

## **Wildfire Recognition Sunday - For Oregon Synod Assembly April 30 – May 1, 2021**

**WHEREAS**, Roughly 1.07 million acres burned during the 2020 Oregon State wildfire season, the second-most on record, with a firefighting cost of \$354 million<sup>i</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, over 4,000 families lost their homes across the state following the Historic September 2020 Fires and Labor Day Windstorm<sup>ii</sup>, including members of the Oregon Synod; and

**WHEREAS**, Oregon Gov. Kate Brown, consistent with the reporting of the Oregon Climate Change Research Institute<sup>iii</sup>, has stated that, *“this horrific firestorm of dry weather, hot wind and drought conditions, will not be a one-time event,”* but *“Unfortunately, it is the bellwether of the future.”*<sup>iv</sup>; and

**WHEREAS**, members of Oregon Synod congregations responded generously and graciously to wildfire survivors, even in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic; and

**WHEREAS**, the Oregon Synod Disaster Preparedness and Response Team, in conjunction with the Bishop’s Office, continues to act lovingly and decisively in the aftermath of this disaster; and

**WHEREAS**, Lutheran Disaster Response U.S. has worked tirelessly with and through the Oregon Synod Disaster Team and Synod Office, consulting with them, offering professional case manager training for various Oregon Aide Agencies, and funneling \$20,000 in direct aid to benefit survivors; therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, that the Oregon Synod, gathering in Assembly April 30 – May 1, 2021 under the theme of *“Faithful in the Fray,”* thank Bp. Laurie Larson-Caesar and Oregon Synod Disaster Team Leaders John Core, Charlene Larsen and Jan Wierima for their unwavering leadership this past year; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the Oregon Synod Council write letters of appreciation and thanks to ELCA Lutheran Disaster Response Director John Pyron and Assistant Director Rev. Joseph Chu for their faithful accompaniment of those serving Oregon wildfire survivors this past year; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that congregations of the Oregon Synod be encouraged to set aside one Sunday in September of 2021 as *“Wildfire Recognition Sunday,”* (September 7, 2021 being the one-year anniversary of the Labor Day Fires); and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the Oregon Synod Disaster Preparedness and Response Team be asked to prepare a litany, prayers and bulletin insert for this Sunday; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that members of celebrating congregations be given the opportunity to make donations to Lutheran Disaster Response U.S. in gratitude and our desire to support survivors of other disasters across the country.

### ***Submitted by Members of the Oregon Synod Disaster Preparedness and Response Core Team:***

*Rev. Manuel Humberto Borbon Talamante, Mid-Willamette Valley Latino Ministry, Silverton; Dave Brauer-Rieke, Central Lutheran, Portland; Deborah Chenoweth, Spirit of Grace, Hood River; Rev. Matthew Eagan, McMinnville Lutheran-Methodist Co-op, McMinnville; Deacon Dr. Laura Gifford, Resurrection Lutheran Church, Portland; Laura Myrella Gomez Galaviz, Immanuel Lutheran Church, Silverton; Mary Karter, Gethsemane Lutheran, Portland; Rev. Paul S. Lyda, St. Matthew Lutheran, Beaverton; Andrea Scofield, Camp Lutherwood Oregon, United Lutheran, Eugene.*

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<sup>i</sup> Salem Statesman Journal, October 30, 2020,

<https://www.statesmanjournal.com/story/news/2020/10/30/climate-change-oregon-wildfires-2020/6056170002/>

<sup>ii</sup> FoxNews Weather Blog, October 10, 2020, <https://fox12weather.wordpress.com/historic-september-2020-fires-labor-day-windstorm/>

<sup>iii</sup> <https://blogs.oregonstate.edu/occri/>

<sup>iv</sup> Science and Environment, What role is climate change playing in this year's historic wildfire season?, September 14, 2020, <https://www.opb.org/article/2020/09/14/what-role-is-climate-change-playing-in-this-years-historic-wildfire-season/>