RESOLUTION 2018:2

Memorial on the ELCA’s 50th anniversary of the ordination of women

Whereas in 1970 both the Lutheran Church in America and American Lutheran Church in their national conventions voted to ordain women; and

Whereas the ELCA rejoices in these actions of its predecessor church bodies and will recognize the 50th anniversary in 2020 of the ordination of women; and

Whereas we express our profound gratitude for the many and varied ways the gifts of ordained women have advanced God’s mission through this church; and

Whereas we learned in the research related to the 45th anniversary of women’s ordination of some progress but also significant disparities for women in the areas of preparation for ministry, all calls including first calls, mobility, compensation, ministry roles, and debt following seminary education (http://search.elca.org/Pages/Results.aspx?k=45th+anniversary+of+women%27s+ordination); and

Whereas the same research uncovered denigrating and discriminatory experiences of many ordained women, some particularly acute for ordained women of color; and

Whereas the church is called to reflect in church and society its roles of advocate and model for the respect, dignity, and equal rights due all women, including the ordained women of this church; and

Whereas this church is simultaneously addressing justice and women in its social statement under consideration and the 50th anniversary of the ordination of women;

Be it resolved that the Nebraska Synod Assembly memorialize the 2019 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to call upon all synods in their 2020 assemblies to include celebration and special recognition of ordained women upon the 50th anniversary of authorizing this ordination practice; and be it further

Resolved that the Nebraska Synod Assembly memorialize the 2019 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to call upon congregations throughout the ELCA to participate in the 50th anniversary of the ordination of women in our church through worship services, Bible studies and other efforts to celebrate and recognize the importance and contributions of ordained women; and be it further

Resolved that the Nebraska Synod Assembly memorialize the 2019 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to call upon all members of this church to examine our consciences, and confess our sins and complicity in whichever circumstances by the outright or silent actions women have faced including barriers, discrimination, or sexual harassment as they prepared for and served as ordained women in this church; and be it further
Resolved that the Nebraska Synod Assembly memorialize the 2019 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to urge all congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization in 2020 to conduct conversations and develop strategies to promote and protect gender equity and justice, with particular focus on addressing the areas of preparation for ministry, call process including first calls, mobility, compensation, ministry roles, and debt following seminary education; and be it further

Resolved that the Nebraska Synod Assembly memorialize the 2019 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to call upon each synod to establish goals and strategies of achieving for ordained women comparable compensation with that of ordained men in all calls by 2024, reporting the outcome of this action step at the Churchwide Assembly in 2025; and be it further

Resolved that the Nebraska Synod Assembly memorialize the 2019 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to call upon this church to establish goals and strategies in each synod of achieving for ordained women access to ministry roles where women are currently underrepresented, with a particular focus on the challenges faced by women of color receiving viable first and second calls; and be it further

Resolved that the Nebraska Synod Assembly memorialize the 2019 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to invite the prayers of all members of this church for the successful outcome of these initiatives.

Submitted by:
Diane Brauer
Our Savior’s
McCook, NE

RECOMMENDATION AND RATIONALE OF THE NEBRASKA SYNOD COUNCIL: That Resolution 2018:2 is appropriate for the Assembly to discuss and take action upon.