

Lutheran Mission Matters



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2019 LCMS Convention Resolution

To Strengthen Multi-Ethnic Outreach

RESOLUTION 1-05A

Reports R1.2 (*CW*, 40–41, 46)

WHEREAS, God our Savior “desires all people to be saved and come to the knowledge of the truth. For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and humankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave Himself as a ransom for all.” (1 Tim. 2:4–6a); and

WHEREAS, Those who have been ransomed by His blood are “from every tribe and tongue and people and nation.” (Rev. 5:9b); and

WHEREAS, God, who determines where every nation shall live (Acts 17:26), has arranged for the nations of the world to come in increasing numbers to the United States; and

WHEREAS, It is His will “that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.” (Luke 24:47 RSV); and

WHEREAS, His disciples of every time and place are to “go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you.” (Matt. 28:19–20a) and to be His “witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.” (Acts 1:8); and

WHEREAS, Many congregations of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod (LCMS) are located in areas that are richly diverse in cultures, races, ethnic groups, languages, and age groups. (The estimated U.S. population as of July 1, 2018, was 328 million Americans; of which 44 million were African Americans [13.4 percent], 59 million Hispanics [18.1 percent], 19 million Asians [5.8 percent], and 4 million American Indian [1.3 percent]. Each year more than 1 million people immigrate to the U.S. along with another 1 million international students, and their families, who have come to study in U.S. colleges and universities. [United States Census Bureau]); and

WHEREAS, The LCMS remains ethnically homogenous—95 percent Caucasian according to the 2014 Pew Research Center report, “Religious Landscape Study: Members of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod” (<https://www.pewforum.org/religious-landscape-study/religious-denomination/lutheran-church-missouri-synod/>); and

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WHEREAS, Jesus exhorts us to “open your eyes and look at the fields! They are ripe for harvest.” (John 4:35 NIV); therefore be it

Resolved, That Synod in convention thank God for the gifts of new and existing multi-ethnic populations that He is giving His Church in North America; and be it further

Resolved, That Synod encourages its congregations in communities of all sizes to continually “look at the fields” around them and seize the opportunities God provides to share the Gospel; and be it further

Resolved, That congregations of the LCMS be encouraged to seek out and welcome all multi-ethnic populations, showing the love of Jesus in both word and deed; and be it further

Resolved, That each district be encouraged to make church planting among multi-ethnic populations a priority of mission work in their district or in partnership with other districts; and be it further

Resolved, That pastors who serve in areas where there are prominent second languages be sensitive to the need to reach out to people in their primary language; and be it further

Resolved, That the Office of National Mission provide resources to assist districts in training workers for multiethnic ministry; and be it finally

Resolved, That Synod reaffirm the formation of church workers through the Ethnic Immigrant Institute of Theology, Center for Hispanic Studies, Cross-Cultural Ministry Center, and other such programs that provide education for ministry to multi-ethnic groups via distance education.

Action: Adopted as read (9)

Res. 1-05A was read and introduced by the committee, with the addition of the Cross-Cultural Ministry Center to the list of programs in the final resolve. Without objection, the chair put the resolution to an immediate voice vote, by which the resolution was adopted.