

2010 Guidelines for Resolutions and Memorials

Minneapolis Area Synod-Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Deadline for resolutions is 1:00 PM Monday, February 22, 2010

You've got an action plan or a policy recommendation? Great!

A RESOLUTION can help get it done IF you know:

* WHAT exactly you want done

*HOW to get it done

*WHO can best get it done

ON THE OTHER HAND, if you want to INFORM or ENCOURAGE a resolution **will not** be the most effective route for you to go. Nor is there need for a group to get the Assembly's permission to do what they are *already* called and empowered to do on behalf of synod congregations.

STEP ONE: Consider if the Synod Assembly is the best group to act on your proposal, or will another group be a more direct route to your desired action. Other groups include:

- a. a Task Force, Table, or Committee: *e.g. Mission Table, Hunger Task Force, Candidacy Committee, or other similar synod-wide group*
- b. the Synod Council
- c. the Synod Staff
- d. the Executive Committee of the Synod Council

Resolutions and memorials lead to concrete *action*. Use other means for conveying encouragement, exhortation, or appreciation. A *resolution* calls for an action—often a policy decision-- that is concrete, specific, and within the power of the Assembly to implement in the Minneapolis Area Synod. A *memorial* is a request for churchwide action involving the entire Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) made by this Synod's Assembly, and directed to the ELCA Churchwide Assembly meeting in August 2011. A memorial to the Churchwide Assembly must come from a Synod's Assembly. Like a resolution, a memorial is brought to the Synod Assembly through a congregational meeting or a conference assembly, but it is sent on to churchwide only by action of the Synod Assembly.

Always direct your recommendation to the body or unit that can most appropriately take the action you are requesting. If that is the Synod Assembly, continue with STEP TWO.

STEP TWO: Write the resolution or memorial so it can be easily read and understood. An effective resolution presents its business clearly and concisely. Use the format outlined below. Refer to the helps in the attached Appendix.

a. Title

State simply what the resolution is about, *e.g. "Salary Guidelines for Lay Workers" or "Creating a Tuition Support Fund for Seminarians"*.

b. Whereas

State the reason(s) for the resolution simply and directly.

Each separate reason must have a separate *Whereas* section.

The final *whereas* ends with the words, *therefore be it* (no period)

49 **c. Resolved that**
50 State the precise action(s) desired. *By whom? When? How? Where will the money come*
51 *from?* Each separate action requires a separate *Resolved* paragraph. Additional paragraphs
52 are introduced with the words, *and be it further* (no period) before beginning the next
53 *Resolved* paragraph.
54

55 **d. Author:**
56 Name the individual(s) with primary responsibility for the form and content of the
57 resolution or memorial. *The author(s)* is the person(s) the Reference and Counsel
58 Committee contacts about any editorial changes. For that reason, committees, conferences,
59 and congregations may not be listed as authors. Be sure to include the author(s) phone
60 number(s) and, if possible, an email address.
61

62 **e. Adopted by:**
63 State the final body that has voted to adopt the resolution or memorial and the date of the
64 action. This will always be one (or more) of the groups listed in STEP THREE, e.g. *The*
65 *Council of St. John's Lutheran Church* or *The Crosstown Conference*.
66

67 **f. Contact person:**
68 Provide the name and telephone number(s) of the person willing to speak to the resolution
69 or memorial if assembly voting members have questions before or during the Assembly.
70 The contact person may also be the author(s).
71

72 **STEP THREE:** Test your idea with other people by asking one or more groups to adopt it. All resolutions
73 considered by the Minneapolis Area Synod meeting in Assembly must be adopted by at least one of the
74 following bodies:
75

- 76 a. a Congregation, by means of a constitutionally called Congregational Meeting
- 77 b. a Conference, in a Conference Assembly
- 78 c. a Synod Table (Mission, Partnership, Global Mission, or Leadership)
- 79 d. the Minneapolis Area Synod Council
- 80 e. any Voting Member who has gathered the signatures of at least 25 others who have been
81 selected by their own congregations as Voting Members of the 2010 Synod Assembly.
82

