



**35<sup>th</sup> Annual Synod Assembly**  
**Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, ELCA**  
**June 10-11, 2022**

**Resolution Submittal Form**

Please use this form to submit resolutions to be considered by the 2022 Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod Assembly. **The Committee of Reference and Counsel will review resolutions submitted to it before the assembly and requests that resolutions be submitted as soon as possible, so that voting members can consider them before the assembly.** Please note: a resolution adopted by

the 2005 Synod Assembly requires that resolutions submitted less than 2 weeks before the assembly (by Thursday, May 26, 2022) will be considered only if the assembly votes to receive them.

**Please read the guidelines on the reverse side of this page.** Return the form to the synod office (address information below)

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*Please type or write legibly. You may submit only one resolution on each form. Copy form for additional resolutions.*

*Sign the form where indicated; include the name and location of your congregation. If you are a lay member of a congregation, include the signature of the pastor or president of the congregation (this signature is requested to certify that you are a participating member of an ELCA congregation in the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod).*

A resolution concerning a change in Roe v Wade and its affect upon Pastoral Counseling

WHEREAS, there is the possibility that the decision Roe v Wade may be overturned or changed by the U.S. Supreme Court; and

WHEREAS, several states either have passed legislation or intended to pass legislation limiting the right to an abortion or placing parameters upon those who seek an abortion or those who perform an abortion or persons who counsel or advise another person regarding an abortion; and

WHEREAS, these parameters may include but not be limited to revoking of one's professional license, fines, and/or imprisonment; and

WHEREAS, women and girls may seek out the counsel and advice of a professional in regards to an abortion decision; and

WHEREAS, included in the group of professionals to whom a woman or girl may seek such counsel and advice are Professional Counselors, Clergy, such as Rostered Ministers, and Social Ministry Agencies and Organizations which may provide counseling services, and

WHEREAS, Rostered Ministers include Pastors and Deacons of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and

WHEREAS, depending upon the legislation of a given State or Commonwealth, Rostered Ministers and Social Ministry Agencies and Organizations may be liable for content of any Pastoral Counseling sessions and possibly face fines and/or imprisonment or any other parameter of said legislation; and

WHEREAS, depending upon the legislation of a given State or Commonwealth, the legislation of that State or Commonwealth may apply to any entity that provides Pastoral Counseling sessions to a person from the legislating State or Commonwealth who may cross State or Commonwealth or Synodical boundaries in order to receive such services, and

WHEREAS, such legislation may negate any HIPAA rules and/or confidentiality between the Rostered Minister and Social Ministry Agency and Organization and the Pastor Counseling Client and the Pastor/Client relationship; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America be memorialized to investigate and ascertain the impact that any overturning of Roe v Wade and/or any legislation of any State or Commonwealth of the USA will have upon Pastoral Counseling, the Pastor/Client relationship and the Rostered Ministers and Social Ministry Agencies and Organizations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America be memorialized to offer support and legal referral to any Rostered Minister or affiliated counseling staff who may be affected by Roe v Wade changes, State or Commonwealth legislation, license revoking, fines, and/or imprisonment.

James T. Parks, LPC, CLP – Good Shepherd, Wilkes-Barre  
Pastor Wes Poole – Good Shepherd, Wilkes-Barre

Date of submission: Thursday May 19, 2022

**Return to:** *Committee of Reference and Counsel, 2022 Synod Assembly, Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, 2354 Grove Rd., Allentown PA 18109-3044, email [info@nepsynod.org](mailto:info@nepsynod.org).*

**Recommendation of the Committee of Reference and Counsel:**

The committee of Reference and Counsel recommends that the proposed memorial “Concerning A Change in Roe v Wade and its Affect on Pastoral Counseling” be commended to this Assembly for its consideration.