

Life of Faith Initiative Model Resolution for Synod Assemblies

Whereas, We seek to embody ever more fully Luther's Reformation call to the ministry of all the baptized;

Whereas, The Gospel of Jesus Christ sets God's people free to serve their neighbors in their daily lives in the various arenas God provides: in families, at work, and in civil society, working for the common good;

Whereas, All the baptized share a single vocation of loving God and loving neighbors (Matthew 22:36-40) as lived out in various roles and relationships;

Whereas, There is a deep yearning, especially among young people, to live meaningful lives;

Whereas, The church as a gathered and scattered community needs the leadership of bishops, pastors, associates in ministry, deaconesses, and diaconal ministers to reorient the ministries of the institutional church to equip the saints for the work of ministry in daily neighborliness (Ephesians 4:12);

Whereas, The Book of Faith initiative is a model for a grassroots movement in engaging the Bible, the Life of Faith initiative will build upon and extend this effort with a focus on Christian vocation;

Whereas, The ELCA has a robust theological education network, including seminaries, colleges and universities, lay schools for ministry, synodical schools, outdoor ministries, campus ministries, a Christian Education Network, congregations, and many other entities; and

Whereas, Our church is rich with a variety of resources for teaching and learning, including print, electronic media, service learning, faith practices, spiritual formation, mentoring, congregational education programs, immersions, experiential learning, and other forms of learning; therefore, be it

Resolved, That we "reaffirm the universal priesthood of all believers, namely, that all baptized Christians are called to minister in the name of Christ and, empowered by the Holy Spirit, to proclaim the promise of God in the world and in their various callings and to bear God's creative and redeeming Word to all the world, to meet human needs, to work for dignity and justice for all people, and peace and reconciliation among the nations..." [copied from the first resolution of the 1993 ELCA Churchwide Assembly in response to the *Together for Ministry* report, in "The Ministry of All the Baptized" section, pp. 13-14; it also reflects section 7.11 of the ELCA constitution, The Ministry of the Baptized People of God];

Resolved, That we call upon congregations to foster Christian vocation by encouraging and equipping people, from children to adults, to discern and claim their call to speak and live the faith in their daily lives through their many varied forms of service with our neighbors in the family, the workplace, and in civil society;

Resolved, That we ask the theological education network—seminaries, colleges and universities, campus ministries, lay schools and outdoor ministries—to collaborate closely in promoting the ministry of all the baptized for the sake of the life of the world;

Resolved, That we ask congregations to join in this grassroots initiative in partnership with the robust theological education network of the ELCA (including Augsburg Fortress Publishers) in sharing and curating a wide range of resources that foster the life of faith in the world;

Resolved, That we encourage the theological education network of the ELCA to equip rostered leaders as ministers of the Word to claim their vocation as teachers, forming congregations as teaching and learning communities at the interface of faith and life;

Resolved, That we call upon congregations to experiment, create, and innovate so that the Life of Faith initiative becomes a vital part of their own ministries;

Resolved, That we memorialize the ELCA churchwide assembly to make the Life of Faith Initiative a central priority in all its expressions—congregations, synods, and churchwide organization; and

Resolved, That this synod commit itself to the Life of Faith initiative and report at its next synod assembly the steps taken to implement this resolution.

Drafted by the Covenant Cluster Task Force on Lay Theological Education:

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