

Greater Milwaukee Synod Reference and Counsel Committee Report to the 2016 Synod Assembly

The Greater Milwaukee Synod Reference and Counsel Committee met on May 11, 2016 to review the resolutions which were submitted for action by this year's Synod Assembly. It is the responsibility of the Reference and Counsel Committee to receive and review resolutions submitted by congregations, clusters and committees of the Greater Milwaukee Synod, along with any submitted by the Synod Council, and report its findings to the Assembly for possible action.

These resolutions were submitted, in the order reported. The complete text of all resolutions is available online in the Synod Assembly file, and in Assembly materials. Only the Resolved statements are presented in this report.

Resolution 1, on Access to The Emergency Food Assistance Program, was submitted by St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Random Lake, with the following resolving statements:

Resolved, That the Greater Milwaukee Synod stands opposed to the requirement to provide "identification or documentation for each household member in order to participate in the [TEFAP] program"; and

Resolved, That the Greater Milwaukee Synod stands opposed to the requirement that "the person taking possession of the food at the pantry is required to provide identification at each visit"; and

Resolved, That the Greater Milwaukee Synod calls upon congregations and members to urge their elected representatives to repeal these identification requirements for The Emergency Food Assistance Program.

With all committee members in agreement, **the Reference and Counsel Committee recommends approval of 2016 Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly Resolution 1**, a Resolution on Access to The Emergency Food Assistance Program, as submitted by St. Paul's Evangelical Lutheran Church in Random Lake.

Resolution 2, to Establish an Annual Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan Sunday, was submitted by the Greater Milwaukee Synod Council, with the following resolving statement:

Resolved, That congregations of this synod are encouraged to observe an annual Lutheran Social Services Sunday where this ministry of the church is remembered in prayer, information on the breadth and scope of services shared, and an opportunity for financial support made available.

With all committee members in agreement, **the Reference and Counsel Committee recommends approval of 2016 Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly Resolution 2**, a Resolution to Establish an Annual Lutheran Social Services of Wisconsin and Upper Michigan Sunday, as submitted by the Greater Milwaukee Synod Council.

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Resolution 3, a Memorial to the Churchwide Assembly on Black Lives Matter, was submitted by Milwaukee Clusters 1 & 2, and co-sponsored by All Peoples Lutheran Church, Milwaukee; Hephatha Lutheran Church, Milwaukee; Village Church, Milwaukee; and the GMS Anti-Racism Team, with the following resolving statement:

Resolved, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod memorialize the 2016 Churchwide Assembly:

1. To request that the ELCA affirm unequivocally that BLACK LIVES MATTER;
2. To request that the ELCA support the 10-point policy solutions of Campaign Zero (an advocacy effort of activists, protesters and researchers focused on police violence) as a faithful expression of public church and advocacy;¹
3. To request that the ELCA encourage all congregations to engage the 10-point policy solutions in education, lobbying, and direct action.

With all committee members in agreement, **the Reference and Counsel Committee recommends approval of 2016 Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly Resolution 3**, a Memorial to the Churchwide Assembly on Black Lives Matter, as submitted by Milwaukee Clusters 1 & 2, and co-sponsored by All Peoples Lutheran Church, Milwaukee; Hephatha Lutheran Church, Milwaukee; Village Church, Milwaukee; and the GMS Anti-Racism Team,

Resolution 4, a Resolution on Justice for the Holy Land through Responsible Investment, was submitted by Hephatha Lutheran Church, Milwaukee and co-Sponsored by All People's Lutheran Church, Milwaukee and Ascension Lutheran Church, Milwaukee, with the following resolving statements:

RESOLVED, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly request that the Domestic Mission Unit of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America direct the Corporate Social Responsibility Team to develop guidelines that will screen out investments in companies profiting from, or complicit in, human rights violations arising from the occupation, including Caterpillar, HP Inc., Hewlett Packard Enterprise, Motorola Solutions, and G4S, and to provide a report with possible recommendations to the November 2016 meeting of the ELCA Church Council, and to forward the guidelines to the separately incorporated ministries, agencies, including the ELCA Board of Pension and other institutions of this church for implementation of divestment as appropriate; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod urge every congregation to provide opportunities for their members to engage in interfaith dialog with Palestinians—Muslim and Christian—and with American Jews and Israelis, to gain an understanding of the complex issues that plague the people of Palestine and Israel; and be it further

