

Report of the Committee on Reference and Counsel

**RESOLUTION A:
REMEMBERING THE WORLD IS A VILLAGE: GLOBAL PANDEMIC 21ST
CENTURY**

- 1 *Whereas*, in 2019 when the world first learned of the severity of this novel coronavirus named
2 COVID-19; and on March 1st, 2020 when the first medically documented case was
3 identified in New York State; and
4 *Whereas*, COVID-19 was first located overseas in 2019 and spread quickly throughout the globe
5 showing how interconnected (village) we truly are; and
6 *Whereas*, the pandemic uncovered denigrating and discriminatory experiences of many people;
7 and
8 *Whereas*, the church is called to reflect in church and society its roles of advocate and model for
9 the respect, dignity, and equal rights due all people; and
10 *Whereas*, this church is simultaneously addressing racism and justice in its social statements;
11 therefore, be it
12 **RESOLVED**, that the Metropolitan New York Synod comprised of 17 unique conferences,
13 which have all suffered the loss of beloved stewards, invite all of our worshipping
14 bodies to commemorate the first Sunday in March 2022 (March 6) and 2025
15 (March 2) as a joint *Remembrance of the Loss of Our Beloved Siblings to COVID-*
16 *19* throughout the state and especially within our congregations; and be it further
17 **RESOLVED**, that the Synod and its conferences*:
18 1. include locally a celebration and special recognition of loved ones; and also
19 2. honor and lift up first responders; and also
20 3. honor and lift up essential workers; and also
21 4. honor and lift up educators; and also
22 5. continue to fight and advocate for fair medical treatment, practice and
23 affordable care for all persons; and also
24 6. lift up all persons regardless of race, sexual orientation and class
25 understanding that we are a village and have come to fully realize what
26 happens in one part of the globe can happen globally if we do not act
27 responsibly together.

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29 *-Bronx, Brooklyn Bridges, Delaware Hudson (Orange, Rockland and Sullivan counties), Eastern
30 Nassau, Hudson (Ulster and Dutchess counties), Manhattan, Northeast Queens, Peconic (Eastern
31 Suffolk County), South Shore Brooklyn, Southeast Queens, Southwest Brooklyn, Southwest
32 Nassau, Staten Island, Tappan Zee (Putnam and Westchester counties), Western Nassau, Western
33 Queens, Western Suffolk

*Prayerfully submitted by
The South Shore Brooklyn Conference
The Rev. Harriet Weber, Convener*

The Committee on Reference and Counsel recommends the adoption of this resolution.

**RESOLUTION B:
A CONDEMNATION OF STATE-SANCTIONED VIOLENCE**

1 *Whereas*, hundreds of Black lives are taken by American police every year;
2 *Whereas*, Black persons killed by police are more likely to be unarmed than white persons killed
3 by police;
4 *Whereas*, Black male teens are twenty-one times more likely to be killed by police than white
5 male teens;
6 *Whereas*, over 98% of police killings result in no charges for the officer(s) involved;
7 *Whereas*, in Lutheran theology, the state exists to preserve the world by establishing order and
8 reigning in human sinfulness, and when the state fails in its preservative function, it is
9 incumbent upon the church to remind the state of its God-given purpose;
10 *Whereas*, the United States has failed in its obligation to protect Black lives. Instead of
11 protecting the rights of Black Americans, it has violated those rights, has criminalized
12 Black people, and has established an intolerable system of police brutality and mass
13 incarceration that targets Black lives;
14 *Whereas*, We cannot let police killings of Black people continue with impunity;
15 *Whereas*, We refuse to accept the idea that these police killings are inevitable; if the United
16 States cannot put an end to the violence perpetuated by its own law enforcement
17 agencies, then it contradicts its claim to be a just state or an order of preservation;
18 therefore, be it

19 ***RESOLVED*, that the Metropolitan New York Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in
20 America does hereby proclaim:**

