

Resolution to Work Toward a Companion Synod Relationship

WHEREAS companion synod relationships have been a blessing to both our synod and our companion synods as we accompany one another, and

WHEREAS the La Crosse Area Synod has shown the capacity to be in two companion synod relationships at the same time (while only having one companion at the present time), and

WHEREAS the Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren (ECCB), a member church of the Lutheran World Federation, is asking for an ELCA companion synod, and

WHEREAS a companion synod relationship with the ECCB would allow the La Crosse Area Synod to mutually share in our missions and would connect our synod with their history that goes back to before the Reformation; therefore be it

RESOLVED that Bishop Arends and the Global Mission Committee of the La Crosse Area Synod pursue establishing a companion synod relationship with the Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren.

Submitted by the Global Mission Committee

Information about the Evangelical Church of the Czech Brethren (ECCB)

- The ECCB was founded in 1918.
- It's the biggest Czech Protestant church and second biggest church in general.
- It was formed through the unification of the Protestant churches of the Lutheran and Reformed confessions.
- The ECCB has about 115,000 members in more than 230 local congregations in the Czech Republic, (roughly the size of South Carolina).
- The ECCB ordains women.
- It currently has no ELCA companion synod.
- The ECCB serves primarily congregations in rural settings.
- It is dedicated to serving people in poverty, seniors, children, Roma and immigrants through comprehensive social services. The Czech Brethren also sponsor early childhood education centers and schools
- The Czech Brethren have, in years past, participated in the ELCA International Camp Counselor Program and enjoyed youth development. This connection could be renewed with Sugar Creek Bible Camp.
- The La Crosse region received Czech immigrants in the 1850s as farmers, in part because the terrain of Bohemia is similar to the bluff and coulee country of west-central and southwest Wisconsin.
- The ECCB is a member of the World Council of Churches, the Conference of European Churches, the Lutheran World Federation and the World Communion of Reformed Churches.