

MEMORIAL ON AFRICAN DESCENT LUTHERAN LIVES MATTER

RESOLVED that the Metropolitan Chicago Synod Assembly memorialize the 2016 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) to include as part of its observance of the 500th Anniversary of the Reformation and the commemoration of the United Nation's International Decade of People of African Descent the following:

1. Direct the Church Council to create a "Declaration of the ELCA to the African Descent Community" similar to the "Declaration of the ELCA to the Jewish Community (4/18/1994)" acknowledging the Lutheran church's complicity in the 400+ years of slavery and the oppression of other marginalized groups; that people of African descent were victims of slavery, the slave trade and colonialism and continue to be victims of its consequences; and, the ELCA has perpetuated racism and discrimination through attitudes, actions, policies and practices these communities still endure. The Council will bring this "Declaration" to the 2019 Churchwide Assembly for its consideration and action with a recommendation to include this Declaration in the governing documents of the ELCA;
2. Direct the Church Council to require the Theological Education Advisory Council (TEAC) in partnership with the Conference of International Black Lutherans (CIBL) to recognize and dismantle white hegemony by lifting up, encouraging and incorporating academic exploration of Black Liberation theology across ELCA educational expressions, to allocate funds for the development of resources and to accomplish this by the 2019 Churchwide Assembly; and,
3. Direct the Church Council to require the Congregational and Synodical Missions Unit of the ELCA to work in partnership with the African Descent Lutheran Association to increase by 10% the number of African Descent leaders, congregations and communities served, thereby renewing its commitment (see African Descent Strategy, CWA, 2005) to create, sustain, reinvest in and support this plan of action by the 2019 Churchwide Assembly and to encourage Synods and congregations to do likewise.

Submitted by:

Synod Council