Resolution 2020-2: A Resolution to Stand with Immigrants, Refugees and Asylum Seekers


WHEREAS the 1998 ELCA Social Message on Immigration proclaims: “We draw on the best of our nation’s traditions as a refuge and haven for the persecuted and destitute when we affirm that we support a generous policy of welcome for refugees and immigrants, and that we will advocate for just immigration policies including fairness in visa regulations and in admitting and protecting refugees”;

WHEREAS the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly voted that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America become a sanctuary church body; and

WHEREAS Sanctuary means “the provision of shelter and a RESPONSE to raids, detentions, deportations, and the criminalization of immigrants and refugees, a STRATEGY to fight individual cases of deportation, to advocate for an end of mass detention and amplify immigrant voices, a VISION for what our communities and world can be, and a MORAL IMPERATIVE to take prophetic action of radical hospitality rooted in the ancient traditions of our faith communities;”

NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Saint Paul Area Synod declare itself ready to protect refugees and undocumented persons from arrest and deportation by Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE), in partnership with organizations including but not limited to Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services, Immigrant Law Center of MN, Advocates for Human Rights, ISAIAH’s Sanctuary Network, Legal Rights Center, Arrive Ministries, International Institute of Minnesota, and the Interfaith Coalition on Migration; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Saint Paul Area Synod recruit leaders from congregations across the synod to join the leadership of the joint Minneapolis Area Synod and Saint Paul Area Synod AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and Opportunities) Task Force, invite congregations to become AMMPARO Welcoming congregations, and in coordination with Churchwide and the Joint synod AMMPARO Task Force, develop and provide resources for congregations to discern the call to sanctuary, learn about sanctuary and immigration in the US, and partner with local immigrant-led organizations in their community; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Saint Paul Area Synod Office of the Bishop advocate for immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers in the Minnesota State Legislature and county and municipal governments within the Synod’s jurisdiction, consistent with the ELCA’s 2009 social policy resolution “Towards Compassionate, Just and Wise Immigration Reform.” Such advocacy would assure that “the stranger, the alien and the resident alien” in Minnesota, without regard to legal status, has full access to all the public benefits enjoyed by the people of Minnesota. These include Driver's Licenses, Child Care

---

2 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly Action CA19.03.11. See 2019 Churchwide Assembly Legislative Update, August 7, 2019, page 3.
3 Immigration Advocacy Strategy: Sanctuary Memorial, Metropolitan New York Synod of the ELCA, Synod Council Action 17.06/06.
Assistance, MinnesotaCare, Food and Cash Assistance programs, Minnesota Family Investment Program
Emergency Cash Assistance, Paid Family and Medical Leave, Earned Sick and Safe Time, and Housing
Support; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Saint Paul Area Synod Office of the Bishop encourage pastors
and congregations to join the Synod in advocating for equal justice for “the stranger, the alien and the
resident alien” living in our communities and that the Synod Office support them in advocating on behalf
of their neighbors; and

Submitted by: The Vestry of Lutheran Church of the Redeemer, Saint Paul, and the Church Council of
Saint Paul-Reformation Lutheran Church, Saint Paul.

Because this resolution is consistent with the governing documents of the ELCA and addresses an issue of
general concern to the Saint Paul Area Synod, the Reference and Counsel Committee recommends
adoption of this resolution.