How to Write A Resolution

I. Validate Your Idea

Begin by discussing your proposed resolution(s) with other people. If you have a difficult time convincing other individuals that your resolution is necessary, you may find it even harder to have your resolution receive the necessary approval by at least three congregations or at least one conference assembly or at least one of the synod leadership groups named on the previous page.

So, as you draft your resolution ask yourself questions like:

- Does this resolution address a major issue in the life and ministry of the synod?
- Is the issue addressed in this resolution worthy of the Assembly's consideration?
- If adopted, can the synod appropriately and effectively implement this resolution?

II. Write the Resolution

A. State the resolution clearly and concisely. Ask yourself questions like:
- Does this resolution make sense?
- Can someone understand this resolution apart from its discussion at the assembly?

B. The "Whereas" clauses state the reasons for the proposed action.
- Each reason is given as a separate "Whereas."
- "Whereas" clauses should be accurate, factual, and well-documented. If a "Whereas" is based on information gathered from an outside resources, copies of that information should be included with the resolution when it is submitted to the Committee on Reference and Counsel.

C. The "Resolved" statements declare the action that will be taken if the resolution is approved. Each action is described as a separate "Resolved."
- The first actor is the Assembly itself.
    - If the only action that is required is that the assembly do something, the customary language is: *"...that the Southwest California Synod, in Assembly, (insert desired action)"*
    - Resolutions may request action by a leadership group of the synod, e.g. the synod council, a synod mission table, a synod team or task force, a synod committee.
- If the resolution calls for someone or a group (other than a synod leadership group) to act, it is normally more appropriate for the Assembly to "encourage" or "request" an action than to "direct" an action.
- There are two kinds of motions that are used to request action by the ELCA Churchwide Organization.
    - A resolution may be transmitted to the ELCA Church Council or a unit of the church.
    - A resolution may be transmitted to the Churchwide Assembly for consideration. Such a resolution is called a memorial. Memorials address broad policy issues.
    - Normally, Synod Assemblies address the Churchwide Assembly. Synod Councils address the ELCA Church Council and Churchwide Units through the ELCA Church Council's Executive Committee. If the Synod Assembly wishes to transmit a resolution to the ELCA Church Council or a Churchwide Unit it does so by directing its Synod Council to transmit the resolution to the ELCA Church Council or to the Church Council's Executive Committee for referral to a churchwide unit.
- How is the action to be funded?
- Background Information: The author of a resolution submitted to the Committee on Reference and Counsel may append background information. In putting together such material, the author is encouraged to bear in mind the primary purpose of background information: to help the voting members of the synod assembly do thoughtful, careful deliberation about the topic addressed by the resolution. Background information should be informative more than argumentative, clarifying unfamiliar terms or

concepts in the resolution. The Committee on Reference and Counsel reserves the right to edit background information, normally in consultation with the author of the resolution.

III. Anticipate Committee Review

The Committee of Reference and Counsel will review the resolutions before they are sent to voting members in the Pre-Assembly mailing.

Format for a Resolution

Normally, a resolution takes the following formats:

A resolution requesting one action:

Resolved, that _____

A resolution requesting more than one action:

Resolved, that _____; and be it further

Resolved, that _____

A resolution with one supporting argument and one action:

Whereas, _____ ; therefore be it

Resolved, that _____

A resolution with more than one argument and one action:

Whereas, _____; and

Whereas, _____; therefore be it

Resolved, that _____

Contact person for the resolution: _____ Phone Number: _____

Email of contact person:_____