¹ The 10-points are: 1) End Broken-Windows Policing; 2) Community Oversight; 3) Limit Use of Force; 4) Independently Investigate & Prosecute; 5) Community Representation; 6) Body Cameras/Film the Police; 7) Training; 8) End For-Profit Policing; 9) Demilitarization; 10) Fair Police Union Contracts.

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RESOLVED, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to divest of direct or substantive indirect holdings in companies profiting from, or complicit in, human rights violations arising from the occupation, including Caterpillar, HP Inc., Hewlett Packard Enterprise, Motorola Solutions, and G4S, until such time as those companies no longer profit from the occupation or cease operations in the illegal settlements; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly encourage its members and congregations to divest of direct or substantive indirect holdings in companies profiting from, or complicit in, human rights violations arising from the occupation, including Caterpillar, HP Inc., Hewlett Packard Enterprise, Motorola Solutions, and G4S, until such time as those companies no longer profit from the occupation or cease operations in the illegal settlements; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly encourage its members and congregations to pray and work for a just peace in Palestine and Israel.

With all committee members in agreement, **the Reference and Counsel Committee recommends approval of 2016 Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly Resolution 4**, a Resolution on Justice for the Holy Land through Responsible Investment, as submitted by submitted by Hephatha Lutheran Church, Milwaukee and co-Sponsored by All People's Lutheran Church, Milwaukee and Ascension Lutheran Church, Milwaukee.

Resolution 5, a Resolution Honoring Bishop Jeff Barrow, was submitted by the Greater Milwaukee Synod Council, with the following resolving statements:

Resolved, that we, as members of this annual assembly of the Greater Milwaukee Synod, offer our appreciation and gratitude in honor of the six years of leadership and service by Jeff Barrow as Synod Bishop; and be it further

Resolved, that we, by this action, also offer thanksgiving to God for Bishop Barrow's vision, service, and faithful discipleship; and be it finally

Resolved, that we bestow upon Bishop Barrow and all with whom he continues to share life and ministry, the boundless blessings of Almighty God—Father, Son and Holy Spirit—and give thanks for the ongoing service Bishop Barrow will bring to the one, holy, catholic, and apostolic church and to the Lord of that church in whom we have life and salvation, now and forever.

With all committee members in agreement, **the Reference and Counsel Committee recommends approval of 2016 Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly Resolution 5**, a Resolution Honoring Bishop Jeff Barrow, as submitted by the Greater Milwaukee Synod Council.

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Resolution 6, a Resolution in support of Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities, was submitted by the Greater Milwaukee Synod Council, with the following resolving statements:

Resolved, the Greater Milwaukee Synod in Assembly affirm the AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities) strategy recently presented to the ELCA Church Council and memorialize the Churchwide Assembly to adopt it; and be it further

Resolved, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly affirm the ministry that is being done in this synod with children and families from Central America; and be it further

Resolved, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly consider ways that it can accompany, foster awareness building and advocate for the children and families in Central America in their country, in the countries in transit and in the United States of America; and be it further

Resolved, that the Greater Milwaukee Synod use the AMMPARO strategy as a guide for accompanying children and families from Central America through the Welcoming Congregations and/or Guardian Angel programs, and for advocating policies that are more just and humane and that uphold and defend the human rights of migrant children and their families.

With all committee members in agreement, **the Reference and Counsel Committee recommends approval of 2016 Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly Resolution 6**, a Resolution in support of Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities, as submitted by the Greater Milwaukee Synod Council.

*Submitted by Rev. Tim Tahtinen, Chair
2016 Greater Milwaukee Synod Reference and Counsel Committee*