

Resolution on Welcome and Inclusion

WHEREAS, we are encouraged by the prophecy of Micah to “Do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God” (Micah 6:8);

And WHEREAS, we are taught in Paul’s letter to the Galatians that “There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female, for all of you are one in Christ Jesus” (Galatians 3:28);

And WHEREAS, the ministry of Jesus and his disciples is to center the marginalized, welcome the outcast, and love all people;

And WHEREAS, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod is committed to living into our discipleship by providing a welcome rooted in God’s welcome to all people and by advocating for the vulnerable;

And WHEREAS, one way that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod has sought to offer this welcome has been through our designation as a Reconciling in Christ (RiC) Synod which was achieved by the Synod met in Assembly in 1995;

And WHEREAS, as of 2020, ReconcilingWorks has requested additional commitments to retain RIC status - including the creation of a formal welcome statement, commitment to racial equity, and financial support of their work in the church;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED THAT the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod adopt the following welcome statement:

We, the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the ELCA, rooted in Jesus' gospel of liberation, unconditional love, and hospitality, welcome all into fellowship and community. This welcome includes those who have traditionally been marginalized in society inclusive of all sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, racial and ethnic backgrounds, physical and mental abilities, and stations in life. As God's beloved, we are guided by the Holy Spirit, committed to the work of racial equity, and called to the pursuit of justice throughout our communities. We encourage all of our congregations to engage in this work of the gospel, creating safe spaces for all people to bravely be their full selves. We celebrate and affirm all of God's children just as they are with all of their differences and gifts.

Be it further RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod provide annual financial support to ReconcilingWorks, as required by ReconcilingWorks' guidelines;

Be it further RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod commit to providing resources and equipping programs for congregations and leaders

throughout the synod, to financially support these initiatives, and to regularly evaluate the inclusivity of the ministries of the synod;

And be it further RESOLVED that the above resourcing, equipping, and evaluating be done through the creation of an Inclusive Communities Committee at the synodical level.