

At the May 2015 Synod Assembly a resolution was passed asking that we as a Synod express our solidarity with our sisters and brothers in Christ around the world who are experiencing persecution for professing the Faith. At its December meeting the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod Council adopted the following statement:

**The Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America stands in solidarity with the Christians and people of more than 60 nations that are suffering persecution for openly acknowledging and practicing their Christian faith.**

**The Christian Church is under attack and has been described by Mgr Bashar Matti Warda, Archbishop of Erbil in Iraq, as dissolving in front of the eyes of its own people. Christians in Iraq, Egypt, Syria, Pakistan, Nigeria and Korea are suffering various forms of persecution.**

**The attack on Christians is worldwide and extends beyond Iraq and the beheading of Egyptian Christians and American citizens by ISIS. It has taken the form of rape, enslaving and kidnapping of Christians in sub-Saharan Africa, Nigeria and Sudan. Christians in India live in fear, while North Korea continues to imprison large numbers of Christians in labor camps. The Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod agrees with and supports those who describe this problem as being major and serious but not unsolvable. The congregations and people of the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod are encouraged to join with those crying out from the Christian community by calling for action from our governmental leaders, by becoming educated and informed, and through prayer. Demonstrating our belief in the power of prayer,**

*Good and gracious God, we pray for our brothers and sisters who suffer at the hands of their persecutors for demonstrating their love and belief in you. We pray that you give them strength and courage and that you make your presence felt despite their suffering. We pray for their captors and persecutors as you have taught us to pray for those who would do us harm. We ask you to guide our leaders to work to end the persecution of people of faith throughout the world. We ask for your divine intervention as we acknowledge that in you all things are possible. Into your hands we commend all for whom we pray. Amen.*