

## Green Corner NWPA Synod Green Team

### ELECTRIC VEHICLES: PART 2

The June 2023 Green Corner introduced some electric vehicle (EV) terms and concepts as related to a response to climate change. It ended with a reminder that we are called to care for all of creation.

This second Green Corner regarding EV's will address some of the creation concerns being raised about EV's: the mining of materials for EV batteries and the human labor, sometimes children, used in mining those materials. This is not a comprehensive coverage of the subject, but we are offering additional references to consider when deciding whether to purchase an electric vehicle.

Some of the key substances used in the current manufacture of EV batteries (cobalt, lithium, nickel and others) are being mined from largely undeveloped areas of foreign countries using techniques that are sometimes environmentally degrading. Furthermore, the human labor used for some of the mining involves very low wages and in some cases, child labor—which should certainly be addressed by EV producers.

However, we must also keep in mind the risks posed by our current climate-degrading way of life, which threatens the entire world's environment and conditions of life for all of earth's creatures. We are often reminded by the best scientists that climate change is not necessarily reversible, and that there is a real urgency associated with action on climate change. Some of these issues are examined in a recent ELCA social message, "Earth's Climate Crisis." (referenced below)

Obviously, the preferred approach to these concerns would be to eliminate the environmental- and human-related issues in using new technology, such as electric vehicles. That could be a complex undertaking that we certainly should pursue. While our faith calls us to persevere in doing God's will and seek a just transition to new technologies, some urgent matters indicate a need for short-term action. In making that choice, we are called to exercise prayerful discernment. We offer the following as a basis for further discernment on whether purchasing an electric vehicle is the earth-friendly choice for you to help protect Creation. We all are trying to Care for Creation in the best way that we can.

[https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/ELCA\\_SocMsg-EarthsClimateCrisis-official-adopted-text.pdf](https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/ELCA_SocMsg-EarthsClimateCrisis-official-adopted-text.pdf)

<https://www.dailymail.co.uk/news/article-4764208/Child-miners-aged-four-living-hell-Earth.html>

<https://www.greeneuropeanjournal.eu/dirty-rare-metals-digging-deeper-into-the-energy-transition/>

<https://www.edf.org/have-questions-about-electric-vehicles-our-clean-car-expert-has-answers>

<https://www.reuters.com/business/autos-transportation/when-do-electric-vehicles-become-cleaner-than-gasoline-cars-2021-06-29/>

For comments and additional information, please contact the Green Team at [NWPASynodGreenTeam@gmail.com](mailto:NWPASynodGreenTeam@gmail.com)

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