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Facilitate Lutheran Discernment Relative to Military Participation

Whereas, the three contrasting positions identified by the ELCA social statement (p.24) “Peace in God’s World” (adopted by 1995 Churchwide Assembly) relative to participation in the military are:

- “1. Conscientious objection to bearing arms in military service at any time;
- 2. Selective conscientious objection to participation in a particular war or military activity (such as the refusal to use weapons of mass destruction in combat);
- 3. In conscience participation in military service.”

Whereas, war has long-term and grave consequences on veterans, including their relationship with God, their families, their communities, the world of nations, and on the civilians who lose homes, livelihoods, bodies, and lives, as well as on opposition soldiers and their circle of loved ones;

Whereas, the entering of military service is a profound personal and moral decision and faith communities have a responsibility to assist young people to make fully informed, morally responsible decisions concerning military duty; therefore be it

Resolved, that the Minneapolis Area Synod meeting in assembly direct the Joint Peace with Justice Committee of the Minneapolis and St. Paul Area Synods to provide our congregations with resources for addressing the issues of faith and conscience with regards to military service, and to invite military chaplains to participate; and be it further

Resolved, that the Minneapolis Area Synod meeting in assembly urges congregations to share these resources with parents, pastors, church youth leaders, Sunday school teachers, and confirmation instructors, in order to encourage the teaching of what Jesus taught and lived.

Author(s): Committee appointed by the Minneapolis Area Synod Council as directed by the 2011 Synod Assembly action on RC-2011-1. [Committee members: Pastor Steve Bonesho; Ms. Amy Blumenshine, DM; Mr. Al Bostelmann; Mr. Larry Kounkel and Ms. Michelle Reichow.]

Adopted by: The Minneapolis Area Synod Executive Committee at its meeting on November 22, 2011

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