

1 **#1 Resolution ELCA Missionary to Liberia**

2 **The Committee on Reference and Counsel recommends the following resolution:**

3 **Whereas** Liberia began as a country in the early 19th century as a project of the American
4 Colonization Society. The ACS believed that Black people would have a better chance of
5 freedom and opportunities if returned to the continent of Africa. Between 1822 and 1861 freed
6 Black slaves and Black people were relocated to Liberia and became known as Americo-
7 Liberian. The government they created was like that of the United States government. Americo-
8 Liberians declared independence on July 26, 1847.

9 **And whereas**, The Rev. Morris Officer established the first Lutheran Presence in West Africa in
10 1860. Initially known as American Lutheran Mission, the Lutheran Church of Liberia grew
11 strong with discipleship becoming an independent national church in 1965.

12 **And whereas**, The Rev. David Day, a graduate of Susquehanna Missionary Institute of
13 Selinsgrove, PA, entered his first call to Liberia to revive the Muhlenberg Mission and serve the
14 people. He served there from 1874 to 1897 developing churches, schools, a medical clinic, and
15 teaching indigenous pastors, with the first ordination in 1885.

16 **And whereas**, The United Lutheran Church in America, and its successor, the Lutheran Church
17 in America, were the single partner of the Lutheran Church in Liberia for a century until the
18 1960's when the LCL joined the Lutheran World Federation.

19 **And whereas**, the Upper Susquehanna Synod has been in a Companion Synod Relationship with
20 Liberia since 1989 with many of our congregations offering financial and material support during
21 and following the Liberia Civil War. There have been numerous work mission trips sponsored
22 by the USS to Liberia to help them rebuild following the Liberia Civil War.

23 **And whereas**, most recently we had two missionaries to Liberia, The Rev. Linda Johnson
24 Seyenkulo and the late The Rev. Brian Palmer. With The Rev. Linda Johnson Seyenkulo's
25 retirement in Dec. of 2024, and the tragic and unexpected death of The Rev. Brian Palmer in
26 2026, this leaves no ELCA missionary personnel in Liberia to work with the Lutheran Church of
27 Liberia.

28 **Therefore, be it resolved** that the Upper Susquehanna Synod Assembly direct The Rev. Bishop
29 Craig Miller to contact the Service and Justice Home Area to implore them to appoint an ELCA
30 missionary to serve the Lutheran Church of Liberia in support of their mission.

31 **And be it further resolved** that the Upper Susquehanna Synod and its congregations will
32 continue to work together in support of God's work with our brothers and sisters in Christ in
33 Liberia.

34 USS Global Team - The Rev. Kerry Aucker, The Rev. Lisa Barnes, Beverly Hoffman, Lowell
35 Leitzel, The Rev. Karen Ward, The Rev. Jim Vitale, The Rev. Ann Zimmerman and The Rev.
36 Bishop Craig Miller

1 **#2 Memorial to the 2028 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in**
2 **America**

3 *Affirming the Sacredness, Dignity, and Flourishing of Every Person*

4 ***The Committee on Reference and Counsel recommends the following memorial:***

5 **Whereas** the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) professes that all human beings
6 are created in the image of God, redeemed by Christ's life, death, and resurrection, and called to
7 lives of dignity, justice, and loving community; and

8 **Whereas** God's mission in the world invites the church to advocate for the well-being,
9 flourishing, and full participation of every person across all dimensions of life, including access
10 to safe and stable housing, healthcare and medical care, education, employment and economic
11 participation, community engagement, sports and recreation, and other arenas of communal life;
12 and

13 **Whereas** the ELCA has long engaged in public witness and social ministry in matters of human
14 dignity and justice as reflected in its social teaching and advocacy work; and

15 **Whereas** many individuals and communities in the United States and around the world face
16 systemic barriers to these basic conditions of flourishing because of economic insecurity,
17 discrimination, exclusionary policies, or limited access to essential services and opportunities;
18 and

19 **Whereas** the ELCA's commitments to justice, compassion, and advocacy call the church to
20 support efforts that promote inclusive access to these essential conditions of human flourishing,

21 **Therefore, be it resolved** that the Upper Susquehanna Synod Assembly memorialize the 2028
22 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to affirm the sacredness
23 and inherent dignity of every human being as a precious creation of God called to flourish in all
24 aspects of life; and

25 **Be it further resolved** that this assembly encourage the churchwide organization, synods,
26 congregations, ministries, and ministries of public advocacy within the ELCA to proactively
27 support policies, programs, and partnerships that expand access to affordable and secure housing,
28 comprehensive and equitable medical care, quality education, inclusive community engagement,
29 safe and accessible opportunities in sports and recreation, and other areas that advance human
30 flourishing; and

31 **Be it further resolved** that the ELCA urges advocacy at local, state, national, and global levels
32 for laws, policies, and systems that uphold human dignity and reduce barriers to flourishing for
33 marginalized and vulnerable populations; and

34 **Be it further resolved** that this assembly requests the churchwide organization, through its
35 offices and units, to provide resources, educational materials, and opportunities for congregations
36 and synods to engage their communities in these concerns and to foster collaborative action
37 toward these goals; and

38 **Be it further resolved** that the churchwide organization invite ELCA members and
39 congregations to incorporate this affirmation into their ongoing ministries of service,
40 accompaniment, advocacy, and worship, seeking to live out Christ's reconciling love in all areas
41 of life.

