

Resolutions 2010-4 and 2010-5

2010-4: Retaining “Under God” in the Pledge of Allegiance

- 1 WHEREAS, on February 7, 1954, with President Eisenhower sitting in “Abraham Lincoln’s pew” at the
2 New York Avenue Presbyterian Church, the church’s pastor, George MacPherson Docherty, deliv-
3 ered a sermon based on Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address and called for the addition of “under God”
4 to the Pledge of Allegiance.
- 5 WHEREAS, Docherty argued that the nation’s might lay not in arms but its spirit and higher purpose,
6 WHEREAS, Docherty noted that the current Pledge of Allegiance could reflect the sentiments of any nation,
7 WHEREAS, Docherty noted that there was something missing in the pledge and that which was missing was the
8 characteristic and definitive factor in the American way of life,
9 WHEREAS, Docherty cited Lincoln’s words “under God” as defining words that set the United States apart from
10 other nations,
11 WHEREAS, President Eisenhower responded enthusiastically to Docherty in a conversation following the service
12 and acted quickly on his suggestion to add “under God” to the pledge,
14 WHEREAS, on the very next day, February 8, 1954, Representative Charles Oakman from Michigan, introduced a
15 bill to that effect and
16 WHEREAS, Congress passed the necessary legislation and President Eisenhower signed the bill into law on Flag
17 Day, June 14, 1954; be it
18 RESOLVED, that the ELCA oppose all attempts, including legal and political, to remove the phrase “under
19 God” from the Pledge of Allegiance as last amended by the US Congress on June 14, 1954 to
20 read: “I pledge allegiance to the flag of the United States of America, and to the republic
21 for which it stands, one nation under God, indivisible, with liberty and justice for all.”

Adopted and submitted by the King of Kings Church Council March 16, 2010.

Reference and Counsel recommends no action be taken by the assembly.

Rationale: The ELCA has no social statements on this matter, and the issue does not significantly advance the mission and ministry of the ELCA.

2010-5: Retaining “In God We Trust” on Currency

- 1 WHEREAS, in his letter dated November 20, 1861 to James Pollack, Director of the US Mint at Philadelphia,
2 Salmon Chase, then Secretary of the US Treasury instructed Mr. Pollack to prepare a national
3 motto to be declared on US currency stating in his letter: “No nation can be strong except in the
4 strength of God, or safe except in His defense. The trust of our people in God should be declared
5 on our national coins.” and
6 WHEREAS, Mr. Chase’s written words still hold true today; be it,
7 RESOLVED, that the ELCA oppose all attempts, including political and legal, to remove the motto “In God
8 We Trust” from all existing and future forms of United States of America currency.

Adopted and submitted by the King of Kings Church Council March 16, 2010.

Reference and Counsel recommends no action be taken by the assembly.

Rationale: The ELCA has no social statements on this matter, and the issue does not significantly advance the mission and ministry of the ELCA