



35th 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)

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 Anti-Racism Education Emphasis

WHEREAS Paul reminded the people of God in his letter to the churches of Galatia that “in Christ Jesus you are all children of God through faith. As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. 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 3:26-28), and

WHEREAS the church is the Body of Christ, and when one member of the Body hurts, we all hurt (1 Corinthians 12:26), and

WHEREAS the 1993 ELCA social statement Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity and Culture states: Racism—a mix of power, privilege, and prejudice—is sin, a violation of God’s intention for humanity. The resulting racial, ethnic, or cultural barriers deny the truth that all people are God’s creatures and, therefore, persons of dignity. Racism fractures and fragments both church and society, and

WHEREAS systemic and institutionalized racism is a cancer infecting North American culture; and a PEW Research Study published in July 2015 shows the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America as the whitest religious group in the United States, and the congregations that make up the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod are primarily White, and

WHEREAS the 2016 Churchwide Assembly voted to require all rostered leaders to undergo anti-racism training as regularly as boundary training, and

WHEREAS the 2019 Churchwide Assembly issued the Apology to Persons of African Descent, and

WHEREAS the ELCA Church Council has issued the Declaration of the ELCA to American Indian and Alaska Native People, and

WHEREAS the ELCA has provided anti-racism training for the ELCA Church Council, Bishops, and Churchwide Staff, therefore, be it

RESOLVED that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the ELCA establish a requirement for Racial Justice/Anti-Racism training for Rostered Ministers, Synodically Authorized Lay Ministers, and Full Communion Partners serving ELCA congregations in the NEPA Synod at least every three years, and be it further

RESOLVED that the Office of the Bishop of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod, in partnership with the Racial Justice Team, will offer at least one Racial Justice/Anti-Racism Training workshop every two to three years at the same cost or less to participants as Boundary Training, and be it further

RESOLVED that the Racial Justice Team, in partnership with Black and Indigenous People of Color (BIPOC), will continue its own ongoing education in Anti-Racism being aware of updates in curricula in order to keep the training current, will commit to engaging BIPOC colleagues to bring an awareness of injustices, and will encourage and offer opportunities for the bishop's staff, the leadership of each congregation, including rostered and lay, to set aside a time each year to reflect on how racism, implicit bias, and privilege impact the church's life and mission.

Submitted by the NEPA Synod Racial Justice Team

Pastor D. Michael Bennethum, Director for Evangelical Mission, NEPA Synod

Kaitlyn Olson Blend, Bear Creek Camp

Pastor Colleen Cox, Grace, Shillington

Pastor Samantha Drennan, Grace, Macungie

Deaconess Deborah Graf, Trinity, Reading

Pastor Jennifer Hall, St. John's, Nazareth

Pastor Brandon Heavner, St. Mark's, Bethlehem

Pastor Suzanne Trump, St. John's Windish, Bethlehem

Date of submission: Tuesday May 24, 2022

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

Recommendation of the Committee of Reference and Counsel:

The Committee of Reference and Counsel recommends that the proposed resolution "Concerning Anti-Racism Education Emphasis" be adopted by this assembly.