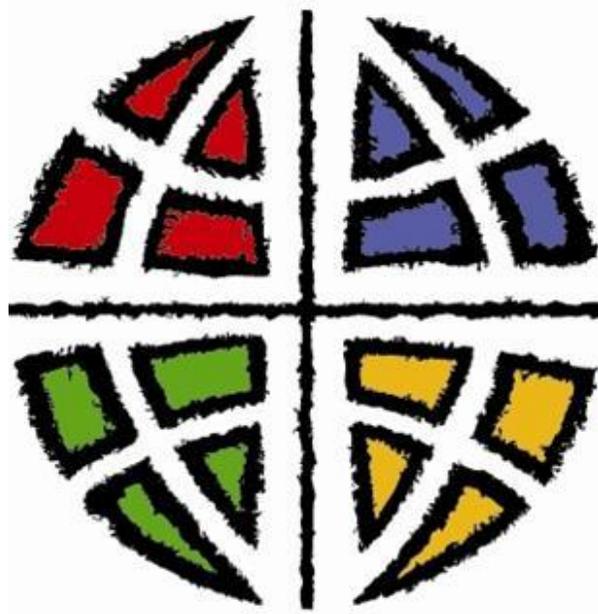




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Resolutions Adopted by the  
South-Central Synod of Wisconsin  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
Assembly

April 2017



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**Establishment of a Synodical Observance in Support of the Madison Area Jail Ministry and Its Jail Chaplaincy**

WHEREAS, the Madison Area Jail Ministry (MAJM) celebrates fifty years of serving the spiritual needs of incarcerated persons in the Dane County Jail, Madison, WI, along with family, friends, and jail staff; and

WHEREAS, we seek as members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, South Central Synod of Wisconsin to live *God's work. Our hands*, and to answer Christ's command to visit those in prison (Matthew 25); and

WHEREAS, MAJM is responsible for numerous volunteer-staffed programs serving more than 800 incarcerated individuals through worship, prayer services, bible studies, support groups and providing resources such as clothing, bibles, devotional materials, reading glasses, and journals; THEREFORE BE IT

**RESOLVED, that the Synod Council designate a Sunday in October 2017 as a local Jail Ministry Sunday within the South Central Synod of Wisconsin, ELCA; and be it further**

**RESOLVED, that congregations are invited to prayerfully consider a special offering for support of a local jail ministry and include it in their annual budgets; and be it further**

**RESOLVED, that in 2017, congregations be encouraged to invite Madison Area Jail chaplains to preach, teach, and provide articles for church publications that share stories of lives touched by Christ's love and care in the jail ministry; and be it finally**

**RESOLVED, that congregations are encouraged to select a congregational liaison to develop a deeper relationship between congregations and Madison Area Jail Ministry with the goal of establishing additional Jail Ministries in communities throughout the SCSW Synod.**



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### **Becoming a Reconciling in Christ Synod**

WHEREAS, Jesus reiterated the command to love our neighbors as we love ourselves (Mark 12:31); and

WHEREAS, the need for care and support for the vulnerable LGBTQ+ (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer) population was dramatically illustrated last year in the killing of 49 people at the Pulse Orlando Nightclub, while statistics from the FBI show that LGBTQ+ people are the most likely targets of hate crimes, as well as targets of numerous subtle aggressions and smaller oppressions; and

WHEREAS, the 2009 ELCA Social Statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* affirmed relationships and structures that will “promote, value, and respect the human dignity of each individual; protect all from physical, emotional, and spiritual harm; demonstrate mercy, compassion, and justice for all, especially the ‘least of these’—those who are most vulnerable in relationships and in society;” and

WHEREAS, this is the tenth anniversary of this synod adopting *An Affirmation of Welcome and Inclusion of all People* at its 2007 assembly that stated “The South-Central Synod of Wisconsin (ELCA) welcomes all people without regard to race, family, or economic status, gender, disability, age, or sexual orientation and invites and encourages all people to participate fully in the life and work of the church and its expressions, in accordance with all ELCA policies, procedures, and publications;” and

WHEREAS, while a Reconciling in Christ synod cannot speak for individuals and congregations, nevertheless this designation serves as a public proclamation and welcoming witness to the Lutheran community and society at large; THEREFORE BE IT

