

MEMORIAL ONE

TO AFFIRM TRANSGENDER, NONBINARY, GENDER EXPANSIVE, TWO-SPIRIT, AND GENDERQUEER PEOPLE OF GOD

WHEREAS in “A Social Statement on Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust,” we read: “this church must work toward greater understanding of sexual orientation and gender identity...” and “such individuals are disproportionately and negatively affected by patterns of stigma, discrimination, and abuse”;¹ and

WHEREAS in “A Social Message on Gender-based Violence,” the ELCA stated that “Gender-based violence is sin. While it takes many forms, in all its variations gender-based violence attacks, violates and often destroys the good that God brings to life”;² and

WHEREAS the “Social Message on Human Rights” declares, “The ELCA will support domestic and international human rights institutions, foster deliberation, and engage in sustained action that seek rights for any neighbors - especially the vulnerable - who are not being treated with the dignity that is God’s gift”;³ and

WHEREAS the Northwest Washington Synod, along with twenty-eight other synods and 1,093 congregations across the ELCA, are Reconciling in Christ partners with ReconcilingWorks: Lutherans for Full Participation that has advocated for the full welcome of lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and asexual/aromantic (LGBTQIA+) Lutherans in all aspects of the life of their Church, congregations, and community;⁴ and therefore, be it

RESOLVED that the ELCA be encouraged to speak out against harmful policies and language towards transgender, nonbinary, gender expansive, two-spirit, and genderqueer people perpetrated by government leaders and agencies, and wherever it is encountered; and be it further

RESOLVED that the ELCA, in partnership with long-time advocacy and education organization ReconcilingWorks, along with ecumenical and community partners, equip congregations, ministries, and rostered and lay leaders with information and theological background to empower us to public witness, as specified in the Strategy Towards Authentic Diversity⁵; and be it further

RESOLVED that this Church continually seek guidance from transgender, nonbinary, gender expansive, two-spirit, and genderqueer leaders both inside the Church (ReconcilingWorks, seminary scholars and students, synod staff, conference of Bishops, rostered leaders, lay leaders) and outside the Church for how to best advocate on their behalf.

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¹ Gift and Trust, p. 24 and 33-34.

² “A Social Message on Gender-based Violence,” adopted by the ELCA Church Council on November 14, 2015, p. 6

³ “A Social Message on Human Rights,” adopted by the ELCA Church Council on November 12, 2017.

⁴ <https://www.reconcilingworks.org/>

⁵ *How Strategic And Authentic Is Our Diversity: A Call for Confession, Reflection, and Healing Action*, as adopted by the ELCA Churchwide Assembly on August 9, 2019, in Milwaukee, Wisconsin: p11.

1. What is the financial impact of this resolution on the synod/churchwide budget? If expenditures are required, what are the sources of income anticipated to accomplish the purpose of the resolution?

Financial impact may be experienced in mission dollars withheld by those who are not in alignment with the Church's values. As the Church has always done, we expect to live into the faith of the Macedonians that God will provide when the world does not. (Acts 16:9-10)

2. What are the personnel implications within our synod (or churchwide)?

Leadership at synod/churchwide will need to take time to create public statements and attend public events/protests.

3. Who will be responsible for the implementation of the resolution?

Presiding Bishop, Bishops, synod staff, rostered leaders, lay leaders.

4. How does this resolution enhance and forward the mission of the church and our synod?

This resolution asks the ELCA to make good on statements made in Strategy Towards Authentic Diversity and various social statements and messages in a time when a vulnerable group in our midst needs the Church to act. As can be seen from the quoted documents, the theological reasoning is already in place. Now is the time to match actions to words.