

Resolution on Accompanying Immigrants

WHEREAS, care and equal justice for the stranger and the call to practice hospitality is a moral imperative in our scriptures¹; and

WHEREAS, the Minneapolis Area Synod of the ELCA, in its diversity, is home to many immigrant communities and congregations; and

WHEREAS, the 1998 ELCA Social Message on Immigration proclaims: “We draw on the best of our nation’s traditions as a refuge and haven for the persecuted and destitute when we affirm that we support a generous policy of welcome for refugees and immigrants, and that we will advocate for just immigration policies including fairness in visa regulations and in admitting and protecting refugees”; and

WHEREAS, “the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) defines accompaniment as walking alongside others in solidarity and mutuality. It's a way of understanding a mission that's based on scripture and practical experience.” (ELCA Blog, ELCA World Hunger); and

WHEREAS, the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly voted to become the nation’s first Sanctuary Denomination; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Minneapolis Area Synod (MAS) provide opportunities for continuing education and training for rostered leaders on the topic of accompanying immigrants; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Bishop of the MAS appoint a synod immigration task force to accomplish the following concrete objectives: identify increased funding sources and coordinate a synod-wide appeal for the benefit of our new and strategic ministries and immigrants and refugees within the synod; curate legal aid resources for individuals within the synod; and work with the office of the Bishop of the MAS to coordinate education, resources, and funding for this work; and be it further

RESOLVED, that congregations be encouraged to make use of training opportunities and resources provided by the synod and non-profits serving immigrants such as Accompanying Migrants with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities (AMMPARO), Global Refuge, and Lutheran Social Services; and be it further

RESOLVED, that congregations hold special offerings in support of immigrant-focused non-profits or new and strategic ministries and to pray for immigrant communities in their worship services regularly; and be it further

RESOLVED, that this assembly urge the Bishop of the MAS, with guidance from legal counsel, to act without regard to immigration laws which are contrary to the 1998 ELCA Social Message on Immigration and the United States Constitution and support MAS congregations which choose to ignore these laws; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Bishop of the MAS prioritize the call to action and advocacy for immigrants and refugees at a state and federal legislative level and implement the recommendations of the immigration task force.

¹ For example, Ex 12:49, Lev 19:33-34, Num 9:14, Num 15:15-16, Deut 10:18-19, Deut 24:17-18, Jer 7:5-7, Ezk 47:21-22, Mal 3:5, Matt 25:31-46, Lk 4:16-21, Rom 12:13, Eph 2:11-22, Heb 13:1-2.

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