

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

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3 WHEREAS, Maryland is among the top five states with the highest rates of opioid-related  
4 overdose deaths with nearly 29.7 deaths per 100,000 persons were related to  
5 opioids—including prescription opioids, heroin and fentanyl—compared to the  
6 national rate of 13.3 deaths per 100,000<sup>1</sup>; and  
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8 WHEREAS, Delaware has the 13<sup>th</sup> highest for opioid-related overdose deaths at a rate of 16.9  
9 deaths per 100,000 persons—compared to the national rate of 13.3 deaths per  
10 100,000<sup>2</sup>; and reported the second-highest percent increase (105%) in suspected  
11 opioid overdose emergency department visits from July 2016 to September 2017<sup>3</sup>,  
12 and  
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14 WHEREAS, there were more than 63,600 drug overdose deaths in the United States, a rate  
15 three times higher than that of 1999,<sup>4</sup> with more than 130 Americans dying every  
16 day from opioid overdose, causing the Trump Administration to declare a public  
17 health emergency in October 2017;<sup>5</sup> and

18 WHEREAS, the ELCA Social Statement on health, healing and health care from 2003, *Caring*  
19 *For Health: Our Shared Endeavor*, says “our calling to be faithful stewards of our  
20 own health and to fulfill our obligations for the health of others comes from the  
21 God who heals and redeems the whole creation;”<sup>6</sup>

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

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

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

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<sup>1</sup> Maryland Opioid Summary. National Institute on Drug Abuse. <https://www.drugabuse.gov/drugs-abuse/opioids/opioid-summaries-by-state/maryland-opioid-summary>

<sup>2</sup> Delaware Opioid Summary. National Institute on Drug Abuse <https://www.drugabuse.gov/drugs-abuse/opioids/opioid-summaries-by-state/delaware-opioid-summary>

<sup>3</sup> 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/>

<sup>4</sup> Drug Overdose Deaths in the United States, 1999-2016. National Center for Health Statistics. <https://www.cdc.gov/nchs/products/databriefs/db294.htm>

<sup>5</sup> Trump Administration Declares Opioid Crisis a Public Health Emergency. NPR Morning Edition October 26<sup>th</sup>, 2017 <https://www.npr.org/2017/10/26/560083795/president-trump-may-declare-opioid-epidemic-national-emergency>

<sup>6</sup> 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](http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/HealthSS.pdf?_ga=2.222456539.1363457913.1523628889-85226468.1442301838)

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43 Reference & Counsel recommendation: Positive.