- 21 **1. Police killings of Black people is state-sanctioned violence and we condemn it;**
- 22 **2. Jesus was a victim of state-sanctioned violence, and so identifies with all**
23 **victims of state-sanctioned violence everywhere;**
- 24 **3. To ignore violence against Black people in the U.S. is to ignore the cross of**
25 **Jesus Christ;**
- 26 **4. American Christians cannot be silent; a system of horror is operating on our**
27 **watch, and we must stand up and declare it to be an unacceptable reality; it is**
28 **incumbent upon the people of the United States to call on our government to**
29 **account for its failure to live up to its God-given responsibility as an order of**
30 **preservation;**
- 31 **5. We call upon all congregations to reflect on the implications of Jesus’**
32 **identification with victims of state-sanctioned violence, and to lend their voices**
33 **in support of those fighting for justice; as Psalm 103 says, “The Lord executes**
34 **righteousness and justice for the oppressed,” so too we should lift up our voices**
35 **for the oppressed;**
- 36 **6. We call upon President Joseph Biden and Vice President Kamala Harris, the**
37 **U.S. House of Representatives, the U.S. Senate, and the Supreme Court of the**
38 **United States to recognize the reality of systemic injustice in our criminal**
39 **justice system, and to recognize that police brutality has become a national**
40 **emergency;**
- 41 **7. We call upon the United States to change our criminal justice system into a**
42 **system of justice.**

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Submitted by:

Rev. Dr. Christian Scharen, Pastor, St. Lydia's Dinner Church

Jack & Debbie Holloway, congregants, St. Lydia's Dinner Church

Elizabeth Norman, congregant, St. Lydia's Dinner Church

Rev. Kelsey Brown, Pastor, Jehu's Table

The Committee on Reference and Counsel MOVES TO COMMIT this resolution to the Synod Council and the Anti-racism Committee for further study, discussion, and possible revision and to resume consideration of this question at our 2022 assembly.

The seriousness of the concern addressed in this proposed resolution is not lost on the committee, and we affirm its intent. Our motion is offered to give this resolution the attention it deserves in public discussion of racial justice throughout the synod as envisioned in the proposed resolution "To Empower and Educate Believers on Diversity and Inclusion" (recommended to this assembly) before it considers the adoption of a resolution on this grave subject.

Report of the Committee on Reference and Counsel

**RESOLUTION C:
TO EMPOWER AND EDUCATE BELIEVERS ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

- 1 *Whereas*, the power to uplift the marginalized was demonstrated in Acts 8 with the conversation with and
2 subsequent baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch, a genderqueer believer of color; and.
3 *Whereas*, 1 John 3:18 teaches us “Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and
4 action”; and
5 *Whereas*, we are called to testify to the presence of God’s gifted people throughout history, many of
6 whom have been/are overlooked and dismissed, yet remain and persevere as witnesses to gospel
7 love; and.
8 *Whereas*, oftentimes the unique perspective of Women, particularly Black and Brown Women, Women
9 of Color, and members of the LGBTQIA+ community bring a fuller depth and breadth of
10 perspective as a whole church in Jesus; and
11 *Whereas*, the creation of safe, respectful spaces allows open communication for followers of Christ to
12 have a voice for their trauma when empathy is lacking and violence is perpetuated against
13 marginalized people; and
14 *Whereas*, honoring Christ’s call to embrace the marginalized in increasingly authentic, respectful, and
15 responsive manners calls us to resist undercutting one another and validate all persons, as lifted
16 in Christ’s prayer from John 17 “protect them in your name...so that they may be one, as we are
17 one”; and
18 *Whereas*, our community of faith becomes stronger and further aligned with the teachings of the gospel
19 when we acknowledge diversity and intersectionality within the body of Christ. This is vital for
20 believers in this Metropolitan New York Synod who are particularly gifted for modeling the
21 ultimate value of all people that the Lord graciously gives; and
22 *Whereas*, the Voting Members of the 2019 Metropolitan New York Synod Assembly voted to "engage or
23 accept a qualified facilitator from outside this synod to lead us through the Bridgebuilder
24 process" only to have it postponed due to public health closures of 2020; therefore, be it
25 ***RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod create discussion programs, including but not***
26 ***limited to coordinated conference-wide discussion groups, to address the intersection of***
27 ***issues of racial justice and faith by the spring of 2022; and be it further***
28 ***RESOLVED, that the Anti-Racism Committee, Evangelism Task Force, and any other appropriate***
29 ***committees of the Metropolitan New York Synod use their resources to work together to***
30 ***incorporate these issues into a cohesive message of inclusion and acceptance by the 2022***
31 ***Metropolitan New York Synod Assembly.***

