

2022 Grand Canyon Synod Assembly
“Stirred Up in the Spirit”
June 10-11, 2022
Love of Christ Lutheran Church in Mesa, Arizona

REPORT OF THE REFERENCE AND COUNSEL COMMITTEE

Dear friends in Christ,

The assembly received one resolution before our deadline on April 22, 2022.

In the opinion of the Reference and Counsel Committee, the resolution as submitted is “in order,” as it does not contradict the constitution, bylaws, continuing resolutions, or assembly rules of the Grand Canyon Synod.

The resolution was edited for clarity, as authorized in the assembly rules.

The resolution (S22.02) is attached, and at the designated time will be presented to the assembly without recommendation.

Para servirle,

Rev. Stephen A. Springer
Dove of Peace Lutheran Church (Tucson, Arizona)
Chair

Resolution S22.02 – A Call to Honor Diversity in Every Congregation

Grand Canyon Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Synod Assembly June 10-11, 2022

Co-Sponsors (Simon’s Project Working Group):

Ken Larson, Community, Las Vegas NV
Taylor Welch, Living Hope, Las Vegas NV
Rev. Rebecca Boardman, Lutheran Campus Ministry at University of Arizona
Rev. Pam Reynolds, Lord of Life, Sun City West AZ
Rev. Lourdes Olson, New Song, Henderson, NV
Rev. Jason Adams, Living Hope, Las Vegas, NV
Arsenia Walker, Living Hope, Las Vegas, NV
Gene Fougner, Emmanuel, Prescott, AZ
Rebekah Johnson, Living Hope, Las Vegas, NV
Rev. Ron Rude, retired, Our Saviour’s, Tucson, AZ
Michael Schulter, Christ, Las Vegas, NV
Becky Havlich, Our Saviour’s, Phoenix AZ

WHEREAS:

- Our Grand Canyon Synod (GCS) Strategic Plan declares “We seek and create new ways to connect and grow our rich diversity through multicultural ministries” and the Synod’s Mission Statement includes “Connect Diverse People;” AND
- In the summer of 2020, members of the GCS were invited by synod staff to take part in the “Open Conversations About Race” series; AND
- Those conversations led to the formation of a working group that continued to meet for deeper discussion and reflection; AND
- That group adopted the name “Simon’s Project” after Simon of Cyrene, who carried the cross of Jesus for a time (Luke 23:26); AND
- The 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly adopted a resolution designating June 17 as a Commemoration of the martyrdom of the Emanuel Nine—the nine people killed on June 17, 2015 during a Bible study at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal Church in Charleston, S.C.; AND
- After a year of discernment, we of the ‘Simon’s Project’ believe we must raise awareness that the Church has not fully embodied the 1993 ELCA social statement—“Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture”; THEREFORE

BE IT RESOLVED:

- The Grand Canyon Synod, meeting in assembly, (re)commits to the following actions and practices, acknowledging that they are a starting point for life-long conversion, not merely a checklist of remedies:
 - We support the work of the GCS Simon's Project working group, as it launches a second cohort committed to cultural diversity awareness and advocacy.
 - We proactively work to dismantle injustice by listening to voices, experiences and the expertise of people at the margins. We strongly encourage congregations to invite multi-skin toned, multi-abled, and multi-aged people into every layer of participation and leadership.
 - We strongly encourage congregations to regularly participate in multi-cultural, multi-ethnic, and multi-religious activities in their community to demonstrate Christ's call to learn from and love the neighbor.
 - We strongly encourage congregations to honor June 17 as a commemoration day of penitence with study and prayer to honor the Emanuel Nine.
 - We strongly encourage congregations to name the sin of prejudice in corporate Confession (racism, sexism, ableism, ageism, homophobia, classism, etc.) as a regular part of worship.
 - We strongly encourage individuals to sign the ELCA Racial Justice pledge, "I commit to study, prayer and action to become an anti-racist individual in an anti-racist church,"
<https://www.elca.org/racialjusticepledge>.