

Resolution 4 – 2017 Greater Milwaukee Synod Assembly Resolution in Commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Milwaukee Open Housing Marches

WHEREAS, August 28th, 2017 marks the 50th anniversary of the open housing marches in Milwaukee, begun on Aug 28th 1967, continuing for the next 200 days organized by the NAACP Youth Council, Father James Groppi, and Alderwoman Vel Phillips, and

WHEREAS, The 1967-1968 open housing marches were done in support of passing a local open housing bill that would desegregate Milwaukee and open up housing throughout the city, and

WHEREAS, Milwaukee's open housing marches garnered national attention and were instrumental in helping pass the Fair Housing Act of 1968 which prohibited discrimination concerning the sale, rental and financing of housing based on race, religion, national origin and sex, and

WHEREAS, Nearly five decades after the federal Fair Housing Act passed, a 2013 study by the University of Wisconsin-Milwaukee found fewer than 9% of black residents in the Milwaukee metro area live in the suburbs — the lowest rate in the country, and that even as major metro areas across the U.S. have modestly desegregated since the 1980s, Milwaukee's rate of black-white segregation has essentially stayed the same, and

WHEREAS, Many of our Lutheran pastors, members, and congregations participated in those marches in 1967 and 1968, and many continue to resist the injustices perpetuated by racism and poverty in Milwaukee today; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, That synod congregations be encouraged to support city-wide events on August 28th, 2017 to commemorate the 50th anniversary of the seminal open housing marches in Milwaukee and the impact they had nationally on the Civil Rights Movement and the passing of the Fair Housing Act, and be it further

RESOLVED, That the Greater Milwaukee Synod designate Sunday, August 27, 2017 to be a “Commemoration of the 50th Anniversary of the Open Housing Marches & Call to Continued Action” whereby congregations would celebrate the legacy of the open housing marches and the continual need to act boldly in the struggle for justice in Milwaukee today, with the synod providing timely information to congregations that can be used to promote this event, and be it further

RESOLVED, That congregations and members of the Greater Milwaukee Synod be encouraged to celebrate the “200 Nights of Freedom” that will follow the anniversary, as a means to educate, inspire, and empower similar acts of resistance to injustice.

Submitted by Clusters 1 & 2, Milwaukee

And by All Peoples Lutheran Church, Ascension Lutheran Church, Hephatha Lutheran Church, Lake Park Lutheran Church, The Table Synodically Authorized Worshipping Community, and Village Church; all of Milwaukee