

## HOW TO WRITE A RESOLUTION OR A MEMORIAL

**WHO** can submit a Resolution or a Memorial to the Synod Assembly?

Resolutions may be submitted by: the four synod officers, the Synod Council as a whole, synod conferences, synod congregations, synod boards and committees and Synod Assembly Voting Members.

**WHEN** to submit?

*Resolutions or memorials must be submitted to the bishop's office ninety (90) days prior to the opening of the assembly - by February 14, 2009.\** for consideration by the assembly. No resolution received after that date shall be accepted for assembly consideration unless the Resolutions Committee adjudges it to be of overriding importance and urgency which is not adequately covered by documents already before the assembly, except that resolutions germane to matters under consideration by the assembly may be accepted at the time the matter is being considered. (S7.15.03).

*\*Resolutions specifically referring to the ELCA Social Statement on Human Sexuality will be accepted by the committee until March 25th.* E-mail completed resolutions and memorials to the synod office at: [swwsynod@plu.edu](mailto:swwsynod@plu.edu) or mail to SW WA Synod: 420-121<sup>st</sup> St S, Tacoma, WA 98444

**HOW** are resolutions or memorials to be written?

**A Resolution** is requesting action from the synod congregations, members, a particular Churchwide unit, Synod Board or to a specific concern.

**A Memorial** is a proposal appealing for action from the Synod Assembly to the Churchwide Assembly only. A memorial should be reserved for broad policy issues that belong in the Churchwide Assembly.

**A resolution and memorial may NOT be combined in one action.**

That is, the Church Council and the Churchwide Assembly may not be addressed in the same resolution. Neither should a synod address both the Church Council and the Churchwide Assembly on the same subject.

In the final "resolved" of such an assembly action for Churchwide should be this provision:

A. FOR REFERRAL TO A CHURCHWIDE PROGRAM OR SERVICE UNIT:

RESOLVED that the Southwestern Washington Synod Assembly direct the Southwestern Washington Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council's Executive Committee for proper referral and disposition under the bylaws and continuing resolutions of this church.

B. FOR FORWARDING TO THE CHURCH COUNCIL:

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Washington Synod Assembly direct the Southwestern Washington Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action.

C. A MEMORIAL ADOPTED BY SYNOD ASSEMBLY is submitted to the Churchwide Assembly with a recommendation for action from the Churchwide Assembly Memorials Committee.

1. Synod Assemblies address the Churchwide Assembly, congregations, members, Synod Council and Synod Boards;

2. Synod Councils address the ELCA Church Council; and

3. Synod Councils address churchwide units through the ELCA Church Council's Executive Committee, including forwarding actions of the Synod Assembly.

For the text of resolutions you may find some basic information on the proper language of resolutions and memorials in Robert's Rules of Order.

**"WHEREAS" clauses:** describe the issue, concern, problem, and basis for or need of the resolution. They state the case, but technically are not part of the resolution. They should be accurate and factual, and should not misrepresent the issue being addressed or offer a false foundation for the proposed action.

**"RESOLVED" clauses:** point to proposed solutions and define requested action.

**"Resolved" clauses** should clearly define: To whom is the request for action addressed? Who will implement the action? What should be done? Does this pertain to the life and ministry of the synod or ELCA Churchwide? Is the action requested one that the synod or ELCA can appropriately and effectively implement? What may the action cost and how is it to be funded?

When should the action be done? To whom should the results be reported?

Obviously, a resolution of a Synod Council **cannot** direct the Church Council to take a specific action. Likewise, a memorial from a Synod Assembly **cannot** order that the Churchwide Assembly vote in a particular way.

Clarity in the text of any resolution or memorial is important. A good test is, "Does this statement in the resolution make any sense? Will the resolution be understandable apart from its discussion in the Synod Assembly?"

A Sample Resolution and Memorial are on the next page.

## RESOLUTION AND MEMORIAL FORMAT:

**WHEREAS**, \_\_\_\_\_; and

**WHEREAS**, \_\_\_\_\_; and

**WHEREAS**, \_\_\_\_\_; therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, that \_\_\_\_\_.

If the resolution needs more than one action, include:

**RESOLVED** that \_\_\_\_\_; and  
be it further

**RESOLVED** that \_\_\_\_\_.

Signature \_\_\_\_\_  
Representing \_\_\_\_\_  
Address \_\_\_\_\_  
City, State, Zip \_\_\_\_\_  
Phone \_\_\_\_\_ Fax \_\_\_\_\_  
Email of contact person \_\_\_\_\_

## EXAMPLE # 1

### IN SUPPORT OF AUGSBURG FORTRESS

**WHEREAS**, Augsburg Fortress is the publishing ministry of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;

**WHEREAS**, Augsburg Fortress is funded solely through sales revenue;

**WHEREAS**, Augsburg Fortress is called to provide products and services that communicate the gospel, enhance faith and enrich the life of the Christian community from a Lutheran perspective;

**WHEREAS**, any revenue in excess of expenses is reinvested back into the development and delivery of ministry resources for the ELCA and other Christian communities; therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, that ELCA members, congregations, and related institutions of the Southwestern Washington Synod carefully consider the stewardship aspects of their purchases of faith formation, worship, and church supply resources; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the members, congregations, and related institutions of the Southwestern Washington Synod examine Augsburg Fortress resources for quality, price, and level of service whenever purchasing decisions are made and they will purchase resources from Augsburg Fortress in support of this ministry of this church when such resources are equal in quality, price, and level of customer service.

*(To Whom: members, congregations, related institutions of the SW WA Synod  
What: examine Augsburg Fortress resources etc.)*

## EXAMPLE # 2

### ENDING HUNGER AS A CORE CONVICTION

**WHEREAS**, 800 million people worldwide are chronically undernourished and 1.2 billion people live on less than \$1 per day; and

**WHEREAS**, 30 million people in the United States, including 13 million children, cannot afford an adequate and balanced diet; and

**WHEREAS**, 189 countries, including the United States, have committed to cutting in half extreme hunger by the year 2015 by establishing the Millennium Development Goals; and

**WHEREAS**, advocacy organizations, like Bread for the World and the Institute for Food and Development Policy (FoodFirst), have established that there is a sufficient food supply to feed the earth's population; and

**WHEREAS**, leading economists now argue that ending chronic hunger is an attainable goal for the first time in human history; and

**WHEREAS**, the Holy Scriptures are very clear in numerous passages that God has compassion on the poor (for example, Jeremiah 22:15-16 and Luke 6:20-21) and that it is God's will that the hungry be fed (for example, Psalm 146:5-7 and Matthew 25:34-35); and therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, that the Southwestern Washington Synod Assembly memorialize the 2005 Churchwide Assembly - Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to make ending hunger a core conviction for this church.

*(To Whom: Churchwide Assembly  
What: to make ending hunger a core conviction for this church)*