



37th Northeastern PA Synod Assembly

HUNGRY FOR LIFE TOGETHER IN CHRIST

A Resolution Concerning NEPA Synod Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Updated Affirmation Statement

WHEREAS, The Gospel of Mark speaks the words of Christ to us all, saying “Go into all the world and preach the gospel to the whole creation,” and in the second letter to the Corinthians, St. Paul writes, “All this is from God, who reconciled us through Jesus Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation”; and

WHEREAS the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod approved a resolution to become a Reconciling in Christ Synod in 2001; and

WHEREAS the Reconciling Works program has recognized the importance of the intersectional commitments to racial equity when building inclusive worship spaces, and has called on existing Reconciling in Christ bodies to reflect on their welcome and affirmation statements and revise them by 2025 to affirm their commitment to "racial equity" or "anti-racism" as part of their welcome of people of “all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions;” and

WHEREAS the LGBTQ+ Task force of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod has reviewed our welcome and affirmation statement and updated the statement to reflect our synod’s continued commitment to social and racial justice; and

WHEREAS the Racial Justice Ministry team has approved this revised language as aligned with our synod’s work toward racial justice; and

WHEREAS we believe that open, visibly inclusive worship and gatherings are central to God’s charge to love our neighbors as God loves us, and we call on our congregations and ministry partners to provide safe, supportive worship spaces and practices for all; and

WHEREAS 12 congregations within the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod are recognized as Reconciling in Christ congregations; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America reaffirms its commitment to welcoming and loving the whole body of Christ by adopting this updated affirmation statement:

The Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod welcomes all people to join us in celebrating God’s love. We affirm that we are divinely and wonderfully made in God’s image, and that we strengthen and enrich our whole church body when we are welcoming to everyone. We encourage and invite people of all sexual orientations, gender identities and expressions, races and ethnicities, ages, socioeconomic statuses, abilities, citizenship and migration

statuses to participate fully in the life and work of the church. We commit ourselves to supporting social and racial equity.

And be it further

RESOLVED, that the Assembly direct the Secretary of the Synod to forward a copy of this resolution to Reconciling Works to reaffirm our status and commitment to being recognized as a Reconciling in Christ Synod; and be it further

RESOLVED that the Northeastern PA Synod in assembly affirms that the NEPA Synod Council will ensure that an annual donation is made to Reconciling Works in keeping with our commitment to the program.

Signature: T.D. Busteed, co-convenor of NEPA LGBTQ+ Taskforce
Congregation and location: Zion's Lutheran, Old Zionsville
04/08/2024

*The Reference and Counsel Committee recommends "A Resolution Concerning NEPA Synod Reconciling In Christ (RIC) Updated Affirmation Statement" **be adopted.***