83 A resolution adopted by any of the above bodies becomes the property of that body and cannot be
84 substantively changed without further action by that body.
85

86 **STEP FOUR:** Submit the resolution or memorial for review by the Reference and Counsel Committee on
87 or before the submission deadline. This committee is appointed by the Synod Council, and acts according
88 to written Policies and Procedures reviewed by the Synod Council.
89

90 **a. How to submit a resolution/memorial:** Resolutions will be received at the Minneapolis Area
91 Synod office, 122 West Franklin Ave, Suite 600, Minneapolis, MN 55404. Resolutions may be
92 submitted in person, by mail, by fax, or as an email. Email submissions are preferred.
93 Send email to: d.wickner@mpls-synod.org.
94

95 **b. Deadline for submission of resolutions/memorials:** All resolutions and memorials must be received
96 in the Synod office by **1:00 PM on Monday, February 22, 2010**.
97

98 **c. Resolutions/memorials submitted after the deadline:** Resolutions received after the deadline will
99 not be considered unless two-thirds of the members of the Reference and Counsel Committee
100 determines that the resolution: 1) is of immediate, urgent, and overriding importance related to an
101 issue that could not have been anticipated prior to the resolutions deadline; or 2) addresses a
102 previously accepted resolution.
103

104 **d. Resolutions/memorials intended for churchwide (ELCA) consideration:** When there is a Division of
105 the House (individual votes tallied by counters) the number of Voting Members on each side of the
106 issue will be sent to the Office of the Secretary of the ELCA, in addition to whether a resolution
107 passes or fails. This will allow all votes to be heard, and give churchwide a more accurate
108 representation of the Assembly's views. **NB: The ELCA will not meet again in Churchwide Assembly**
109 **until August 2011. No action will be taken on memorials submitted to churchwide until August 2011.**
110

111 **STEP FIVE:** You're done! The Reference and Counsel Committee now goes to work, reviewing each
112 resolution to determine whether it meets the criteria set forth in the Appendix, and working with the
113 author(s) to put it in its strongest, clearest form.
114

115 **a. Changes to the resolution or memorial:** In consultation with the author(s) it may be edited for
116 form or clarity, or be combined with another, substantively identical, resolution from another
117 body. A resolution may not be substantively changed without action by the original adopting
118 body. If the Reference and Counsel Committee has done due diligence to contact an author(s)
119 regarding editorial changes and there has been no response after one week, the Reference and
120 Counsel Committee may, at its option, decide not to refer the resolution to the Assembly.
121

122 **b. Resolution/memorial summaries:** The Reference and Counsel Committee will provide a one
123 paragraph summary (about 150 words) of each resolution or memorial brought to the Assembly.
124 This paragraph will summarize the action being sought, not advocate a course of action.
125

126 **STEP SIX:** Resolutions and memorials accepted by the Reference and Counsel Committee will be referred
127 to the Assembly for consideration during plenary session.
128

129 **a. Resolutions not addressed by the Assembly:** Any resolution referred to the Assembly through
130 the Reference and Counsel Committee that is not taken up by the Assembly prior to the Closing
131 of the Assembly is automatically referred to the Synod Council for consideration.
132

133 **b. Status of resolutions:** The Reference and Counsel Committee will report on the status of the
134 previous Assembly's adopted resolutions, based on information provided to the Reference and
135 Counsel Committee by the Bishop, synod staff, and Executive Committee.
136
137
138
139
140
141
142
143
144
145
146

147 These Guidelines were presented to the Synod Council September 17, 2009 for use in preparing resolutions for action by the
148 2010 Minneapolis Area Synod Assembly on April 24, 2010.