**RESOLVED, that this synod officially become a Reconciling in Christ synod by adopting this updated affirmation of welcome:**

**“Following Jesus, who commanded his followers, ‘Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another,’ and believing that all persons are created in the image of God, the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin (ELCA) strives to be fully inclusive for all. This synod welcomes people of every race, background, age, political affiliation, economic and social status, sexual orientation, gender identity and expression, and mental and physical ability, while striving to enable all people to participate fully in the life and work of the church and its expressions;” and be it**

**RESOLVED, that this synod attend to this affirmation by pursuing practices that welcome and include people of all sexual orientations and gender identities and expressions; and be it finally**

**RESOLVED that this assembly calls the Synod office to make two commitments: to act as a resource for congregations in order to continue conversations about welcoming and inclusion; and to accompany congregations who wish to pursue the Reconciling In Christ process for themselves.**



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**500 Years and Still Reforming – Individually, Ecumenically, Culturally**

WHEREAS, on October 31, 1517, Martin Luther spurred the Reformation by posting 95 theses, declaring in the first, “When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said ‘Repent’ (Matthew 4:16), he called for the entire life of believers to be of repentance;” and

WHEREAS, Luther continues to spur us to ongoing reformation, constantly turning all aspects of our lives back toward God; and

WHEREAS, ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton has encouraged us to celebrate this 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary year by utilizing Luther’s *Small Catechism*; and

WHEREAS, the 2016 ELCA Churchwide Assembly approved the *Declaration on the Way* explaining agreements between Lutherans and Catholics, inviting us to explore ways to collaborate with Catholic congregations; and

WHEREAS, Bishop Mary Froiland encourages this synod to embrace its identity as a reforming church, not just as a historical memory, but as ambassadors of reconciliation, renewal, and hope for our 21<sup>st</sup> century culture and context; and

WHEREAS, the ELCA’s first social statement *The Church in Society* in 1991 proclaimed that “As a reconciling and healing presence, this church is called to... pioneer new ways of addressing emerging social problems and... resolutions to the world’s divisions;” and

WHEREAS, subsequent ELCA social statements have sought to discern faithful responses to difficult emerging ethical issues including *Abortion* (1991), *Caring for Creation* (1993), *Criminal Justice* (2013), *Human Sexuality* (2009), and *Race, Ethnicity, and Culture* (1993); THEREFORE BE IT

**RESOLVED, that this assembly encourage members to engage in ongoing individual reformation by reading, teaching, and preaching Luther’s *Small Catechism*, as well as the *Declaration on the Way*; and be it further**

**RESOLVED, that this assembly encourage ongoing reformation in the ecumenical relationships of our congregations, including exploring shared worship services with Roman Catholic congregations; and be it finally**

**RESOLVED, that this assembly encourage our ongoing role as a reconciling and healing presence for addressing social problems and the world’s divisions amid ongoing changes in culture.**



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### **Carbon Fee and Dividend, A Climate Solution**

WHEREAS, this church faithfully addresses the impact science, economics, and politics have on the well-being of God's creation and God's children; and

WHEREAS, this synod has adopted multiple resolutions and memorials including *A Faithful Response to Global Climate Change* in 2007, *Energy Stewardship* in 2011, and *The Church's Response to Climate Disruption* in 2015 reminding us that part of our calling as followers of Jesus is to address climate change; and

WHEREAS, since 1993 this church has understood the threats of climate change with the 1993 social statement *Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice* stating the urgency was already “widespread and serious, according to the preponderance of evidence from scientists worldwide [of] dangerous global warming, caused by the buildup of greenhouse gases, especially carbon dioxide” from the burning of fossil fuels, and that “action to counter degradation, especially within this decade, is essential to the future of our children and our children's children;” and

WHEREAS, the 2016 ELCA Churchwide Assembly adopted memorials from five synods on *A Responsible Energy Future* that give guidance to church investment decisions and “help transition to an economy less dependent on fossil fuels” and that also continue to call “all ELCA members, congregations, and synods...to advocate for policies that reduce energy use and our dependence on fossil fuels;” and

