

## **Resolution #1**

### **Support of Welcoming Immigrants and Refugees**

Whereas the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) Social Statement “For Peace in God’s World” states that “through the cross of Christ, God calls us to serve the needs of our neighbor, especially of those groups and individuals who suffer and are vulnerable” (pg. 6) and that, on the basis of our faith, “we pledge to continue our church’s historic leadership in caring for refugees and immigrants” (pg. 21).;

Whereas the ELCA Social Message on Immigration states that even though we “recognize the obstacles and difficulties our church and society face in welcoming newcomers” (pg. 1), those difficulties only “deepens our belief that ‘all people are God’s creatures, sinners for whom Christ died’ and our responsibility to respect the human dignity of all” (pg. 1);

Whereas the ELCA Social Message on Immigration continues by stating that “immigration, refugee, and asylum policies express who we are as a nation, influence the nation’s future character, and affect the lives of millions of people. We encourage our members, in light of our history and our ministry with newcomers, to join with other citizens in our democratic society to support just laws that serve the common good” (pg. 6);

Whereas Lutheran Children and Family Services, Pennsylvania’s largest refugee resettlement program, had to shut down in 2016 due to “unpredictable state and local funding, coupled with reimbursement that didn’t cover the true cost of service contributed to mounting deficit,” as stated on Lutheran Children and Family Services’ website;

Whereas Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Services (LIRS) has issued statements strongly opposing the Trump Administration’s actions regarding refugees and migrants, stating that these actions “prevent us from undertaking life-saving work during the most critical time for refugees and displaced persons in human history.”

Whereas ELCA Presiding Bishop, the Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, issued a pastoral message in response to “President Trump’s refugee executive order” urging “ELCA congregations into learning, prayer and action on behalf of those who seek refuge on our shores”; and

Whereas the Southeastern Pennsylvania (SEPA) Synod is a leader in the ELCA in working on behalf of our neighbors in need; now, therefore, be it

*Resolved*, that SEPA Synod:

1. reaffirm the ELCA Social Message on Immigration;
2. follow the guidance of ELCA Presiding Bishop Eaton by recommending resources for learning and faithful guidance about immigration and refugee services to ministers and congregations;
3. urge ministers, congregations, and members to use their Christian freedom to act on behalf of neighbors, including immigrants and refugees; and
4. urge ministers, congregations, and members to contact elected officials concerning their beliefs related to immigration and refugee policies.

Mover: The Rev. Tyler Rasmussen, Trinity Lutheran Church in Pleasant Valley, 610.346.7282

Second: The Rev. Lynette Chapman, Trinity Lutheran Church in Quakertown, 215.536.4345

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