Write Your Resolution Right: A Quick and Easy Guide

One avenue of access for congregations, conferences, synod organizational units and voting members to address issues and propose a plan for action is the resolution. Resolutions help organize the work of the assembly by clarifying important issues or concerns.

1. Resolutions may be submitted by congregations, synod organizational units, conferences, or a voting member of the assembly until 45 days prior to the first day the assembly meets. For the 2021 Synod Assembly, resolutions must be in the synod office by **Wednesday, April 7, 2021**

Minutes showing adoption of such proposed resolutions from a meeting of a congregation, congregation council, synod committee, or conference assembly must accompany the submitted resolution. The signatures, typed names, and telephone numbers must be provided by voting members (of the forthcoming synod assembly) submitting a resolution. Please include the name and information for the contact person in the event the resolution is from a group to assist the committee if they have questions regarding the resolution.

2. A resolution should be stated clearly and concisely and should be tested before they are submitted. Ask yourself...
   - Is the information in the resolution complete and accurate?
   - Is this a matter that pertains to the life and ministry of the synod?
   - Is this a matter of significance requiring consideration by the synod assembly?
   - Is the action requested one which the synod can appropriately and effectively implement?
   - Is this concern directed to the appropriate unit? Would it be best directed toward the synod council, the executive committee, a synod network or committee, the synod staff, etc.?
   - Do other people validate this idea? Have I tested it with other voting members, rostered leaders, etc.?
   - Does my resolution answer the following questions:
     - WHAT should be done?
     - WHO should act?
     - WHAT ENTITY should bear the cost, if any, and what cost is anticipated?
     - WHEN should the action be done?
     - TO WHOM should the results be reported?
   - If the resolution demands changes to the constitution or bylaws, are the proposed changes included in the resolution?
   - Does the resolution use specific, non-inflammatory language, including straightforward nouns and verbs?

Remember - Direct Your Intentions to the Appropriate Body!

The Churchwide Assembly receives many memorials. Many of these concerns could be better addressed by sending resolutions to the ELCA Church Council. Please keep in mind that memorials may not be the only route for a synod to address an issue.

**Memorials** must include a final “resolved” clause asking the Churchwide Assembly to act (or refrain from acting) in a particular way. Here is a sample final paragraph of a memorial from a Synod Assembly:

> RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Iowa Synod Assembly memorialize the 2022 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to . . . [clearly describe the proposed course of action].

The final “resolved” clause of **resolutions** will differ depending upon whether they are intended for the attention of the Church Council or a churchwide unit or office through the Church Council’s Executive Committee. Here are sample final paragraphs for resolutions:

> RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Iowa Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action.

*Or*
RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Iowa Synod Assembly direct the Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council’s Executive Committee for referral and disposition to the appropriate unit or office of the churchwide organization in accordance with the bylaws and continuing resolutions of this church.

Or

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Iowa Synod Council request the Church Council to . . . [clearly describe the proposed course of action].

Or

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Iowa Synod Council request the Church Council’s Executive Committee to . . . [clearly describe the proposed course of action by a Churchwide unit or office].

We are encouraged to route our resolutions through our synod council either to the church council or to the church council’s executive committee. The churchwide policy affirms that:

- Synod Assemblies may address the Churchwide Assembly through memorials;
- Synod Councils may address the ELCA Church Council through resolutions; and
- Synod Councils may address churchwide units or offices through the ELCA Church Council’s Executive Committee (including forwarding resolutions adopted by Synod Assemblies).
Resolution Format Guide

A resolution must be written in the following format:

WHEREAS: The WHEREAS sections clearly state the REASONS for the resolution. Each reason should be a separate WHEREAS. Keep in mind, a “whereas” clause is **not** required. This is only for supporting information, but not necessary. Writers of resolutions are encouraged to be succinct should they choose to submit whereas clauses.

RESOLVED: The RESOLVED sections clearly state the action(s) desired - what should be done, who should do it, how it should be done, and when it should be done. Each action should be a separate RESOLVED so the assembly may deal with them individually.

If a resolution requires one action, use the following format:
RESOLVED,__________________________.

If a resolution requires more than one action, the following format is used:
RESOLVED,__________________________;
RESOLVED__________________________.

If a resolution is preceded by a reason for submitting it, the following format is used:
WHEREAS,__________________________; therefore, be it
RESOLVED,__________.

If a resolution is preceded by two or more reasons, the following format is used:
WHEREAS,__________________________; and
WHEREAS,__________________________; therefore, be it
RESOLVED,__________.

You must always include with your resolution:
- a title for your resolution
- name of congregation and city (or committee, or conference) from which the resolution was originated
- date the resolution was submitted

If your resolution is being submitted by a conference or committee, you must also include:
- typed name and signature of conference dean or committee chair,
- minutes from meeting at which the resolution was drafted/approved

For examples of past resolutions, see [http://seiasynod.org/news-events/synod-assemblies/resolutions](http://seiasynod.org/news-events/synod-assemblies/resolutions)

Resolutions must be in the synod office by **Wednesday, April 7, 2021**. The Synod Reference and Counsel Committee will process resolutions to “bring to the floor.” Members of the Reference and Counsel Committee are also available to provide suggestions for writing or directing resolutions.

Send Your Resolutions to Val Harlynn, [communications@seiasynod.org](mailto:communications@seiasynod.org)

or

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