WHEREAS, it is recognized that as long as carbon pollution remains free, the true costs of fossil fuels are hidden, allowing fossil fuels to appear cheaper than low-carbon alternatives even as they put long-term health and economic prosperity at risk; and

WHEREAS, a Carbon Fee and Dividend system would impose a predictable, steadily-rising carbon fee on all fossil fuels and other sources of greenhouse gases at the point where they first enter the economy, with all fees collected minus administrative costs being returned to households as a monthly energy dividend to ease the financial burden on families during the transition to low-carbon; and

WHEREAS, phased-in carbon fees on greenhouse gas emissions will stimulate investment in alternative energy technologies, create jobs, give businesses powerful incentives to increase their energy efficiency and reduce their carbon footprints in order to remain competitive, and ultimately put us on a path of a sustainable climate by reducing greenhouse gas emissions and transitioning us to a clean energy economy; THEREFORE BE IT

**RESOLVED, that this assembly encourage members and congregations to continue learning about and advocating for Carbon Fee and Dividend; and be it finally**



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**RESOLVED, that this assembly invite our bishop to communicate our support for Carbon Fee and Dividend legislation to the members of Congress who represent the geographical territory of this synod.**

**Welcoming Refugees, Asylum Seekers, and Immigrants**

WHEREAS, Jesus calls those who follow him to love their neighbors, the hungry, the homeless, and the vulnerable; and

WHEREAS, in Deuteronomy, the people of God were admonished, “You shall also love the stranger, for you were strangers in the land of Egypt“ (Deut. 10:19) and St. Paul urged the church to “Welcome one another, just as Christ has welcomed you, to the glory of God” (Romans 15:7); and

WHEREAS, the United States of America is primarily a nation of immigrants with a long bipartisan history of welcoming newcomers to our shores; and

WHEREAS, the congregations and members of the ELCA have a long tradition of refugee resettlement ministries especially through Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services and Lutheran Social Services; and

WHEREAS, many newcomers, especially children and others who have been trafficked to this country for the purpose of forced labor or sexual exploitation, need protection, help, and the opportunity to live in dignity; and

WHEREAS, the 2005 Synod Assembly of the South-Central Synod of WI passed the memorial *Refugees, Asylum Seekers, and Immigrants* in support of refugees, asylum seekers, and immigrants; THEREFORE BE IT

**RESOLVED, that Synod Assembly of the South-Central Synod of WI encourage the congregations and bishop of this synod to advocate for education, services, and fair treatment for refugees, immigrants, and asylum seekers; and be it further**

**RESOLVED, the 2017 Synod Assembly of the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin-ELCA call on all South-Central Synod of Wisconsin-ELCA congregations to**

- 1. Provide opportunities for their members to learn about the issues and needs for comprehensive immigration reform (many resources are available at <http://refugeesunday.lirs.org/>),**
- 2. Encourage their members to contact elected representatives, especially at in-person listening sessions but also through letters, phone calls, and social media, to advocate for comprehensive immigration reform based on the principles of LIRS,**
- 3. Participate in the work of our synod refugee resettlement team through prayer, contributions, and active support of resettlement of refugees in partnership with Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan (check the synod website at <http://www.scsw-elca.org/refugee-task-force.aspx> for ways to become involved and for people to contact), and**



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- 4. Encourage their members to welcome all newcomers, especially immigrants and refugees, to their communities and to help them assimilate into our society; and be it further**  
**Welcoming Refugees, Asylum Seekers, and Immigrants cont.**

**RESOLVED**, that Synod Assembly of the South-Central Synod of WI encourage the congregations and bishop of this synod to oppose all legislative attempts to ban the arrival of refugees, immigrants, and asylum seekers; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the 2017 Synod Assembly of the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin—ELCA encourages the bishop, congregations, and members to support legislation based on principles for comprehensive immigration reform articulated by Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services (<http://lirs.org/wp-content/uploads/2013/02/LIRS-Principles-for-Comprehensive-Immigration-Reform.pdf>):

