

2022 Resolution on formation of an Oregon Synod Antiracism Resources Network

Whereas it has been 29 years since the ELCA adopted the 1993 Social Statement *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture*. The Statement declared racism a sin, the ELCA will model honest engagement on the issues of race, and participation in public life is essential to doing justice, and

Whereas in recent years additional statements and commitments have been made to proclaim the ELCA's vision of a community of people who affirm the values of diversity, dignity, compassion, justice and inclusion. These include:

- 2019 – Social Policy Resolution – *Condemnation of White Supremacy and Racist Rhetoric* which calls for all congregations of the ELCA to engage in communal study of the structures and rhetoric that empower and fuel racism and white supremacy and take to heart the teaching of Scriptures, so we may all be better equipped to speak boldly about the equal dignity of all persons in the eyes of God;
- 2019 - *Declaration of the ELCA to the people of African Descent* which calls for the ELCA to engage in anti-racism and racial justice work;
- 2019 – *How Strategic and Authentic is our Diversity: A Call for Confession, Reflection and Healing Action* which states that “Some synods, associations and congregations within the ELCA have shown leadership by developing antiracism programs, training antiracism facilitators, and working to prioritize the dismantling of racism within their communities. Yet this should be the work of all entities within the ELCA, not just a few” and that “The ELCA should intentionally partner with The Episcopal Church (TEC) and other full communion, ecumenical and interreligious partners on justice, antiracism, and reparations, while also sharing resources and the burden of labor to broaden such work and relationships”, and

Whereas as Lutherans we understand and affirm that the call to pray and act for racial reconciliation is integral to our witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ, and

Whereas antiracism tools, programs, and trainings are essential to help all congregations join the stated work of the ELCA to dismantle racism in all its forms.

Therefore be it resolved that the Oregon Synod sanctions the formation of an Oregon Synod Antiracism Resources Network (Network) that will be formed, led, and directed by volunteers from member congregations throughout the Synod. The Network will:

- Share information and offer support for antiracism education and activities to congregations throughout the Synod to live out the ELCA's commitment to becoming an anti-racist church, and
- Identify educational resources to study and understand the history of white supremacy, racism, systemic racism and how these evils affect every aspect of our lives together, and
- Encourage congregations within the synod to engage in ecumenical partnerships in antiracism education, such as partnering with the Episcopal Church to engage the resource, “Sacred Ground : a Film-based Dialogue Series on Race and Faith”, and Ecumenical Ministries of Oregon's Reckoning with Racism, and

- Assist congregations in ways to use these resources to deepen the commitment toward transformation into a reflection of the inclusive and equitable reign of God, and
- Report back to the Synod on the efficacy of these efforts and progress made toward holding ourselves accountable to our commitment to becoming an antiracist church.

Presented by Peace First Lutheran Church Council and Antiracism Team, Astoria;

Co-signed by the Oregon Synod Reparations Task Force (Alys Allwardt, Mandy Ellertson, Rev. David Eppelsheimer, Rev. Matta Ghaly, Rev. Sara Gross Samuelson, Gerry Grover, Karen Haines, Stephanie Kistler, Jan Mallory, Rev. Solveig Nilsen-Goodin, Shirley Peterson, Gary Schulstad, Gerry Stolp, Heidi Stolp, Debi Stromberg), Debra Hibbs, Paul Potter