



*But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. – Luke 10:33-34*

*In the last week, the United States House of Representatives passed legislation that would begin the process of repealing and replacing the Affordable Care Act. The firestorm that has ensued, on both sides of the political divide, brings into relief the challenges of our health care system and reveals the deficiencies in both the Affordable Care Act as well as its proposed replacement. In response to the ongoing conversation, Bishop Gohl issued this statement which is excerpted from our ELCA social statement on health, healing, and health care, **Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor**, as amended and adopted 935 - 34 as a social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the eighth Churchwide Assembly on August 15, 2003, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.*

Health care is a shared endeavor. Just as each person's health relies on others, health care depends on our caring for others and ourselves. Patients and caregivers are more than consumers or providers; they are whole persons working together in healing relationships that depend on and preserve community. Although health care goods and services may be bought and sold, health care is above all an activity of caring that grows out of relationships of mutual responsibility, concern, and trust—and that cannot be reduced to a commodity. Regardless of the means used to provide health care and ensure access to it, we must diligently preserve the nature of health care as a shared endeavor. This means that we recognize our mutual responsibilities and guard against the ways in which motivation to maximize profit and to market health care like a commodity jeopardizes health and the quality of health care for all.

“Being well” for Christians does not mean we are untouched by pain and suffering. Human beings are finite and vulnerable, and so we recognize limits on what we expect of health and health care for our families and ourselves. “Being well” means that we participate in Christ's own “greater love” (John 15:13) by giving ourselves for others and sharing their suffering in response to Christ who bore the suffering of all. Like the good Samaritan, we are to bandage the wounds of our neighbor in need of healing, whoever the neighbor may be (Luke 10:29-37).



*But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. – Luke 10:33-34*

*In the last week, the United States House of Representatives passed legislation that would begin the process of repealing and replacing the Affordable Care Act. The firestorm that has ensued, on both sides of the political divide, brings into relief the challenges of our health care system and reveals the deficiencies in both the Affordable Care Act as well as its proposed replacement. In response to the ongoing conversation, Bishop Gohl issued this statement which is excerpted from our ELCA social statement on health, healing, and health care, **Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor**, as amended and adopted 935 - 34 as a social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America by the eighth Churchwide Assembly on August 15, 2003, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin.*

Health care is a shared endeavor. Just as each person's health relies on others, health care depends on our caring for others and ourselves. Patients and caregivers are more than consumers or providers; they are whole persons working together in healing relationships that depend on and preserve community. Although health care goods and services may be bought and sold, health care is above all an activity of caring that grows out of relationships of mutual responsibility, concern, and trust—and that cannot be reduced to a commodity. Regardless of the means used to provide health care and ensure access to it, we must diligently preserve the nature of health care as a shared endeavor. This means that we recognize our mutual responsibilities and guard against the ways in which motivation to maximize profit and to market health care like a commodity jeopardizes health and the quality of health care for all.

“Being well” for Christians does not mean we are untouched by pain and suffering. Human beings are finite and vulnerable, and so we recognize limits on what we expect of health and health care for our families and ourselves. “Being well” means that we participate in Christ's own “greater love” (John 15:13) by giving ourselves for others and sharing their suffering in response to Christ who bore the suffering of all. Like the good Samaritan, we are to bandage the wounds of our neighbor in need of healing, whoever the neighbor may be (Luke 10:29-37).

Advocacy is a ministry of the Church and its members in the public realm. Advocates use their voice and action to influence private and public decision-making on behalf of the neighbor. Such advocacy gives present voice to the prophetic cry, “Why then has the health of my poor people not been restored?” (Jeremiah 8:22). Advocacy for public policy is carried out ... by people called both to speak to lawmakers on its behalf and to provide information and encouragement to church members to contact their own representatives. Continuing advocacy by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is one expression of the shared endeavor of health care in the human community and is based on existing social policy statements. Advocacy for public policy is also a responsibility of individuals acting in their calling as Christians and citizens.

The Christian Church is called to be an active participant in fashioning a just and effective health care system. Responding to those who were sick was integral to the life and ministry of Jesus and has been a central aspect of the Church's mission throughout its history. Health care and healing are concrete manifestations of God's ongoing care for and redemption of all creation. We of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America have an enduring commitment to work for and support health care for all people as a shared endeavor.

Our commitment comes in grateful response to God's saving love in Jesus Christ that frees us to love and seek the wellbeing of our neighbor. Understanding health care as a shared endeavor compels the Church and all people of good will to join in efforts for change. Our calling to be faithful stewards of our own health and to fulfill our obligations for the health of others comes from the God who heals and redeems the whole creation.

*But wanting to justify himself, the man asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, ‘Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.’ Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?” He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.” – Luke 10:29-37*

Advocacy is a ministry of the Church and its members in the public realm. Advocates use their voice and action to influence private and public decision-making on behalf of the neighbor. Such advocacy gives present voice to the prophetic cry, “Why then has the health of my poor people not been restored?” (Jeremiah 8:22). Advocacy for public policy is carried out ... by people called both to speak to lawmakers on its behalf and to provide information and encouragement to church members to contact their own representatives. Continuing advocacy by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is one expression of the shared endeavor of health care in the human community and is based on existing social policy statements. Advocacy for public policy is also a responsibility of individuals acting in their calling as Christians and citizens.

The Christian Church is called to be an active participant in fashioning a just and effective health care system. Responding to those who were sick was integral to the life and ministry of Jesus and has been a central aspect of the Church's mission throughout its history. Health care and healing are concrete manifestations of God's ongoing care for and redemption of all creation. We of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America have an enduring commitment to work for and support health care for all people as a shared endeavor.

Our commitment comes in grateful response to God's saving love in Jesus Christ that frees us to love and seek the wellbeing of our neighbor. Understanding health care as a shared endeavor compels the Church and all people of good will to join in efforts for change. Our calling to be faithful stewards of our own health and to fulfill our obligations for the health of others comes from the God who heals and redeems the whole creation.

*But wanting to justify himself, the man asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, ‘Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.’ Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?” He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.” – Luke 10:29-37*