

RECONCILING IN CHRIST RESOLUTION

**Responses to questions in the following pages appear as submitted on the nomination forms.*

WHEREAS,

WHEREAS the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America affirms that all people are beloved by God. God's extravagant welcome is sure and certain; and

WHEREAS the ELCA's Social Statement on Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust adopted in August 2009 calls on all congregations and rostered ministers "to reach out in welcome to all in accord with previous Churchwide Assembly actions as reaffirmed by the 2005 Churchwide Assembly [CA05.05.18], and to assist members to understand what it means to be hospitable to all in the name of Christ regardless of sexual orientation;" and

WHEREAS in 1991 the ELCA Churchwide Assembly declared "gay and lesbian people, as individuals created by God, are welcome to participate fully in the life of the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;" and

WHEREAS since 2017, the UCLA School of Law's William Institute has studied violence against LGBTQIA persons which finds that LGBTQIA persons are 4 times more likely to experience violent victimization compared to non-LGBTQIA persons[1]. And in 2020 and 2021, the Human Rights Campaign (HRC) tracked a record number of violent fatal incidents against transgender and gender non-conforming people since HRC began tracking such crimes in 2013[2]; and

WHEREAS 33% of LGBTQIA persons feel uncomfortable or unsafe to share with anyone in their faith community about their identity[3]; and

WHEREAS Reconciling in Christ (RIC) is the designation for congregations, synods, and other ELCA ministries to designate themselves as open and affirming towards LGBTQIA persons and families. This includes 980 RIC-designated ministries and communities, including 29 synods; and

WHEREAS The TX-LA Gulf Coast Synod currently has 8 congregations and ministries that are Reconciling in Christ (RIC); now, be it therefore

[1] <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/press/ncvs-lgbt-violence-press-release/>

[2] www.hrc.org/resources/fatal-violence-against-the-transgender-and-gender-non-conforming-community-in-2021

[3] <https://www.stonewall.org.uk/cy/node/24594>

RESOLVED

RESOLVED The TX-LA Gulf Coast Synod begin a year-long process of discerning becoming a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) synod. This process will be guided by the Gulf Coast Synod LGBTQIA Coalition which will include regional educational forums and consultations with synod staff, council and conference deans; and

RESOLVED The LGBTQIA Coalition will develop, in consultation with the Synod Council, a proposed synod Welcome Statement. The proposed Welcome Statement will be presented to the 2023 Synod Assembly to vote on whether to become a Reconciling in Christ synod.

RECONCILING IN CHRIST RESOLUTION

(CON'T)

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IMPLICATIONS OF RESOLUTION

In what way is this resolution helping congregations make disciples of Jesus Christ?

By providing resources and guidance for congregations to provide hospitality, welcome and inclusion of all in the Gospel ministry we share through the waters of baptism. To align the work of the synod staff, council, and conference deans including in candidacy, call process, campus ministries, etc.

What are the personnel implications within our synod (or churchwide)? Who will be responsible for implementations of the resolution?

The synod staff will have a staff relator to the synod's LGBTQIA Coalition. A Welcome Statement will be required to be developed according to the guidelines of Reconciling Works that includes commitments to welcome and inclusion of LGBTQIA individuals and families, as well as to the work of anti-racism through our synod's anti-racism team.

What is the financial impact of this resolution on the synod budget? If expenditures are required, what are the sources of income anticipated to accomplish the purpose of this resolution?

There is no significant nor ongoing financial impact on the synod budget. The minimal costs for hosting the educational forums will come from a fund in the synod budget already established for the LGBTQIA Coalition which is primarily funded by our synod's RIC congregations and other designated donations. There may be minimal administrative costs for printing resources at the synod office.

Resolution Topic

Reconciling in Christ Resolution

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