

# 1992: YEAR OF REMEMBRANCE, REPENTANCE, AND RENEWAL

## Social Policy Resolution CA91.5.28



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.

### **Resolved**

#### *Regarding the Columbus Quincentenary*

To declare 1992, the Columbus Quincentenary, as a year for remembrance, repentance, and renewal throughout the church and as a year for developing and deepening relationships with Native American people, as well as others who have faced suffering and oppression during the past 500 years;

To request that the inter-unit task force on the Columbus Quincentenary, along with other appropriate resource persons, under the leadership of the Commission for Multicultural Ministries and in consultation with the Native American, African-American, Hispanic, and Asian communities, bring its plan for implementing this commitment to the November 1991 meeting of the ELCA Church Council. This plan will include ways by which the churchwide organization will assist individuals, congregations, synods, the churchwide organization and Lutheran agencies, institutions and schools:

- to understand more fully the historical context and the impact of the coming of Columbus on the indigenous peoples who populated the Caribbean and the North and South American continents,
- to understand and respond to issues relating to treaty rights, to racism and to poverty that affect the well-being of Native Americans in this country and indigenous peoples throughout the world,
- to understand and appreciate the history, heritage and culture of Native American peoples and other communities of color, and to acknowledge the contributions that Native Americans, Asians, African-Americans, and Hispanics, have made to the life and the culture of this country, and
- to engage in dialogue with Native American brothers and sisters and to build and improve relations with them;

To encourage each synod to give attention at its 1992 synod assembly to the theme of remembrance, repentance and renewal of relationships with Native American people, as well as with other racial/ethnic groups within that synod, and to undertake additional efforts during 1992 to assist congregations and individuals to respond to the opportunity that the Columbus Quincentenary offers to strengthen relationships with Native American people.

#### *In Solidarity and Advocacy with Native Americans*

To affirm the commitment of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to support the sovereignty of Native American tribes, to speak out for just treatment of Native Americans, and to promote harmony, reconciliation and mutual understanding within and among our communities;

To instruct the Commission for Church in Society, in consultation with the Commission for Multicultural Ministries and the Native American Lutheran Association to recommend policy for advocacy in the area of treaty rights, tribal sovereignty, and religious freedom;

To affirm the ongoing work in this area of individuals, congregations and synods and of the churchwide organization, including the Commission for Church in Society (Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs) and the Commission for Multicultural Ministries;

To increase efforts in this area, including advocacy for justice for Native Americans by the bishop of this church, by the Lutheran Office for Governmental Affairs in Washington, D.C., by synods and their bishops, by congregations and by individuals throughout this church, particularly during the Columbus Quincentenary year.

*For Congregational Study and Observances*

To encourage individuals and congregations to engage seriously in the churchwide discussion relating to the development of a social teaching statement on "Race, Ethnicity and Culture" and to address issues relating to Native Americans and the Columbus Quincentenary within this context; and

To commend to the Commission for Communication the request of the Nebraska Synod and La Crosse Area Synod that congregations observe a Native American Awareness Sunday each year, as that commission, in consultation with other units, develops the annual ELCA Calendar of Emphases.

**Adopted by the Churchwide Assembly in August 1991**