

LIFT EVERY VOICE OREGON SYNOD RESOLUTION IN SUPPORT OF IP 17 AND IP 18 Whereas Jesus said, *“Blessed are the peacemakers for, they will be called children of God”* Matthew 5:9; and

And Whereas the prophet Micah declares (as does Isaiah 2:4)

*“God shall judge between many peoples,
and shall arbitrate between strong nations far away;
they shall beat their swords into plowshares,
and their spears into pruning hooks;
nation shall not lift up sword against nation,
neither shall they learn war any more;
but they shall all sit under their own vines and under their own fig trees, and no one shall make them afraid;
for the mouth of the LORD of hosts has spoken.”* Micah 4:3-4

And Whereas Lutherans are called, as are other Christians and those of other faith traditions, to be prophetic voices of vision and conscience while working for the common good from an ethic of love;

And Whereas in America today 45,000 people are killed annually through gun violence which has risen to an all-time high during Covid-19 and is a leading public health crisis;

And Whereas Oregon has been home to mass shootings in recent history, at Thurston High School, Clackamas Town Center, Reynolds High School and Umpqua Community College, with shootings taking place daily in Oregon, where semi-automatic weapons and large capacity magazines are often being used in these shootings;

And Whereas in the 24 years since the school shooting at Thurston High School in Springfield, May 21, 1998, the current generation of Oregon children and youth from pre-school to high school have not lived without the anxiety of gun violence and the threat of mass shootings in schools, theaters, malls and neighborhoods, which impacts their physical, mental/emotional, spiritual and social health;

And Whereas Mary spoke with incredible courage and power as a young woman when called by God to risk everything declaring *“Here am I, the servant of the Lord”* Luke 1:38; and in the Magnificat that followed *“God has brought down the powerful from their thrones, and lifted up the lowly”* Luke 1:52;

And Whereas the prophet Jeremiah was called to be a prophet as a youth and God said,

*“Do not say, ‘I am only a youth’;
for you shall go to all to whom I send you,
and you shall speak whatever I command you.
Do not be afraid of them,
for I am with you to deliver you, says the LORD.”* Jeremiah 1:7-8;

And Whereas the voices of young leaders in our state and nation are speaking out with the same clarity and power as those before them and are saying enough is enough and now is the time to end the gun violence;

And Whereas Lift Every Voice Oregon, an interfaith coalition of Muslims, Jews, Christians, Native American

spiritual leaders, Hindus Buddhists, Sikhs, other people of faith and people of just good will in Oregon are volunteering to gather signatures to put Initiative Petition 17 and Initiative Petition 18 on the November 8, 2022 General election Ballot with a deadline of July 8, 2022 for 112,000 valid signatures;

And Whereas IP 17 would ban the sale of large capacity magazines over 10 and bumpstocks; would require a permit and training to purchase any gun; would require a complete background check before purchase, closing the Charleston loophole; and would address the registration of “ghost” guns;

And Whereas IP 18 would ban the manufacture and sale of semi-automatic assault style weapons which includes many handguns, while allowing current owners to keep those they own after registering for restricted use only;

And Whereas a primary action our young leaders are calling our nation to is to ban the sale of assault style weapons and large capacity magazines;

And Whereas the 2018 Oregon Synod Assembly overwhelmingly passed a similar Resolution on Lift Every Voice Oregon's public safety work on ending gun violence;

Therefore, be it resolved that the Oregon Synod of the ELCA stand with the Lift Every Voice Oregon Coalition and a large and rapidly growing statewide interfaith and secular network in answering the clarion call of our prophetic young leaders to work to place IP 17 and IP 18 on the November 8, 2022 General Election ballot;

And be it further resolved that the churches of the Oregon Synod be encouraged to take action on this bellwether legislation with national implications as they deem right in this time and in their context to support this effort through direct action and public dialogue, using scripture, church teachings, the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King Jr.'s six principals for nonviolent direct action and the excellent tools designed by the Oregon Synod's Advocacy team;

And be it further resolved that the Oregon Synod Memorialize the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to join in the call to ban the sale of assault style weapons and large capacity magazines, and call for a national background check database while equipping our congregations to act locally on this issue for the public safety of our youth and the well-being of all who reside in this land.

Submitted by:

Rev. Dr. W. J. Mark Knutson, Pastor, Augustana Lutheran Church, Portland; Chair, Lift Every Voice Oregon; IP 17 and IP 18 Chief Petitioner

Augustana Lutheran Church Council: Mark Witham, President; Ayn Reyes Frazee, Immediate Past President; Susan Nieman and Ramona Nieman, Vice-Presidents; Ken Petersen, treasurer; Greg Halverson, Secretary

*Augustana Lutheran Church Advocacy Committee: Lisa Wenzlick, Norene Goplen, Liz McKanna, co-Chairs
Augustana Lutheran Church members of the Lift Every Voice Oregon Statewide Steering Committee:
Marilyn Keller, IP 17 and IP 18 Chief Petitioner; Liz McKanna, Ben Iboshi, Laura Thalacker, Tamrah Knutson, Joe Paterno, Janey Paterno, D'Norgia Price, Norene Goplen, Dan Bell, Charles Mitchell
March 4, 2022*