

FAITHFUL JOURNEY—DEEPENING THE WELCOME

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- WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Chicago Synod Assembly in 1988 encouraged congregations and their members to be diligent in prayer and study and open to a deeper sensitivity and compassion among those who differ, and further recommended that each congregation review "A Study of Issues Concerning Homosexuality" prepared by the Advisory Committee on Issues Relating to Homosexuality of the [former] Lutheran Church in America (Synod Assembly Resolution 16-88); and
- WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Chicago Synod Assembly in 1993 affirmed "that gay and lesbian people share with all others the worth that comes from being loved and forgiven children of God; that gay and lesbian people are welcome within the life and ministry of this synod upon making the same affirmation of faith that all other people make; and that gay and lesbian people are expected and encouraged to share in all aspects of this synod's ministry as defined within the current practices and procedures of the ELCA" (Synod Assembly Resolution 14-93); and
- WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Chicago Synod Assembly in 1995 encouraged "every congregation in this synod to consider adopting a similar affirmation of welcome to gay and lesbian Christians" and called for the bishop to designate a group to "work in consultation with the Bishop and with Lutherans Concerned/Chicago to develop a plan, process, timeline and budget to implement this resolution" (Synod Assembly Resolution 2-95); and
- WHEREAS, a March 1996 "open letter" from the ELCA Conference of Bishops urged the ELCA and its members to be open and affirming of gay and lesbian people and asked gay and lesbian people "to join with other members of the church in mutual prayer and study of issues that still divide us. So that we may seek the truth together"; and
- WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Chicago Synod Assembly in 1999 called for the development of study materials by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America [on issues relating to homosexuality] (Synod Assembly Resolution 07-99); and
- WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Chicago Synod Assembly in 2001 called for workshops on *Homosexuality and the Lutheran Church* to be organized and presented in each of the eight conferences by Synod Assembly 2002, in which workshops the psychological, theological, and biblical aspects of homosexuality were presented by professionals and then discussed in small groups; (Synod Assembly Resolution 05-01); and
- WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Chicago Synod Assembly in 2002 called once again for workshops on psychological, theological, and biblical aspects of Homosexuality and the Lutheran

41 Church to be organized and presented in each of the eight conferences by Synod
42 Assembly 2002 (Synod Assembly Resolution 02-01); and

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44 WHEREAS, the Metropolitan Chicago Synod and its congregations continued to take active roles in
45 this church's Journey Together Faithfully between 2002 and 2009, also continuing to
46 memorialize the ELCA toward greater inclusivity for our LGBTQ members; and

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48 WHEREAS, the Churchwide Assembly 2009 adopted four resolutions that commit the ELCA to (1)
49 bear one another's burdens and respect bound consciences in these matters; (2) allow
50 congregations that choose to do so to find ways to recognize and support lifelong,
51 monogamous, same-gender relationships and hold them publicly accountable; (3) find a
52 way for people in such relationships to serve as rostered leaders in the ELCA; and,
53 further, (4) suggests a specific way to allow rostering while respecting bound
54 consciences; therefore be it

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56 RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Chicago Synod and Lutherans Concerned/Chicago conduct a one-
57 day synod-wide workshop entitled "Deepening the Welcome: After Churchwide 2009" to
58 be scheduled to take place before the next synod assembly in June 2011.

59 The workshop opportunities will focus on how congregations can gain understanding
60 of the decisions, explore this new landscape as a missional church, continue dialogue
61 with those who disagree, and intentionally choose to become more welcoming to all
62 people, including lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) neighbors/people and
63 rostered leaders. Participants will discuss ways to create a more welcoming atmosphere
64 within their own congregations and strategize actions that illustrate that welcome.

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66 Submitted by:

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