

REINVESTMENT RESOLUTION

1 **Whereas** a history of redlining and housing discrimination affects the makeup of
2 the Metro Chicago Synod and its congregations.¹
3 **Whereas** a history of white flight in Chicago and surrounding suburbs has eroded
4 education funding, real estate values, and opportunity in affected neighborhoods^{2 3 4}
5 **Whereas** the Metro Chicago Synod has lacked robust funding mechanisms for
6 congregations and leadership outside of self-sustaining congregational models⁵
7 **Be it resolved that** the 2024 Metro Chicago synod assembly encourages the Metro
8 Chicago Allyship team to develop a plan for reinvestment within our synod
9 through partnership with work already done by existing ethnic-specific
10 Churchwide desks and synod-level associations.

¹ See [Mark T. Mulder](#), "Shades of White Flight: Evangelical Congregations and White Flight," looks at this phenomenon from Christian Reformed Churches in Chicago in the 1960s and 1970s, and is deeply applicable to this reality for ELCA congregations.

² From The Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago, auth by Daniel Aaronson , Daniel Hartley , Bhash Mazumder, "The Effects of the 1930s HOLC "Redlining" Maps (REVISED August 2020). *Working Papers*, No. 2017-12, 2017. They found "that areas that received a lower grade on the HOLC (redlining) maps experienced worse housing market outcomes with respect to homeownership, house values, rents, and vacancy rates over subsequent decades. This suggests that there was significant and persistent housing disinvestment in the wake of restricted credit access. We also find that the maps affected the degree of racial segregation as measured by the fraction of African American residents on each side of a neighborhood boundary."

³ White flight, or blockbusting, continues to this day in suburban Chicago, while gentrification occurs in previous areas of disinvestment within the city of Chicago. See "How Common Was Blockbusting in the Postwar U.S.?" by Katherine Bennett , Daniel Hartley , Jonathan Rose *Chicago Fed Letter*, No. 468, July 2022. (<https://www.chicagofed.org/publications/chicago-fed-letter/2022/468>)

⁴ Homelessness rates affiliated with areas of white flight and divestment, see: (<https://chicagohomeless.issuelab.org/resource/illinois-state-of-homelessness-2022.html>) See also: Suburban Alliance to End Homelessness 2019 Project Prioritization- homeless students with families. Illinois State Board of Education shows in 2019 statistics that 50% of homeless students who are in families are in south suburbs.

⁵While the ELCA identifies itself as neither congregational or episcopal in polity, the funding mechanism of congregations and their governance is congregational. Congregations depend on the wealth and generosity of their congregational members for their funding models once established. Exceptions, such as new mission starts and in the past, congregational renewal, existed, but were not normative. See pg. 2, *ELCA Church Council Governance Policy Manual* (https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/ELCA_Church_Council_Governance_Policy_Manual.pdf)

11 **Be it further resolved** that the Allyship team will gather a network of
12 congregations interested in pursuing reinvestment (using financial resources to
13 work towards our siblings and our congregations having equal access) for the
14 purpose of information sharing, mutual support and mutual accountability
15 **Be it further resolved** that the Allyship team be encouraged to bring to the 2025
16 Metro Chicago synod assembly a resolution which includes specific ways
17 congregations and the synod can fund reinvestment within the Metro Chicago
18 synod.

*Submitted by Pastor Eric Worringer and Pastor Amy Wiegert on behalf of the
Metro Chicago Synod Allyship Team*