



Wednesday Noon Live In April, we interviewed Andrew Fuller, Program Director of Housing and Human Needs from our D.C. Advocacy Office! In this 15-minute video, get an excellent update on the **Farm Bill** and the **Child Tax Credit** and their impact on hunger, and the **John R. Lewis Voting Rights Advancement Act**.

More on the bills Andrew discussed:

The farm Bill is a multi-faceted piece of legislation that includes agricultural development, environmental conservation efforts and hunger. Nutrition makes up to 80% of allocations in the legislation which is funded through the agricultural appropriations bill. To learn more, listen to the above video and go here:

[Farm Bill Introduction.pdf](#) [farmbillinvitationtoactionwithletter.pdf](#) [FarmBillLeaveBehind.pdf](#)

Take Action: [Take action on hunger in the Farm Bill - ELCA](#)

The Child Tax Credit is a vital tax break for families with dependent children that meet the federal criteria. During the pandemic, the credit helped cut childhood poverty in half, but those expansions expired. The expanded and fully refundable Child Tax Credit could lift 400,000 children out of poverty and benefit half a million children of veterans/active-duty families. To learn more, listen to the above interview and find info within the body of the below action alert from our D.C. office.

Take Action: [Urge Congress to expand the Child Tax Credit - ELCA](#)

The John R. Lewis Reenactment Act would restore and strengthen parts of the Voting Rights Act of 1965. It would require local governments to request federal approval for certain changes to election laws related to non-discrimination. This was stripped from the Voting Rights Act in the 2013 Supreme Court case Shelby County v. Holder which gutted this measure. To learn more, listen to the above interview and read this fact sheet by the Brennan Center: [VRAA FactSheet.pdf \(brennancenter.org\)](#)



Share Stories about Hunger - Message from Frances

Hunger is a devastating reality that many Wisconsinites face day to day. 1 in 14 people face hunger in the state according to a 2023 study titled "Map the Meal Gap" from Feeding America. LOPPW recognizes that addressing this crisis demands policy makers to understand the real-life experiences of individuals and families facing hunger. We are

requesting stories from you to bring into our advocacy activities around hunger policies, such as the Farm Bill. Contact Frances J. Dobbs at frances.dobbs@elca.org with stories about hunger you would like to be shared. These can be either from your own life or encounters you've had with others experiencing hunger. If you have any questions, please contact the same email above.

Some Results in the Legislature after the last Floorperiod



Governor Evers' Bill Signing

Thank you to everyone who has supported efforts to counter human trafficking. LOPPW was invited to be a part of the signing of **three anti-sex trafficking bills**:

* AB 973 /SB 940: Relating to mandatory training regarding human trafficking for employees of community-based residential facilities and owners of certain entities and certain other employees and granting rule-making authority.

* AB 976 /SB 946: Relating to the testimony of a child in a criminal proceeding for a human trafficking crime.

* AB 978 / SB 954: Relating to creation of a Human Trafficking Council and requiring the establishment of county sex trafficking task forces.

A few bills supporting the **caring for God's creation** we supported passed:

Assembly Bill 846: Related to exemptions from public utility regulation regarding electric vehicle charging stations, installation and operation of electric vehicle charging stations by state agencies or local governmental units and imposing an excise tax on electric vehicles. The change brought Wisconsin into compliance with the federal National Electric Vehicle Infrastructure plan, enabling us to receive \$78.7 million in federal funding. A second bill, AB 847, allows the state Department of Transportation to administer the money in federal grants to help businesses construct charging stations over the next five years.

Senate Bill 52: Relating creating a deicer applicators certification program and making an appropriation. (FE) The department shall create a deicer applicators certification program and establish criteria for training commercial applicators in methods for snow and ice removal and deicer application that protect water quality.

Assembly Bill 258: Relating to authorizing community solar programs and granting rule-making authority did not pass but had a good start.

We were disappointed that none of the **four DACA bills** passed, although one came close. Through our individual visits with legislators, the bills had a lot of bipartisan support, and the authors are committed to continuing their efforts in the next legislative session.

The significance of **returning 17-year-old youth to the juvenile youth system** drew the attention of bill authors from the Republicans and Democrats. However, when the Democrats released their bill, it was a surprise to the Republicans, with whom our coalition was working. The Republican bill was in the pre-bill state, and the authors were still in the process of garnering more support for it in their party. There seemed to be a lot of confusion. In the end, the Republicans did not present their version of the bill even though the Democrats withdrew theirs. The Democrats' bill came up again later but didn't receive bipartisan support. We will continue to support this important effort.

