

SOCIAL STATEMENT ON HUMAN DISABILITY

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- 3 WHEREAS, an estimated 54 million children and adults within the United States live with a
4 disability; and
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- 6 WHEREAS, people who live with a disability historically have faced challenges in gaining equal
7 access to education, employment, health care, and accessibility and are more likely
8 to live in poverty than people without disabilities; and
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- 10 WHEREAS, because of ignorance, fear, and perpetuation of myths, people with disabilities and
11 their families have been stigmatized and discriminated against in church and society;
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- 14 WHEREAS, there are persons who live with a disability who are active members and leaders in
15 congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, yet many
16 congregations struggle with issues of accessibility, accommodation, and welcome;
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- 19 WHEREAS, in carrying out its mission to the world, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
20 commits itself to “study social issues and trends, work to discover the causes of
21 oppression and injustice, and develop programs of ministry and advocacy to further
22 human dignity, freedom, justice, and peace in the world” (ELCA bylaw 4.03.1.); and
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- 24 WHEREAS, neither the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America nor its predecessor bodies has a
25 social statement addressing the theological and social implications of human
26 disability; and
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- 28 WHEREAS, the “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for
29 Addressing Social Concerns” states that topics for social statements shall be
30 approved by the Churchwide Assembly and that development of a social statement
31 shall be overseen by the Church in Society unit; therefore, be it
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- 33 RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan Chicago Synod memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of
34 the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the Church in Society program
35 unit to develop a social statement concerning people with disabilities to be presented
36 for consideration by the 2015 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further
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38 RESOLVED, that the task force charged with the formation of this social statement pay special
39 attention to the unique issues that face different types of disabilities, whether they
40 be physical, sensory, psychiatric, or intellectual.

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42 Submitted by:

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