

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

1 WHEREAS care and equal justice for “the stranger, the alien and the resident alien” is consistently taught
2 in Holy Scripture: (i.e. Ex 12:49, Lev 19:33-34, Num 9:14 & 15:15-16, Deut 10:18-19, Deut 24:17-18, Jer
3 7:5-7, Ezk 47:21-22, Mal 3:5, Matt 25:31-46, Lk 4:16-21, Rom 12:13, Eph 2:11-22, Heb 13:1-2); and
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5 WHEREAS the 1998 ELCA Social Message on Immigration proclaims: “We draw on the best of our
6 nation’s traditions as a refuge and haven for the persecuted and destitute when we affirm that we support
7 a generous policy of welcome for refugees and immigrants, and that we will advocate for just
8 immigration policies including fairness in visa regulations and in admitting and protecting refugees”;¹ and

9 WHEREAS the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly voted that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in
10 America become a sanctuary church body;² and

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12 WHEREAS Sanctuary means “the provision of shelter and a RESPONSE to raids, detentions,
13 deportations, and the criminalization of immigrants and refugees, a STRATEGY to fight individual cases
14 of deportation, to advocate for an end of mass detention and amplify immigrant voices, a VISION for
15 what our communities and world can be, and a MORAL IMPERATIVE to take prophetic action of
16 radical hospitality rooted in the ancient traditions of our faith communities;”³
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18 NOW, THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Saint Paul Area Synod declare itself ready to protect
19 refugees and undocumented persons from arrest and deportation by Immigration and Customs
20 Enforcement (ICE), in partnership with organizations including but not limited to Lutheran Immigration
21 and Refugee Services, Immigrant Law Center of MN, Advocates for Human Rights, ISIAH’s Sanctuary
22 Network, Legal Rights Center, Arrive Ministries, International Institute of Minnesota, and the Interfaith
23 Coalition on Migration; and
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25 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Saint Paul Area Synod recruit leaders from congregations across
26 the synod to join the leadership of the joint Minneapolis Area Synod and Saint Paul Area Synod
27 AMMPARO (Accompanying Migrant Minors with Protection, Advocacy, Representation and
28 Opportunities) Task Force, invite congregations to become AMMPARO Welcoming congregations, and
29 in coordination with Churchwide and the Joint synod AMMPARO Task Force, develop and provide
30 resources for congregations to discern the call to sanctuary, learn about sanctuary and immigration in the
31 US, and partner with local immigrant-led organizations in their community; and
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33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Saint Paul Area Synod Office of the Bishop advocate for
34 immigrants, refugees, and asylum seekers in the Minnesota State Legislature and county and municipal
35 governments within the Synod’s jurisdiction, consistent with the ELCA’s 2009 social policy resolution
36 “Towards Compassionate, Just and Wise Immigration Reform.” Such advocacy would assure that “the
37 stranger, the alien and the resident alien” in Minnesota, without regard to legal status, has full access to all
38 the public benefits enjoyed by the people of Minnesota. These include Driver’s Licenses, Child Care

¹ ELCA Social Message on Immigration (1998), page 7.

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.

39 Assistance, MinnesotaCare, Food and Cash Assistance programs, Minnesota Family Investment Program
40 Emergency Cash Assistance, Paid Family and Medical Leave, Earned Sick and Safe Time, and Housing
41 Support; and

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

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

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