

21-01 Resolution on Translation and Interpretation of Synodical Governance

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has established a new strategic approach to the future diversity, outlined in the Future Direction 2025 document (<https://www.elca.org/future>) that the Southwest California Synod adopted as our guiding document; AND

WHEREAS, the third goal of Future Directions 2025 is a “Welcoming Church” and stresses the priority of supporting all levels of the church to understand, speak out, and act against discrimination, like the systemic discrimination of not providing language access through interpretation for our official synodical events; AND

WHEREAS, the fifth goal of Future Directions 2025 is “A well-governed, connected and sustainable church” and stresses the priority for synods to re-evaluate and change historic approaches to governance to create a culture of willing accountability. Another priority of the fifth goal is to review church structures to guarantee they meet the present and future needs of the ELCA with a focus on responsibility and how best to support congregations; AND

WHEREAS, the Southwest California Synod intentionally funds and supports worship communities that do not speak English to address the dire issue of lack of diversity in our church, and we assume responsibility to ensure full participation for all people in our worshipping communities; AND

WHEREAS, the Southwest California Synod’s constitution and bylaws require our Synod Assembly and Synod Council Meetings to function according to Robert’s Rules of Order, which requires that the presider of the meeting ensure that all voting members fully understand meetings and motions; AND

WHEREAS, the Southwest California Synod has been inconsistent in providing written translation of governing documents, meetings, and website, or have never begun efforts to allow language access of non-English speaking individuals or others experiencing disabilities as voting members; AND

WHEREAS, as synodical leaders we can fully anticipate and expect congregations and members of the synod to value diversity and join fundraising efforts for language interpretation endeavors; therefore, be it

RESOLVED that the Southwest California Synod identify the on-going cost of translating all website and governing documents and providing interpretation at Synod Council Meetings and Synod Assemblies, budget for the cost of language access services, to non-native speakers and create a corresponding fundraising plan; AND

RESOLVED that the Southwest California Synod provides appropriate language interpretation, including Sign Language, to ensure all voting members of the corresponding governance bodies participate in their dominant language or whichever language ensures full understanding.

Signed and submitted by the following individuals:

- 1.Rev. Joseph A. Castañeda Carrera, MPP, Pastor, Adore LA, Los Angeles
- 2.Desta Goehner, Spiritual Director, Director of Congregational Relations, California Lutheran University
- 3.Rev. Tracy Williams, Pastor Holy Redeemer Bellflower, CA
- 4.Rev. Matt Keadle, Pastor, St. Mark's Lutheran Church, Los Angeles
- 5.Rev. Stephanie Jaeger, Pastor, St. Matthew's Lutheran Church and Sharing Hands Deaf Ministry
- 6.Rev. Jennifer Chrien, Pastor, Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church, Simi Valley

- 7.Rev. Marsha E. Harris, Pastor, Central Lutheran Church/Iglesia Luterana Central, Van Nuys, CA
- 8.Rev. Nancy Switzler, Pastor, Our Redeemer Lutheran Church, Oxnard
- 9.Rev. Scott Fritz, Pastor, Lutheran Church, Long Beach
- 10.Pastor Drew Stever, Hope Lutheran, Hollywood
11. Rev. Hazel Salazar-Davidson, California Lutheran University, Thousand Oaks, CA
- 12.Laura Salazar Krueger, Representative of the Central Coast Conference and member of Gloria Dei Lutheran Church, Santa Maria
- 13.TEEM Pastora Jade D. Mohorko Ortiz, Redimidos, Oxnard, CA
- 14.Rev. Brian Hiortdahl, Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church, West Hills
- 15.Libby Denton, Candidate for Word and Sacrament, Vicar at First Lutheran Church and School, Torrance, CA
- 16.Rev Changan(John) Yu, Bethlehem Lutheran Church Chinese Ministry, San Gabriel. CA
- 17.Rev. Caleb Crainer, St. Andrew's Lutheran Church, Los Angeles, CA
- 18.Rev. Ryan Chaddick, American Lutheran Church, Burbank CA
- 19.Rev. Steve Herder, Ascension Lutheran Church, Thousand Oaks, CA
- 20.Chelsea Kadovitz, Bethel Encino ELCA Encino, CA
- 21.Erik Goehner, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Thousand Oaks, CA
- 22.Meredith Smith, Camp Director, El Camino Pines, Frazier Park, CA
- 23.Allison Moorman, Salem Lutheran Church, Glendale CA
- 24.Josh Moorman, Salem Lutheran Church, Glendale CA
25. Dixie Hanson, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Thousand Oaks, CA
- 26.Rev. Brenda Bos, Southwest California Synod, Glendale, CA
- 27.Rev. Dr Marj Funk-Pihl, DEM SWCA, Glendale CA
28. Eric Renn, Adore LA, Los Angeles, CA and Bethel Encino, Encino, CA
- 29.Mary Stanford, Salem Lutheran Church, Glendale CA
- 30.Corinne DeVries, Salem Lutheran Church, Glendale, CA
- 31.Anastasia McGee, Salem Lutheran Church, Glendale, CA
32. Stephanie Zhong, Bethel Encino ELCA Encino, CA
- 33.Renee Brandt, Lutheran Church in the Foothills, La Canada CA
34. Jaffa Castañeda Carrera, Adore LA, Los Angeles CA
- 35.Rev. Megan Hunt Fryling, Bethlehem Lutheran Church, Granada Hills, CA
- 36.Kendra Frank, Salem Lutheran Church, Glendale, CA
- 37.Kirstyn Bonneau, Salem Lutheran Church, Glendale, CA
38. Alicia Sadowski, Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Thousand Oaks, CA
- 39.Pastor Nikki Fielder, Shepherd of the Valley Lutheran Church, Simi Valley, CA
- 40.Pastor Scott Fielder
41. Jeremy Forbing, Bethel Encino ELCA Encino, CA

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

The financial impact will be between 10,000- 25,000 annually, but there are plenty strategies for funding that have not been approached, including grantwriting and allowing interest congregations create a language access fund. The author and signers of the resolution are willing to work with council for fund development purposes. A small committee of the synod council and interested staff would need to meet with the individuals interested in funding this endeavor and support in appropriate strategies and partnership with council. We ask the Bishop and DEM to be staff representatives who will coordinate volunteers, but not to execute the labor.

What are the personnel implications within our synod—or churchwide? Who will be responsible for implementation of the resolution?

A small committee of the synod council and interested staff would need to meet with the individuals interested in funding this endeavor and support in appropriate strategies and partnership with council. We ask the Bishop and DEM to be staff representatives who will coordinate volunteers, but not to execute the labor.

How does this resolution enhance and forward the mission of the church and our synod?

The resolution is directly rooted, as written, in the synod's adopted strategy as outlined in Future Directions 2021, in the ELCA's Authentic Diversity Statement, and in our churches faith document to make inclusive spaces for governance and ministry that will carry us into the future of our church.