

21-03 Resolution on Support for Lutheran Retreats, Camps, and Conferences

Whereas, Lutheran Retreats, Camps and Conferences (LRCC) has been in faithful partnership with the congregations of the Southwest California Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for more than 60 years; and,

Whereas, more lay and rostered leaders in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America discern their call to ministry at one of our Lutheran Bible camps than any other place in our church; and,

Whereas, Lutheran Retreats, Camps and Conferences (LRCC) has faithfully followed all state and county health department guidelines, causing the Board of Directors of LRCC to close both the El Camino Pines (in the Southwest California Synod) and Luther Glen Farm (in the Pacifica Synod), beginning in March of 2020; and,

Whereas, 70% of the operating income that funds the ministry of LRCC is earned by hosting various user groups at both our Bible camps, and that the real impact of the Covid-19 pandemic closures of our local Lutheran Bible camps has resulted in over \$1,000,000 dollars in lost revenue; therefore,

Be it resolved:

That the Southwest California Synod, in assembly, calls on the congregations of the Southwest California Synod to fully support the ministry of Lutheran Retreats, Camps and Conferences with special focus over the next few years as it recovers from the impact of of the Covid-19 pandemic by supporting the HELP Camp-aign, and thus pledging to:

- a) **Help** children, youth and adults from Southwest California congregations to attend our Lutheran Bible camps by promoting the character building programs of LRCC, and by offering campership money to prospective campers; and,
- b) **Encourage** youth and young adults from Southwest California congregations to serve as Bible camp counselors and camp volunteers; and,
- c) **Lean in** to support the financial recovery of our local Lutheran Bible camps, in such ways as: initiate a fund raising event; support LRCC through the congregation's annual budget; host a Camp Sunday and/or, encourage your congregational members to support LRCC; and,
- d) **Pray** for God's blessing on the partnership of the Southwest California congregations and Lutheran Retreats, Camps and Conferences.

Signed,

Nate Maxwell Doherty, Ascension - Thousand Oaks

Pr. Steve Herder, Ascension - Thousand Oaks
Denise Pulte, First – Torrance
Jeanne Sinsheimer, First - Torrance
Pr. Bill Hurst, First - Torrance
Desta Goehner, Holy Trinity - Thousand Oaks
Pr. Erik Goehner, Holy Trinity - Thousand Oaks
Meredith Smith, Mt. Cross - Camarillo
Scott Smith, Mt. Cross - Camarillo
Marilyn Gardner, Mt. Cross - Camarillo
Richard Gardner, Mt. Cross - Camarillo
Elaine Hente, Grace - Culver City
Monica Holman, Mt. Carmel - San Luis Obispo
Lisa Lambert, Shepherd of the Valley - West Hills
Sandi Engh, Shepherd of the Valley - West Hills
Pr. Scott Fielder, New Hope - Agoura
Scott Odahl, Salem - Glendale

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?

This resolution requires no expenditures from the synod budget.

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

This resolution carries no explicit personnel expenditures from the staff of either the Southwest California Synod or the churchwide staff. The implementation of the resolution falls to the staff and volunteers of Lutheran Retreats, Camps and Conferences (LRCC), and the willing participation of the people of the synod.

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

This resolution calls on the congregations and people of the Southwest California Synod to assist in the financial recovery of our local Lutheran Bible camps after the Covid-19 pandemic. The relevance of a vital Bible camping ministry is obvious to most ELCA Lutherans, but the case needs to be made anew to each generation. By helping LRCC financially recover from the pandemic, the Southwest California Synod will benefit by:

- a) Having two theologically sympathetic camps to send children for Christian education and recreation;
- b) Providing a camp that hires dozens of young adults annually to be camp counselors and year round staff;
- c) Being in partnership with two camps that host dozens of congregations for family retreats and adult recreation;
- d) Advancing the evangelical mission of the ELCA.