

2021 Resolution 2

Resolution on Modifying Gendered Language in Synod Nomination Processes

Submitted by the Church Council of Trinity Lutheran Church, West Bend

WHEREAS the Greater Milwaukee Synod has committed itself to being a Reconciling In Christ (RIC) synod since 1991; and,

WHEREAS the Greater Milwaukee Synod's Vision, Mission, Values, and Practices Statement (2019) states that God's vision is "a world that embodies the fullness of life: justice, peace, equity, hope and love for everyone, including all races, genders, identities, abilities, and social statuses;" and,

WHEREAS structural systems of gender oppression both actively and passively function to reject, diminish, ignore, silence and cause violence to members of non-majority groups; and

WHEREAS the ELCA's representational principles give voice and presence at the Synod Council level for those who are often marginalized within social structures, yet seem insufficient to ensure that the diversity of God is honored and celebrated within this Church in its life together; and,

WHEREAS the Synod Constitution, in required provision †S6.04. notes that "the Synod Council shall establish processes that will ensure that at least ... at least 45% of the lay members of assemblies, councils, committees, boards, or other organizational units shall be women and at least 45% shall be men; and that, where possible, the representation of ministers of Word and Sacrament shall include both men and women;" and,

WHEREAS at the 2019 Synod Assembly, floor discussion about gendered language within our processes of appointment and nomination was named as harmful to our community as it perpetuates the marginalization of gender queer, non-conforming, non-binary, expansive, and agender individuals and communities; and

WHEREAS gender non-conforming, non-binary, expansive and agender individuals are limited to serving in an un-defined category; and,

WHEREAS not all gender non-conforming, non-binary, expansive and agender individuals are in positions where they are able to freely proclaim and celebrate their gender; and,

WHEREAS the language human societies use to identify gender is imperfect, fluid, expanding, and shifting ; **therefore, be it**

RESOLVED, That the Synod Council create a Task Force to study and determine how best to remove and modify prohibitive and harmful gendered language from synod processes of nomination, taking into account how best to represent and invite all LGBTQQIA2S+ siblings, (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual, Transgender, Queer, Questioning, Intersex, Asexual/Agender, 2 Spirits, and others) especially all gender queer, non-conforming, non-binary, expansive and agender individuals into synod leadership; and be it further

RESOLVED, That this Task Force develop a resolution to be acted upon by the 2022 Synod Assembly and be it further

RESOLVED, That this Task Force craft a Memorial to the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, addressing these language issues on the Churchwide level; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Synod Council, in consort with the Reconciling in Christ Committee, yearly review and consider future language modifications around gender diversity within this Synod; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Synod Council commit to updating these wordings around gendered language to better celebrate and reflect the growing and changing community every three years.