- **Provide an earned pathway to lawful permanent residency and eventual citizenship for undocumented immigrants and their families;**
- **Ensure the humane and just enforcement of U.S. immigration laws, specifically by reducing the use of immigration detention and expanding the use of community support programs for immigrants who do not need to be detained;**
- **Protect families from separation and ensure an adequate supply of visas for families seeking to reunite;**
- **Provide adequate resources and protections to ensure the successful integration of refugees, asylees, survivors of torture and trafficking, unaccompanied minors, and other vulnerable migrants; and**
- **Ensure the protection of U.S. citizen and migrant workers; and be it further**

**RESOLVED**, that Synod Assembly of the South-Central Synod of WI encourage its members to encourage our legislators to return to the target goal of the United States receiving 110,000 refugees in fiscal year 2017; and be it finally

**RESOLVED**, that this synod support and advance multicultural and interfaith connections on behalf of all God's children, so that understanding and mutual respect become hallmarks of our faith and witness.



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**Recognition of Rev. David N. Larson's Service as President and CEO of Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan**

WHEREAS, Rev. David N. Larson has provided distinguished leadership as President and Chief Executive Officer of Lutheran Social Services (LSS) of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan since July 2002, and prior to that serving as Vice-President of resource development; and

WHEREAS, Rev. Larson served as a synod representative to the LSS operating board for six years; and

WHEREAS, Rev. Larson, has tirelessly urged a strong commitment to the social ministry of the church, reminding us that, "When people are at their worst, we need to be at our best;" and

WHEREAS, Rev. Larson has been a leading voice of inspiration and challenge to fulfill the mission of LSS, "Motivated by the compassion of Christ, we help people improve the quality of their lives;" and

WHEREAS, Rev. Larson will retire in 2018 from a career of dedicated service as a Lutheran pastor and social services leader; THEREFORE BE IT

**RESOLVED, that this Synod recognize, affirm, and celebrate Rev. David N. Larson for his service to the church and the thousands of lives that have been changed because of his passionate and committed leadership.**



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**Preparing for the Women and Justice Social Statement**

WHEREAS, in faith we are all called to “do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God.” (Micah 6:8); and

WHEREAS, the 2009 Churchwide Assembly authorized a social statement process “on the topic of justice for women in church and society” and the ensuing Women and Justice: One in Christ Task Force has diligently worked toward a social statement with listening events across the ELCA from 2013-2016, encouraging open, honest, and empowering conversations about sexism and its negative impacts on individuals and families, in our homes, congregations, and communities; and

WHEREAS, a study document Faith, Sexism, and Justice: Conversations toward a Social Statement has been designed to invite dialogue and action, including feedback through August 31, 2017; and

WHEREAS, those comments will help shape a draft social statement that will be available for comment and synodical hearings from October 12, 2017, through October 30, 2018, to prepare for a social statement to be considered for adoption at the 2019 Churchwide Assembly; THEREFORE BE IT

**RESOLVED, that congregations, groups, members, and institutions of the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin are encouraged to use the study document, Faith, Sexism, and Justice: Conversations toward a Social Statement, and respond to it prior to the August 31, 2017, deadline; and be it finally**

**RESOLVED, that congregations, groups, members, and institutions of the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin are encouraged to read, study, and respond to the social statement draft beginning in October 2017.**



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### **Campus Ministry**

WHEREAS, the ministries of the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin include three campus ministry sites at UW-Madison, UW-Platteville, and UW-Whitewater; and

WHEREAS, the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin welcomes and encourages participation from its members under the age of 30 at synod events and within its congregations and organizations; and

WHEREAS, Lutheran Campus Ministry sites serve as places of worship, spaces of respite during anxious times, places of contact with the church, and communities of support for young adults; and

WHEREAS, Lutheran Campus Ministry sites offer young adults a place to explore their vocation in life in a community of peers and campus ministers; and

WHEREAS, the Synod Campus Ministry Oversight Team is charged with supporting and engaging the synod with our Lutheran Campus Ministry sites; THEREFORE BE IT

**RESOLVED, by the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin that each year in the fall, one Sunday in September or October be designated a Lutheran Campus Ministry Sunday; and be it finally**

**RESOLVED, that congregations are encouraged on that day or another day in the fall to offer special prayers, to lift up campus ministry during worship, to share information about Lutheran Campus Ministry, to connect with local campus ministry sites, to receive a special offering for campus ministry, and to connect their young adults with Lutheran Campus Ministry wherever they attend college or university.**