**Background Information**

**Resolution to Dissolve Lutheran Campus Ministry of Minnesota, Inc.**

**Please note:** this resolution addresses only the dissolution of ***Lutheran Campus Ministry of Minnesota (LCMM), Inc.,*** a non-profit corporation under the laws of the State of Minnesota. **This resolution does not propose dissolving any of the nine Campus Ministry Agencies (CMAs)** that provide campus ministry on the public university campuses in Bemidji, Duluth, Mankato, Marshall, Minneapolis/St Paul, Moorhead, Morris, St Cloud, and Winona.

**Historical background:** Lutheran Campus Ministry of Minnesota, Inc. was originally incorporated in Minnesota in 1941 as *The Twin Cities Lutheran Student Foundation*.   The original incorporators included the Evangelical Lutheran Augustana Synod of North America, the Norwegian Lutheran Church in America, the American Lutheran Church, the United Lutheran Church in America, the Lutheran Free Church, and the United Danish Evangelical Lutheran Church. None of these Lutheran denominations still exist, having all participated in the formation of the American Lutheran Church (ALC) in 1960 and the Lutheran Church in America (LCA) in 1962. The ALC and the LCA, along with the Association of Evangelical Lutheran Churches (AELC) formed the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) in 1988.

The original articles of incorporation stated that the purpose of LCMM was *“to promote the spiritual, moral, and social welfare of the Lutheran Students in accordance with the precepts of the Christian Faith and religion as interpreted by the Evangelical Lutheran Church*.”   With the formation of the ELCA in 1988 new Articles of Incorporation were drafted and revised in 2008 and 2010, stating that the purpose of LCMM is *“to maintain, develop, and promote the ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) to the students and faculty in the institutions of higher learning in Minnesota in accordance with the policies of the ELCA Vocation and Education program unit or its successor.”*

LCMM, Inc. has existed as a cooperative agency in support of local campus ministries across Minnesota. The members of LCMM, Inc. are the six ELCA synods of Minnesota. Since 1988 LCMM, Inc. has been the primary vehicle whereby the six synods have ***managed properties*** for the CMAs, ***called pastors*** and other rostered leaders to serve the CMAs, and ***distributed funding*** from the synods and ELCA churchwide organization to the CMAs.

**What has changed?** Since 1988 much has changed in the ELCA and the surrounding culture. These changes have had significant impact on how LCMM, Inc. manages proprieties, calls campus ministers and distributes synodical and churchwide funding to CMAs. The most critical changes have included:

* **A substantial reduction in the funding ELCA congregations share with the ELCA churchwide organization and the 65 synods of the ELCA.** Lutherans in America in 1965 shared 17.7% of congregational income with their denominations; by 2013 this percentage had dropped to less than 5% of congregational income going to ELCA synods and the ELCA churchwide organization. This has directly impacted the number of dollars that the ELCA and its synods have been able to share with LCMM, Inc. In 2000 LCMM, Inc. distributed over $900,000 to the nine CMAs in Minnesota, and in the current year that amount will drop to less than $500,000. The decline in giving from congregations has also reduced the capacity of the ELCA churchwide organization to provide denominational staff to oversee campus ministry. In 2009 the ELCA eliminated five churchwide campus ministry staff positions—three of which were full-time regional directors for campus ministry. (One of these regional directors served simultaneously as Executive Director of LCMM, Inc.)
* **Significant changes in how campus ministers are selected and how campus ministry properties are tended.** Under the most recent revision of LCMM’s bylaws (2010) Letters of Calls are no longer issued on behalf of LCMM, Inc. but instead are issued on behalf of the CMAs that are actually interviewing and selecting campus pastors. Similarly, the ELCA churchwide organization and LCMM, Inc., have been encouraging local CMA boards to hold title to and be responsible for CMA properties. One reason why this resolution proposes taking until January 31, 2018 to finalize the dissolution of LCMM, Inc., is that some of these property transfers are still in process.
* **A growing tendency to embrace more local governance and support for campus ministries**. Tasks formerly coordinated by ELCA churchwide staff members are now coordinated by synod staff persons; boards of CMAs now give greater attention to local fund-raising. This shift toward more local governance has already resulted in the dissolution of other statewide organizations like LCMM, Inc. Within the ELCA, only Minnesota and North Dakota still have statewide campus ministry organizations—and the board of the North Dakota consists of only six persons (four of whom are bishops or members of synod staffs).

**Looking Ahead**

Although this resolution proposes dissolving a vehicle (LCMM, Inc.) that has served us well over the last 75 years, our church remains strongly committed to supporting a Lutheran ministry presence on nine of the public universities in our state.

**Local support** for Lutheran campus ministries at our public institutions of higher education in Minnesota has been growing—and it will continue to grow. Eliminating the costs of operating a statewide non-profit corporation—both in terms of money and the time of persons serving on the LCMM, Inc. board--will free up more volunteer time and dollars for the vital ministries of our nine CMAs.

As we move away from the LCMM, Inc. model, our synods will step up to a higher level of engagement with the CMAs on their territories. Folks from our six synods will also help cultivate life-giving networks among Lutheran campus ministers, CMA board members and synod leadership groups charged with tending campus ministries on the territories of the synods. A wonderful resource for developing such networks is the Lutheran Campus Ministry Network whose exciting new website can be found at <http://www.lumin-network.org/>

Thanks to the dedication of supportive congregations, generous donors, campus ministers, CMA boards, and the six synods of Minnesota, we continue to serve God’s mission on the campuses of nine public universities in our state. Through these local campus ministry centers, ELCA Lutherans offer:

* Outreach to students with grace-filled practices (hospitality, Bible study, worship, etc.)
* Regular worship life and discipleship training ways appropriate to young adults
* Presence in times of crisis (public tragedies, personal crisis times)
* Leadership formation and encouragement of vocation
* Experience learning/service with ecumenical an inter-faith groups
* Attention to the spiritual needs of ELCA students (when we know of their presence) but also many others, some who are not yet baptized.