42 Submitted by - Chad Hershberger, Rev. James A. Vitale, Jr., and Charlene Rineer- Camp Mount
43 Luther, Rev. Justin Lingenfelter-United In Christ Lutheran, West Milton, Rev. Pam Meilands-
44 The Table, Bloomsburg (Through Reconciling Works)

1 **Resolution to the Upper Susquehanna Synod Council**
2 **Affirming the Sacredness, Dignity, and Right of Every Person to Flourish**
3

4 **Whereas** the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America confesses that every person is created in
5 the image of God and is worthy of dignity, care, and full participation in the life of the
6 community; and

7 **Whereas**, the gospel of Jesus Christ calls the Church to accompany neighbors in seeking justice,
8 healing, and abundant life, particularly where people experience exclusion, harm, or barriers to
9 flourishing; and

10 **Whereas**, human flourishing depends on access to essential and interconnected aspects of life,
11 including but not limited to safe and affordable housing, comprehensive and affirming medical
12 care, education, community belonging and civic engagement, employment and economic
13 security, arts, sports, and recreation, and other expressions of communal life; and

14 **Whereas** many individuals and communities, especially those who are marginalized or made
15 vulnerable by systemic inequities, discrimination, or unjust policies—continue to face barriers to
16 these basic conditions of dignity and well-being; and

17 **Whereas**, the ELCA has a long tradition of social teaching, public witness, and advocacy rooted
18 in faith, scripture, and Lutheran theology that affirms God’s desire for justice, wholeness, and
19 life-giving community for all people,

20 **Therefore, be it resolved** that the Upper Susquehanna Synod affirms the sacred worth, inherent
21 dignity, and God-given right of every person to flourish in all aspects of life, without exception;
22 and

23 **Be it further resolved** that it commits to supporting ministries, policies, and practices within the
24 synod that promote equitable access to housing, healthcare, education, community life, sports
25 and recreation, and other conditions necessary for human flourishing; and

26 **Be it further resolved** that it encourages congregations, ministries, and synod-related
27 organizations to engage in education, accompaniment, and advocacy that reflect these
28 commitments in their local contexts; and

29 **Be it further resolved** that it supports the work of ELCA partners and affiliated ministries,
30 including Reconciling Works, whose mission and resources equip the church to live out these
31 values of welcome, justice, and inclusion; and

32 **Be it further resolved** that it calls upon synod staff and leadership to consider these
33 commitments in synod planning, public witness, partnerships, and communications, as
34 appropriate to the synod’s context and capacity; and

35 **Be it further resolved** that it directs that this resolution be shared with congregations of the
36 synod and with the churchwide organization as a statement of the synod’s values and
37 commitments.

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39 Submitted by
40 Chad Hershberger, Rev. James A. Vitale, Jr., and Charlene Rineer- Camp Mount Luther
41 Rev. Justin Lingenfelter- United In Christ Lutheran, West Milton
42 Rev. Pam Meilands- The Table, Bloomsburg
43

44 Due to the nature of the topic, it was submitted as both a resolution and a memorial. Per the
45 guidelines, the Committee on Reference and Counsel determined it fit the criteria for a memorial.
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1 **#3 RESOLUTION OF GRATITUDE AT THE 2026 ASSEMBLY OF THE UPPER**
2 **SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD OF THE ELCA**

3 **The Committee on Reference and Counsel recommends the following resolution:**

4 **Whereas** the Assembly of the Upper Susquehanna Synod convened on June 6, 2026, at Camp
5 Mount Luther, Mifflinburg, under the theme “Strength for Today and Hope for Tomorrow” and
6 many have offered their time, God given gifts, and hard work to plan and run the Assembly and
7 support the work of the Upper Susquehanna Synod. Therefore, be it:

8 **Resolved**, that we the members of the 2026 Assembly of the Upper Susquehanna
9 Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America offer thanks and prayerful support to our
10 Bishop, our officers, our synod staff, and our deans for their faithfulness in working for and with
11 us, and for their loving support of us in our life together; and be it further

12 **Resolved**, that we offer thanks and prayers for everyone who guided the Assembly participants
13 for “Strength for Today and Hope for Tomorrow”. We especially express appreciation for the
14 ELCA Representative and keynote speaker Rev. Amy Reumann and for Chaplain Rev. Brian
15 Vasey; and be it further

16 **Resolved**, that we give thanks to the representatives of the many other synods and churchwide
17 ministries represented at the assembly, including Campus Ministries, Diakon, Seafarers, Global
18 Refuge, and Camp Mt. Luther; and be it further

19 **Resolved**, that we give thanks to all those who offered their service to this synod through the
20 election process, to those who were elected, and to those who continue to serve; and be it further

21 **Resolved**, that we offer thanks to those who made this assembly possible in various ways: the
22 Synod Assembly committee; our parliamentarian, registrar Nancy Neidig, Director Chad
23 Hershberger and the communications team, Administrative Assistant, Ms. Brenda Krouse, the
24 worship team, volunteers, musicians, technical crew, and Camp Mt. Luther; and be if further

25 **Resolved**, that above all, we give thanks to God for strengthening us with the presence of Jesus
26 Christ and the Holy Spirit so that we may have hope for tomorrow as we follow Jesus’ example
27 to serve all people.

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