We hope that our new fair legislative maps will encourage law makers from both parties to work more closely with each other.

April 2nd Constitutional Amendment Question Results

Unfortunately, Wisconsin will join other states in passing similar election regulations that could harm democratic participation and election efficiency.

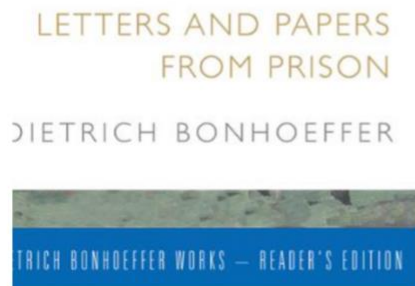
Question 1 asked whether outside funds should be used in election administration. The result now will limit these funds which puts Wisconsin's ability to fund our elections, fully in a precarious situation. This change will have a negative impact on the voter experience and could lead to long lines and wait times at polling places and other negative consequences for the efficiency of our election system.

Question 2 asked whether Wisconsin should only allow election officials to help facilitate primaries, elections, and referendums. Its passage will likely result in clerks being overburdened without the help of volunteers, experts, and other members of the community that they currently rely on. Moreover, efforts to educate the public about their right to vote could become more difficult as a result of this amendment.



Book Study on Dietrich Bonhoeffer's "Letters and Papers from Prison"

Join the Lutheran Office for Public Policy in Wisconsin's policy council and staff for this four-part book study beginning in April, the month we commemorate Dietrich Bonhoeffer's death in a Nazi prison. Explore his words of faith and hope on these dates:



April 23
April 30
May 7
May 14
From 6:30-7:30 PM (Central)

"Despite Dietrich Bonhoeffer's earlier theological achievements and writings, it was his correspondence and notes from prison that electrified the postwar world six years after his death in 1945. The materials gathered and selected by his friend Eberhard Bethge in *Letters and Papers from Prison*... introduced to a broad readership his novel and exciting ideas of religionless Christianity, his open and honest theological appraisal of Christian doctrines, and his sturdy, if sorely tried, faith in face of uncertainty and doubt."

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/3582507416>
will also be provided in emails & on social media, or,
contact cynthia.crane@elca.org for the link
You can **purchase the book** at stores such as Amazon and
Augsburg Fortress: www.augsburgfortress.org



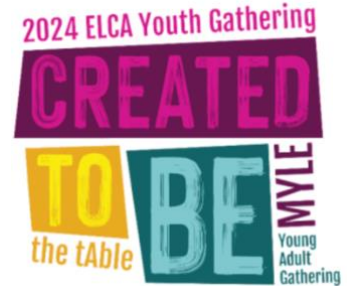
LOPPW is a member of the Healthy School Meals for All Coalition that seeks to implement a universal meal program in Wisconsin that would provide nutritious meals free at the point of cost to students. **Join us at the community building session tonight at 6PM-7PM** to learn, share, and ask questions regarding this movement. Use the QR code above or the zoom link below to register.

<https://us02web.zoom.us/join/joinMeeting?zcsdOChrjoiEtHQRPRUaLTC6CHE3TuOdC2s#/registration>



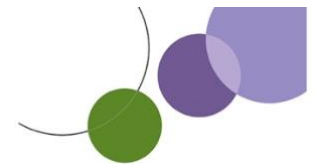
Save the date of October 4-6, 2024, for our second youth advocacy retreat! We will hold the gathering at Pine Lake Camp in Clintonville. We are opening the event to high school youth and young adults. More details to come.

Learn more about the national youth gathering [HERE!](#)



Earth Day is on April 22 this year. Is your congregation or group to which your congregation is connected holding any special events? Please let us know if you would also like us to publicize your event/s. Just respond to this email.

The ELCA is developing a social statement on civic life and faith, the relationship of church and state, and related matters, as called for by the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly. To find more information, the full Draft of the Social on Civic Life and Faith and needed feedback, please go to [this page on the ELCA website](#).



DRAFT OF A SOCIAL STATEMENT ON CIVIC LIFE AND FAITH
A document for public comment provided by the ELCA Task Force for Studies on Civic Life and Faith



[Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton](#) is among more than 140 global Christian leaders who signed a letter sent through [Churches for Middle East Peace](#) on Mar. 26, stating "We hold onto the hope that peace is possible even in the midst of this darkest hour." We say, "Enough killing!" and together demand a comprehensive and permanent ceasefire. Full statement: <https://cmep.org/march-2024-international-letter/>

Thank you for taking time with us!