**Resolution 2018-2: A Faithful Response to the Opioid Crisis**

WHEREAS, Maryland is among the top five states with the highest rates of opioid-related overdose deaths with nearly 29.7 deaths per 100,000 persons were related to opioids—including prescription opioids, heroin and fentanyl—compared to the national rate of 13.3 deaths per 100,000[[1]](#footnote-1); and

WHEREAS, Delaware has the 13th highest for opioid-related overdose deaths at a rate of 16.9 deaths per 100,000 persons—compared to the national rate of 13.3 deaths per 100,000[[2]](#footnote-2); and reported the second-highest percent increase (105%) in suspected opioid overdose emergency department visits from July 2016 to September 2017[[3]](#footnote-3), and

WHEREAS, there were more than 63,600 drug overdose deaths in the United States, a rate three times higher than that of 1999,[[4]](#footnote-4) with more than 130 Americans dying every day from opioid overdose, causing the Trump Administration to declare a public health emergency in October 2017;[[5]](#footnote-5) and

WHEREAS, the ELCA Social Statement on health, healing and health care from 2003, *Caring For Health: Our Shared Endeavor,* says “our calling to be faithful stewards of our own health and to fulfill our obligations for the health of others comes from the God who heals and redeems the whole creation;”[[6]](#footnote-6)

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Delaware-Maryland Synod calls upon our members to pray for those dealing with opioid and other substance abuse issues and their families; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Synod Council create an Opioid and Addiction Team that will provide faith-based, scientifically sound, education and resources to the congregations of this synod to include topics related to addiction prevention, active addiction and recovery support for opioid and other substance abuse addictions; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, designate October 14, 2018, as Opioid Crisis Sunday during National Substance Abuse Prevention Month with worship resources provided by the Opioid and Addiction Team for use by all synod congregations.

Submitted by:

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Reference & Counsel recommendation: Positive.

1. Maryland Opioid Summary. National Institute on Drug Abuse. <https://www.drugabuse.gov/drugs-abuse/opioids/opioid-summaries-by-state/maryland-opioid-summary> [↑](#footnote-ref-1)
2. Delaware Opioid Summary. National Institute on Drug Abuse <https://www.drugabuse.gov/drugs-abuse/opioids/opioid-summaries-by-state/delaware-opioid-summary> [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
3. Delaware ED Data Shows Significant Increase in Opioid Overdoses; DPH Announces Forum for First Responders and EDs to Address Overdose Management. March 7, 2018. <https://news.delaware.gov/2018/03/07/delaware-ed-data-shows-increase-opioid-overdoses/> [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
4. Drug Overdose Deaths in the United States, 1999-2016. National Center for Health Statistics. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/databriefs/db294.htm> [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
5. Trump Administration Declares Opioid Crisis a Public Health Emergency. NPR Morning Edition October 26th, 2017 <https://www.npr.org/2017/10/26/560083795/president-trump-may-declare-opioid-epidemic-national-emergency> [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
6. Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor. 2003 page 6. <http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/HealthSS.pdf?_ga=2.222456539.1363457913.1523628889-85226468.1442301838> [↑](#footnote-ref-6)