

TOGETHER: Matters of nature; matters of prayer

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God's creation amazes us. The natural world in which we live and breathe sustains physical life and, at times, sends blatant reminders of its power.

In New Orleans this month, we have been reminded again of nature's power, as tornadoes struck an already-damaged city. And in Texas, we have been reminded we have a stewardship of creation none of us can ignore.

David Crosby, pastor of [First Baptist Church in New Orleans](#), said in the latest storm's aftermath: "It's like the picture you see of a severely beaten man who is on his knees, bleeding, and then he takes another blow. You wonder if this is the point where the poor fellow will just fall over and lie still."



Executive Director
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In the midst of the trauma, First Baptist in New Orleans is reaching out to help the people of the city. “We took water, food, chainsaws and other clean-up supplies to the debris-strewn areas,” he reported. “It was another opportunity to share the love of Christ.”

Tornadoes and hurricanes, with their random displays of force, give us only a chance to respond. But in other matters of how we deal with our stewardship of creation, we have the chance to be proactive. Such is the case in Texas as we determine how to meet our energy needs.

[Christian Life Commission](#) Director Suzii Paynter recently issued an appeal for our governor and legislature to consider carefully the issues related to building new power plants in Texas.

This matter needs discussion in Texas life. It cannot simply be a decision made by people with a financial interest in the matter. This issue affects all of us. It deserves to be thought through, and time must be given for people to consider the best options.

This is not a partisan political issue. It is clear from widespread discussion that Republicans and Democrats both are concerned about the long-term results of this decision.

This is truly a moral, biblical and theological issue. God gave the human race stewardship over creation. He gave the earth to us so we might use and enjoy it, to have dominion over it. But nowhere does he give any of us the right to destroy it or to use it up for our own advantage without regard to our children and their children, or without regard for others who share the planet with us.

I take that to mean that if you cut down trees, you plant more. If you farm the land, you practice good conservation policies. If you care about the health of people, you give attention to plumbing and sewers, and you don't pollute the rivers and streams. If the air we all breathe is not respected and protected as far as is possible, we have been careless and disrespectful of the Creator's gifts.

The Christian Life Commission position is not that there should be no coal-fired power plants. Paynter is calling for the state to slow down the permit process in order to consider important health and technology information requested by city leaders.

The CLC is not speaking for Texas Baptists, but it is saying to us that this issue needs our consideration and involvement.

Our thoughtful, earnest prayers are needed both for our New Orleans friends and our state leaders. Our actions are needed, as well.

We are loved.

Charles Wade is executive director of the Baptist General Convention of Texas Executive Board.

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