**Resolution 2019-1: Becoming a Reconciling in Christ Synod**

WHEREAS, the *Constitution, Bylaws, and Continuing Resolutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America* clearly proclaim that “this church, in faithfulness to the Gospel, is committed to be an inclusive church in the midst of division in society," and that "the congregations, synods, and churchwide units of this church shall seek to exhibit the inclusive unity that is God’s will for the Church” (5.01b); and

WHEREAS, empowered by the Holy Spirit, and in the name of Jesus, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (“the ELCA”) and the Delaware-Maryland Synod (“the synod”) share an ongoing commitment to justice work in the world and communities in which we live; and that ongoing commitment to justice work necessarily includes justice and advocacy work alongside people from historically marginalized communities; and

WHEREAS, in baptism without stipulations or conditions we have been made new; and through communion, the very sacraments that proclaim that same unconditional grace to the world, we find ourselves united as many different members of the one body of Christ; and

WHEREAS, the communities of the synod have experienced the magnificent and outrageous welcome of God and have tasted the free gifts of God's unconditional grace; and God’s outrageous and unconditional welcome has transformed us;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED, that the synod shall, in faithfulness to the continued and pressing need for the church, in all of its varied and faithful expressions, to extend a specific welcome to historically marginalized people and communities, adopt the following as their official statement of welcome as a Reconciled in Christ synod:

*“The Delaware-Maryland Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America welcomes all into the fullness of God’s love. This welcome is inclusive of people of every race, national origin, immigration status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, age, physical or mental ability, sex, political perspective or socio-economic status. Rather than using our differences to divide us, we pledge to use our differences as gifts for our work together;”* and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the synod candidacy committee provide seminarians and those going through the candidacy process with accompaniment resources, including referral to Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries’ *The Mysteries of the Ages: a handy guide for LGBTQIA+ people exploring or preparing for rostered ministry in the ELCA,* and that the synod provide workshop-style inclusivity training for synod staff, candidacy committee members, Synod Council members, conference deans, and other rostered and non-rostered leaders who desire to participate in such training. Newly hired and/or newly called synod staff persons would be expected to participate in such training events when they are next offered. Such trainings should be similar to (but would not be limited to) the *Building an Inclusive Church* training as offered by ReconcilingWorks: Lutherans for Full Participation. Such trainings shall occur at least every four years, or upon the election of a new bishop; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the congregations and other ministry sites of this synod shall be encouraged to become Reconciling in Christ, making use of such appropriate materials for their study and deliberation as are available from ReconcilingWorks: Lutherans for Full Participation. Likewise, a copy of this resolution shall be forwarded by the Office of the Bishop to ReconcilingWorks: Lutherans for Full Participation*.*

Submitted by:

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Recommendation from Reference & Counsel: Positive