Submitted by:

S. Deacon Candidate Lois C. Jenkins, Trinity, Middle Village

S. Deacon Gwen Miller, Lily Sage Mathias, S. Deacon Roberta Detmers, Congregation Council Member Maritza Tamayo, Trinity, Astoria/LIC

The Rev. Analyse Triolo, Pastor, Holy Trinity, Bellerose, Dean, Northeastern Queens Conference

The Rev. Karen Kuttler, Rostered Minister

The Rev. Jeanne R. Warfield, past Dean, Western Queens Conference

The Rev. Leticia Alanis, Pastor/Mission Developer, All Saints/Todos los Santos, Woodhaven.

The Committee on Reference and Counsel recommends the adoption of this resolution.

Report of the Committee on Reference and Counsel

**MEMORIAL A:
TO EMPOWER AND EDUCATE BELIEVERS ON DIVERSITY AND INCLUSION**

1 *Whereas*, the power to uplift the marginalized was demonstrated in Acts 8 with the conversation with and
2 subsequent baptism of the Ethiopian eunuch, a genderqueer believer of color; and
3 *Whereas*, 1 John 3:18 teaches us “Little children, let us love, not in word or speech, but in truth and
4 action”;
5 *Whereas*, we are called to testify to the presence of God’s gifted people throughout history, many of
6 whom have been/are overlooked and dismissed, yet remain and persevere as witnesses to gospel
7 love;
8 *Whereas*, oftentimes the unique perspective of Women, particularly Black and Brown Women, Women
9 of Color, and members of the LGBTQIA+ community bring a fuller depth and breadth of
10 perspective as a whole church in Jesus;
11 *Whereas*, the creation of safe, respectful spaces allows open communication for followers of Christ to
12 have a voice for their trauma when empathy is lacking and violence is perpetuated against
13 marginalized people;
14 *Whereas*, honoring Christ’s call to embrace the marginalized in increasingly authentic, respectful, and
15 responsive manners calls us to resist undercutting one another and validate all persons, as lifted
16 in Christ’s prayer from John 17 “protect them in your name...so that they may be one, as we are
17 one”;
18 *Whereas*, a community of faith becomes stronger and further aligned with the teachings of the gospel
19 when we acknowledge diversity and intersectionality within the body of Christ;
20 *Whereas*, this diversity and inclusion is vital for believers to model the ultimate value of all people that
21 the Lord so graciously gives; therefore, be it
22 **RESOLVED**, that the Metropolitan New York Synod memorialize the 2022 Churchwide Assembly of
23 the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to commit to create discussion programs,
24 including but not limited to coordinated church-wide discussion groups, to address the
25 intersection of issues of racial justice and faith; and be it further
26 **RESOLVED**, the life and ministries of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America be empowered to
27 use resources to work together to incorporate these issues into a cohesive message of
28 inclusion and acceptance.

Submitted by:

S. Deaconal Candidate Lois C. Jenkins, Trinity, Middle Village

S. Deacon Gwen Miller, Lily Sage Mathias, S. Deacon Roberta Detmers, Congregation Council Member Maritza Tamayo, Trinity, Astoria/LIC

The Rev. Analyse Triolo, Pastor, Holy Trinity, Bellerose, Dean, Northeastern Queens Conference

The Rev. Karen Kuttler, Rostered Minister

The Rev. Jeanne R. Warfield, past Dean, Western Queens Conference

The Rev. Leticia Alanis, Pastor/Mission Developer, All Saints/Todos los Santos, Woodhaven

The Committee on Reference and Counsel recommends the adoption of this memorial.

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Report of the Committee on Reference and Counsel

*The resolutions are presented in the order in which they were submitted.
The Committee on Reference and Counsel recommends the following order for their
consideration: Resolutions A, C, B, Memorial A.*

Members of the Committee

*Pr. Chryll Crews
S.Dcn. Jean Fucci
Eugene "Gene" Hiigel
Pr. John Jurik
Pr. James Krauser, chair
S.Dcn. Rob Sinanan*