

## Support of "Sal Y Luz" – Peace Sanctuary Churches in Colombia

1 **WHEREAS**, the Minneapolis Area Synod has encouraged learning about and solidarity with the  
2 suffering churches and people of Colombia; and  
3

4 **WHEREAS**, Colombia's Peace Sanctuary Churches are pursuing peace by feeding the hungry, sheltering  
5 the displaced, building new economies, and opening dialogue to reconcile relationships, and  
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7 **WHEREAS**, Lutheran World Relief's "Sal y Luz" Project is partnering communities of faith in Iowa,  
8 South Dakota, and Minnesota (Holy Trinity Lutheran Church and the Community of St. Martin in  
9 Minneapolis, Luther Seminary's INVITE group in St. Paul) with Colombian Peace Sanctuary Churches;  
10 therefore be it  
11

12 **RESOLVED**, that the Minneapolis Area Synod (MAS) through the Partnership Table and the  
13 Joint Peace with Justice Committee encourage its congregations to work for peace and  
14 strengthen solidarity with Colombian churches by action:  
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- 16 1. Through the Joint Peace with Justice Committee, continue to learn and communicate the  
17 work of the Peace Sanctuary Churches, with the help of the Lutheran World Relief  
18 ([www.lwr.org](http://www.lwr.org)) and the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs ([www.loga.org](http://www.loga.org)).  
19
- 20 2. Through the Partnership Table, to invite representatives from the Peace Sanctuary  
21 Churches to visit our communities, sharing what they have learned in peace-building and  
22 creating relationships with our congregations.  
23
- 24 3. Through the Partnership Table, encouraging the sending of a delegation from Upper  
25 Midwest partner churches to gain first-hand experience of the Peace Sanctuary  
26 movement.  
27
- 28 4. Through the Joint Peace with Justice Committee and MAS Communication Director,  
29 share our experience with the larger community, public media, and U.S. officials, thus  
30 urging our government to envision a new political stance toward Colombia based on  
31 peace-building priorities.  
32
- 33 5. Through prayer specifics provided by the Joint Peace with Justice Committee, continue in  
34 prayer during corporate worship, MAS Assembly worship, and other occasions for our  
35 suffering Colombian brothers and sisters in Christ.

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Adopted by: Minneapolis Area Synod Partnership Table, December 2, 2004

*The Reference and Counsel Committee recommends adoption of this resolution.*

► **SA04.16.05.0** Voted to adopt Resolution RC2005-13. Adopted by voice vote.

## BACKGROUND INFORMATION

### "Sal Y Luz" – Peace Sanctuary Churches in Colombia

The Lutheran World Relief *Sal y Luz* project will partner communities of faith in Iowa, Minnesota, and South Dakota with Colombia's courageous Peace Sanctuary Churches.

"*Sal y Luz*" means "salt and light." This is what the Peace Sanctuary Churches aspire to be: places of refuge and hope in a country ravaged by five decades of violence. Thousands of individuals have been killed and millions have been displaced from their homes in Colombia's civil war. More than 40 Protestant pastors were murdered last year alone. In the midst of this violence, many congregations have declared themselves Peace Sanctuary Churches. These congregations boldly pursue peace, feed the hungry, shelter the displaced, establish new economies, and open dialogues to reconcile relationships.

While these Peace Sanctuary Churches have achieved astonishing successes in building peace, little is known about their experiences outside of the local areas where they take place. Through this new partnership with communities of faith in the Upper Midwest, the Peace Sanctuary Churches seek to document the lessons learned over their years of peace building experience. Three Churches in Colombia's Atlantic Coast region are now beginning an intensive documentation process, to share the good news that *peace is truly possible in Colombia*.