

Resolution in Support of Anti-Racism Training for Leaders in the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin

WHEREAS, Scripture tells of a diverse people made one in Christ (Galatians 3:28) and of the ministry of reconciliation being entrusted to us (2 Corinthians 5:19); and

WHEREAS, the 1993 ELCA Social Statement “Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture” acknowledges: “Racism—a mix of power, privilege, and prejudice—is sin, a violation of God’s intention for humanity. The resulting racial, ethnic, or cultural barriers deny the truth that all people are God’s creatures and, therefore, persons of dignity. Racism fractures and fragments both church and society;” and

WHEREAS, the 2019 Churchwide Assembly adopted recommendations on authentic diversity which called for “ELCA synods, seminaries, colleges, and universities to require their staff and rostered ministers to participate in antiracism training every two to three years, and that training should be reported in the Ministry Leader Profile and annual reporting” and for such training to “intersect with issues of gender, sexuality, class, ability, naturalization status, etc. in a way that is holistic, comprehensive, and mutual;” and

WHEREAS, the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin’s Racial Equity Team is commissioned “to build awareness of racial disparities through educational events in our synod” and “to empower congregations and individuals to join actions that promote racial equity in the policies of our synod;” and

WHEREAS, the Synod holds expectations of other training, such as expecting all rostered leaders to attend a boundaries workshop every three years and keeping a record of attendance in each rostered minister’s file, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the South-Central Synod of Wisconsin offer at least one anti-racism training each year at a similar cost to participants as a boundary workshop, and be it further

RESOLVED, that, as directed by Churchwide’s adopted call for authentic diversity, such training will pay attention to the intersection of racism with issues of gender, sexuality, class, ability, naturalization status, etc. in a way that is holistic, comprehensive, and mutual, and be it further

RESOLVED, that, as directed by the ELCA call for authentic diversity, all Rostered Leaders in the Synod participate in racial justice/anti-racism training at least once every three years and that the Synod Office keep a record of completion of these trainings, and be it finally

RESOLVED, that each congregation, including its church staff and lay leaders, set aside time each year to reflect on how racism, implicit bias, and privilege impact their life together and public witness.

Submitted by Rev. Andy Twiton, Rev. Justin Dittrich, Rev. Heather Hayward, Ann Leon, Rev. Wendy Moen, Mary Nervig, Donna Peterson, Vica Steel, and Rev. Nick Utphall
Recommendation: Bring to the Assembly for consideration