

Resolution to Increase Congregational Mission Support Giving

WHEREAS mission support is defined as the dollars shared by congregations with the larger church, without any specific ministry designation, to carry out the ministries of the ELCA locally, nationally and internationally, and

WHEREAS the Mission Support Committee and Synod Council are thankful for all financial gifts, large and small, shared by congregations, and

WHEREAS due to the challenges of our current culture, the needs of congregations for leadership development, pastoral care, conflict mediation and synod communications have increased over the last 10 years, and

WHEREAS there has been no appreciable increase in congregational mission support giving over the last 10 years, which limits our ability to respond to increased congregational needs, forces us to spend our reserves, reduces our support of seminaries, and forfeits any financial flexibility to seize future, unexpected ministry opportunities, and

WHEREAS it is clear that maintaining the current levels of congregational mission support giving is unsustainable for growth, and

WHEREAS the Mission Support Committee has met with key leaders of congregations who give 10% or more of their general offerings to mission support in order to understand their giving practices and generous sharing with the larger church, and

WHEREAS the Mission Support Committee has learned that every congregation, with its own history, personality and values that shape its giving practices, deserves to be heard, understood and supported as it strives to increase in generosity for the greater ministries of the ELCA, and

WHEREAS the Synod Council and Mission Support committee have engaged in prayer, study and conversation to develop a comprehensive plan to help the congregations of the La Crosse Area Synod collectively increase mission support by at least \$100,000 by the end of 2016; therefore be it

RESOLVED that the Mission Support Committee, with the help of the Synod Council, carry out this plan which includes the following:

- In the fall of 2015, leaders of congregations, upon invitation of the Mission Support Committee, will meet with leaders of other congregations and elected synod leaders for conversations that encourage, educate, and foster accountability towards specific mission support giving goals for each congregation,
- the Mission Support Committee will develop and provide a self-assessment tool that will help congregations monitor their progress in achieving their goals,
- the Mission Support Committee will seek creative, compelling ways to communicate to congregations the importance and value of mission support for doing God's work in the world and the vitality of congregations,
- the Synod Council will explore and consider additional streams of income to support the work of the La Crosse Area Synod,
- Congregations will model and encourage the practice of weekly, proportionate sharing of mission support.