disregarding God.

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INITIATIVE