



# Northeastern Minnesota Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

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## Preparing Resolutions for the 2020 Synod Assembly

Note Deadlines for Submitting Resolutions on back

Dear Synod;

We all are aware that Synod Resolutions are of course receivable at any Synod Assembly. In the past few years we have dealt with a number of them. This year, is a Bishop Election year, as you know. I am asking that we all consider the amount of time that will be needed at this particular Assembly for such an Election which includes Question and Answer and speeches from Bishop Nominees at the Assembly. It is always a good and helpful thing to work diligently on resolutions with a number of congregations and conferences and many people before ever bringing them to the floor at an Assembly. The truth is, those are the best ones to bring forward because in that case a critical mass of people are already aware of the issues and have talked about them, before the Assembly itself. If there are resolutions that would benefit from a longer "incubation" period I urge you to spend more time working from the ground up and consider postponing them till next year. It is not a demand, but a request and I thank you in advance for considering this in this Election year.

Memorials and Resolutions are a major agenda item for any Synod Assembly. The following items are pointers for writing resolutions that will help your issues be aired and facilitate the smooth flow of business. The pointers were gleaned from Roberts Rules of Order and a variety of other sources.

### **Determine Appropriate Direction**

Make an attempt to determine if the issue or idea you are concerned about is most appropriately handled by:

- a Synod Committee or Task Force
- the Synod Council
- the Synod Staff
- the Synod Executive Committee
- the Synod Assembly

Direct your concern to the appropriate unit. If the Synod Assembly is the most appropriate, follow the steps below.

### **Validate Your Idea with Other People**

It is advisable to channel your idea through other individuals or groups to get their responses on how convincing your idea actually is. If you have a difficult time convincing others that your idea is valid you may find it even harder to convince the Synod Assembly.

**Please Note:** The synod council has voted that resolutions coming before the Synod Assembly must be presented by:

- a congregation,
- a conference,
- any committee or task force of the synod, or
- ten (10) voting members of the Synod Assembly with signatures and respective congregations noted.

### **Writing a Resolution**

The resolution itself should be concise and to the point and therefore easily understood. An effective resolution is designed to state a concern or problem and to propose a method of resolving that concern or problem. The concern or problem is stated in the "WHEREAS" clause(s). Sometimes the concern can be adequately stated in one such clause; other times it takes several clauses to clearly state the concern or problem. The proposed solution to the concern should be stated in the "BE IT RESOLVED" clause(s). The solution should clearly define:

- who should act
- what should be done
- when it should be accomplished
- to whom the results should be reported
- what the action will cost and how it should be funded

Basically, the best resolutions and memorials are simple and direct. They contain a minimum of adjectives and adverbs. They avoid inflammatory words and generalized statements. They clearly and accurately state facts. They are built on straightforward nouns and verbs. Good resolutions and memorials say, in essence, "Please, this is why we think this is important and this is the action that we believe should be taken."

At times, an action by a churchwide unit is desired in a resolution or memorial. Rather than addressing all such resolutions to the Churchwide Assembly, it may be more appropriate (and expedient) to work through the Church Council. In that case the final "Resolved" should be in this form:

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly direct the Northeastern Minnesota Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council's Executive Committee for proper referral and disposition under the bylaws and continuing resolutions of this church.

or

RESOLVED, that the Northeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly direct the Northeastern Minnesota Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action.

### ***Sample Resolution***

WHEREAS, there is a lot of business which needs to be handled at the Synod Assembly; and,  
WHEREAS, much time can be spent clarifying issues that are poorly stated or use excessive words; and  
WHEREAS, the author of each resolution wants his or her resolutions to be carefully considered;  
therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the persons submitting resolutions to the 2020 Synod Assembly be encouraged to use clear, concise language.

### **To Submit Resolutions**

- Resolutions submitted to the Committee for Reference, Counsel and Memorial must include the name and address of the submitters and, if individuals, their congregational membership. If citing a document, attach it to the resolution.
- Resolutions can be submitted to the synod office:

Northeastern Minnesota Synod  
1105 East Superior St., Upper Suite  
Duluth, MN 55802-2204.

### **Resolution Deadlines**

**The Synod Assembly Planning Committee** recommends **Wednesday, April 1, 2020** as the final date for submitting resolutions so that the Reference Counsel and Memorial Committee would have adequate time to review them.