149
150
151
152
153
154
155
156
157
158
159
160
161
162
163
164
165
166
167
168
169
170
171
172
173
174
175
176
177
178
179
180
181
182
183
184
185
186
187
188
189
190
191
192
193
194
195
196
197

APPENDIX

A. Criteria for resolutions and memorials

In order for any resolution or memorial to be brought before the Assembly it must meet the following criteria:

1. Action on the resolution or memorial is necessary to and consistent with the mission and business of the Minneapolis Area Synod. Resolutions that simply bring matters of concern to the Assembly's attention, or encourage persons to care or get involved rather than seeking a specific action, will be referred by the Reference and Counsel Committee to the appropriate Minneapolis Area Synod body rather than being sent on to the Assembly for action.

Before referring to another body a member of the Reference and Counsel Committee will have discussion with the author(s). A Reference and Counsel Committee decision to refer is reached by a majority vote of the committee members. A resolution may be referred to another Minneapolis Area Synod body if the Reference and Counsel Committee determines that body is better suited than the Assembly for consideration and action upon the issue.

Any Reference and Counsel Committee decision to refer a resolution may be reversed by a two-thirds vote of the Synod Assembly initiated by a motion from a Voting Member on the floor of the Assembly.

2. The action sought by the resolution or memorial is consistent with the Minneapolis Area Synod Constitution, Bylaws, and other governing documents. For example:

i. (S10.04) All resolutions requiring expenditure of funds will contain an estimate of fiscal impact. Any proposal to appropriate funds, whether by amendment to the budget or otherwise, which is presented to a meeting of the Synod Assembly without the approval of the Synod Council shall require a two-thirds vote for adoption.

ii. (S18.21) All resolutions calling for the adoption or amendment of the Bylaws shall require a two-thirds majority vote by the Synod Assembly for adoption.

iii. (S18.13) The Constitution may be amended by a two-thirds vote of the Synod Assembly after having been presented in writing at the previous regular meeting of the Synod Assembly over the signatures of at least 25 members and approved by a two-thirds vote of such regular Synod Assembly meeting.

3. All resolutions and memorials brought to the Assembly will be clear, succinct, and consistent with the author(s) intended purpose in order that they may be clearly understood by the Voting Members, and so receive a fair hearing before the Assembly. For this purpose a member of the Reference and Counsel Committee may contact the author(s) in order to assist the author(s) in editing for clarity or gather additional information.

4. All statements contained within any resolution or memorial must be accurate, respectful and necessary to an understanding of the resolution.

198
199
200
201
202
203
204
205
206
207
208
209
210
211
212
213
214
215
216
217
218
219
220
221
222
223
224
225
226
227
228
229
230
231
232
233
234
235

B. Additional tips for authors

- 1) **Length** A resolution or memorial may be no more than one page, one side. Normally an author(s) uses an 11 or 12 pt type face.
- 2) **Spacing** The text is single spaced, with a full space between sections.
- 3) **Background Information** (this is optional, but encouraged): If the author(s) or adopting body (e.g. Conference) believes it would aid the Reference and Counsel Committee or the Assembly, a one page statement pertaining to the history or context of an issue may be attached to the resolution or memorial. The Reference and Counsel Committee will use its discretion in determining whether the Background Information will be printed and distributed to the voting members of the Assembly.
- 4) **Each resolution uses the same style or format.** Resolutions not using the following style will be returned to the author(s) for completion. Refer to the attached Sample Resolution for an example.

Whereas, ..., and			
Whereas, ..., and			
Whereas, ...therefore be it			
Resolved, that..., and be it further			
Resolved that...			
Author: _____			
First Name	Last Name	Congregation	telephone/e-mail
Adopted by: _____			
Congregation, conference assembly, synod table or accompanying signature page			date adopted
Contact person: _____			
First Name	Last Name	Congregation	telephone/e-mail

N.B. Be sure to update each resolution with **CORRECT AND CURRENT** “adopted by” information before forwarding to the Committee of Reference and Counsel at the Synod office.