

## Engaging in Solidarity with our Muslim Neighbors

**Whereas** the Minneapolis Area Synod is committed to working to bring about peace, justice and the reign of God (see background information), and

**Whereas** hostility and divisions in our country are escalating, and violence and intimidation are being visited on the basis of religious belief as well as other distinctions, and

**Whereas** Muslims are being particularly targeted in policies, public rhetoric and acts of violence, and

**Whereas** the ELCA Consultative Panel on Lutheran-Muslim Relations declares, “When Christians and Muslims see one another as siblings this produces new opportunities for cooperation in local, national and international communities. It is important that Christians understand and stand firm against Islamophobia. It is furthermore essential that Christians and Muslims endeavor to establish relationships of trust, integrity and a shared vision of their place in the rich interreligious landscape,” therefore be it

**Resolved** that the Minneapolis Area Synod encourage its congregations and members to engage in one or more of the following actions by the 2018 Synod Assembly:

- sponsor one or more educational sessions on Islam or on interrupting religious bias, or partner with another congregation in doing so.
- reach out to build relationships in their neighborhood with a non-Christian place of worship or another religious institution, particularly any being targeted for hostile words and actions.
- write and endorse a statement condemning hostility in the name of religion and expressing solidarity with members of other faith traditions.
- initiate and engage in inter-religious service projects which include spiritual reflection and discussion.
- engage in advocacy actions, such as writing to school officials requesting training for faculty and staff in understanding Islam and dealing with religious diversity; writing letters to the editor or contacting legislators advocating for protection of religious minorities; advocating for respect and accommodation in individual workplaces for religious diversity, and be it further

**Resolved,** that the Minneapolis Area Synod Council establish a task force to make resources available for education on Islam and on leading skillful, effective interfaith initiatives.

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45 **Background Information for Engaging in Solidarity with our Muslim Neighbors**

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47 The following are several statements from the ELCA Consultative Panel on Lutheran-Muslim  
48 Relations related to the issues this resolution raises.

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50 “When Christians see one another as siblings this produces new opportunities for cooperation  
51 in local, national and international communities. It is important that Christians understand and  
52 stand firm against Islamophobia. It is furthermore essential that Christians and Muslims  
53 endeavor to establish relationships of trust, integrity and a shared vision of their place in the  
54 rich interreligious landscape.”

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56 ELCA Consultative Panel on Lutheran-Muslim Relations, [http://www.elca.org/Faith/Ecumenical-](http://www.elca.org/Faith/Ecumenical-and-Inter-Religious-Relations/Inter-Religious-Relations/Muslim-Relations)  
57 [and-Inter-Religious-Relations/Inter-Religious-Relations/Muslim-Relations](http://www.elca.org/Faith/Ecumenical-and-Inter-Religious-Relations/Inter-Religious-Relations/Muslim-Relations)

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60 “Beginning in 1990 the ELCA’s Division for Global Mission made Christian-Muslim relations a  
61 central focus of its work and asserted, ‘The Gospel of Jesus Christ calls Christians to mutual  
62 understanding and friendship with Muslim people in the United States and around the world.  
63 By learning about Islam and seeking opportunities to know Muslim people better, we bear  
64 witness to God’s saving love incarnate in Jesus. (“Our Muslim Neighbors”).’ Now in the 21st  
65 century it is crucial for Christians to understand Islam and to reach out to Muslims... To this  
66 end, ELCA members, synods, and church wide units are encouraged...

67 To take the initiative in fostering Christian-Muslim dialogue

68 To demonstrate the biblical virtue of hospitality by knowing who are their Muslim  
69 neighbors, visiting with them, greeting them especially on occasions of Islamic feasts,  
70 accepting invitations to events hosted by Muslims, and inviting them to open houses at  
71 their churches or into the homes of church members

72 To conduct youth and adult studies within congregations that are aimed at better  
73 understanding of Islam and Muslims

74 To join with Muslims in addressing social concerns

75 To increase advocacy efforts on behalf of Muslims in the United States and abroad”

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77 ELCA Consultative Panel on Lutheran-Muslim Relations, “Guidelines for Christian- Muslim  
78 Relations,” March 18, 2004

79 [http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/ELCA%20Muslim-](http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/ELCA%20Muslim-Christian%20Guidelines%20March%2018%202004%20draft.pdf?_ga=1.13475391.925715065.1447271813)  
80 [Christian%20Guidelines%20March%2018%202004%20draft.pdf?\\_ga=1.13475391.925715065.1](http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/ELCA%20Muslim-Christian%20Guidelines%20March%2018%202004%20draft.pdf?_ga=1.13475391.925715065.1447271813)  
81 [447271813](http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/ELCA%20Muslim-Christian%20Guidelines%20March%2018%202004%20draft.pdf?_ga=1.13475391.925715065.1447271813)