



South-Central Synod of Wisconsin
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Guidance for Submitting a Resolution or Memorial to the 2017 Synod Assembly

1. RESOLUTIONS OR MEMORIALS MAY BE SUBMITTED BY:
 - a) the Synod Council and other constitutional units, conferences, clusters, coalitions, committees, ministry teams of the Synod as recognized by the Synod Assembly; Lutheran partnerships with which the Synod works or which it funds; congregations of the Synod; or three or more voting members of congregations of the Synod.
 - b) Only voting members of the assembly (three minimum) may introduce resolutions following the Call to Order of the assembly.
2. **AS A COURTESY, PLEASE SUBMIT RESOLUTIONS TO THE SYNOD OFFICE BY FEBRUARY 15, 2017** to allow the committee & the office time to prepare resolutions for publication. Resolutions may be submitted by downloading the template from the synod website, completing & returning it to Rhonda Marten at rhondam@scsw-elca.org. You will receive an email confirmation from the Reference and Counsel committee when we receive your resolution. If you do not receive confirmation within (one week) of sending, please contact Rev. Rebecca Ninke by email: rebecca.m.ninke@gmail.com.
3. THE DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION OF RESOLUTIONS to the reference & counsel committee for inclusion in the assembly book & the assembly agenda is 60 days prior to the opening of the assembly (Feb. 28, 2017.) Resolutions submitted after the deadline may be referred to the appropriate committee or reported as information to the assembly. Submissions after the deadline will not be considered by the Reference and Council Committee unless they address a timely or unforeseen matter.
4. RESOLUTIONS RECEIVED AFTER THE OPENING OF THE ASSEMBLY must be timely and germane to the matters before the assembly or on the assembly agenda. They may be brought to the floor of the Assembly by a two-thirds vote of the Assembly present and voting.
5. SUBMITTERS SHOULD BE PREPARED to have a representative speak to the Synod Assembly to provide background information not prudent to include in the document.
6. EACH RESOLUTION OR MEMORIAL MAY REQUEST ACTION FROM ONLY ONE ENTITY; i.e., a document may not ask both a churchwide assembly and the synod to address an issue.
7. WHEREAS clauses:
 - a. *Robert's Rules of Order, Newly Revised* (11th ed.), Section 10, page 107, discourages their use. If submitters find them necessary as introduction, there should be as few as necessary. They should be succinct and factual. They should not be argumentative.
 - b. If utilized as introduction, they should briefly describe the reasons for the proposed action in the RESOLVED clauses or provide little-known information including sources for stated facts.
8. RESOLVED clauses:
 - a. If adopted, become the officially worded statement of an action taken by a legislative body.
 - b. Should plainly state the action desired, who is to implement the action, and who is to bear any cost.
 - c. Should give each action a separate RESOLVED.
 - d. Should include proposed wording for any resolution requiring a change in Synod bylaws.

9. Documents should be tested against questions such as:
 - a. Is the information complete and accurate?
 - b. Do the RESOLVED clauses clearly define the proposed course of action?
 - c. Is this a matter which pertains to the life and mission of the Synod or germane to issues on the agenda?
 - d. Does the proposed memorial or resolution address a priority, ministry, or concern of this synod and this church?
 - e. Are the proposed actions feasible and appropriate for the Synod Assembly, Church Council, Churchwide Assembly, or the unit or office that will be addressed?
 - f. Is this document properly labeled a memorial or a resolution? (See next.)

From the Office of the Secretary of the ELCA:

What is the Difference between a Memorial and a Resolution?

In 1988, the ELCA Church Council voted that communications from synods to the churchwide organization and the Churchwide Assembly would be made pursuant to ELCA constitutional and bylaw provisions. Essentially, this action affirmed three avenues for communication: (1) Synod Assemblies may address the Churchwide Assembly through memorials; (2) Synod Councils may address the ELCA Church Council through resolutions; and (3) Synod Councils may address churchwide units or offices through the ELCA Church Council's Executive Committee (including forwarding resolutions adopted by Synod Assemblies). Although both memorials and resolutions are requests by a synod for action, they are intended to address different issues and are processed differently.

Memorials address broad policy issues and are passed by Synod Assemblies for consideration by the Churchwide Assembly. Synod Councils are not authorized to adopt memorials for submission to the Churchwide Assembly. One of the responsibilities of the Churchwide Assembly, in accordance with provision 12.21.c, in the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America*, is to "[r]eceive and consider proposals from synod assemblies." Once received by the churchwide organization, they are referred to the Memorials Committee, which is appointed by the Church Council to review and make recommendations to the Churchwide Assembly, in accordance with bylaw 12.51.02. The Memorials Committee meets approximately six to eight weeks before the Churchwide Assembly.

Resolutions are requests from synods to the Church Council or units or offices of the churchwide organization. Either Synod Assemblies or Synod Councils may originate resolutions. Frequently, Synod Councils pass resolutions between meetings of the Synod Assemblies and forward them directly to the Church Council for consideration or to the Church Council Executive Committee if the desired action involves referral to a unit or office of the churchwide organization. As a practical matter, resolutions have a narrower focus than memorials because they are requests for consideration or action by individual units or offices or the Church Council. Thus, for example, a request for the Church Council to recommend a parliamentary rule or action by a unit would be the subject of a resolution, but a request to change an ELCA policy should be a memorial.

A resolution and a memorial are *not* to be combined in one action. In addition, a synod should not address both the Church Council and the Churchwide Assembly on the same subject. The Office of the Secretary, with the concurrence of the Executive Committee of the Church Council, may treat a proposal characterized as a memorial as a resolution or vice versa. In these circumstances, the synod will be notified promptly of the re-classification.

It also is important to point out that resolutions and memorials *cannot* direct the churchwide organization to take action. They are proposals *requesting* the specified action.