



Recommendation: Archival of Certain Social Policy Resolutions

Background

In accordance with “Policies and Procedures of the ELCA for Addressing Social Concerns” (2018), Church Council may vote to archive social messages. Likewise, social policy resolutions may be archived by action of the Churchwide Assembly. The proposed archival of “A Changing Europe: Peace and the Churches” social message (adopted 1989), along with the reasons for the proposed action, was reviewed by the Conference of Bishops and came before the Church Council for action. A two-thirds vote of the Church Council archived this social message as a historical document. A report of this action is to be given to the 2019 Churchwide Assembly.

Social policy resolutions serve as this church’s policy directives until a) replaced by subsequent resolutions, b) rendered mute by subsequent social teaching documents, or c) sent to archive by a Churchwide Assembly. A review for relevance shall be initiated 25 years after adoption. Social policy resolutions are adopted in a particular social context, and this planned review of their continued relevance enables subsequent generations of church leaders to consider whether a resolution should continue to represent the policy of this church.

The director for theological ethics has compiled all resolutions that are now 25 years or older and recommended those to be archived in the category of historical documents. A compilation was shared with a variety of groups for review over a three-month period. The Conference of Bishops reviewed the list at its spring 2019 meeting, and it came before the April 2019 Church Council meeting. The Church Council voted to recommend archiving these documents.

It should be noted that only the social policy resolutions marked as “yes” in “2019 Archival of Certain Social Policy Resolutions” will be archived. Those reviewed but marked as “no” will remain active.

Recommended for assembly action: Archival of social policy resolutions

To archive the social policy resolutions identified in the “2019 Archival of Certain Social Policy Resolutions” document as suitable for archive, in accordance with the “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” (2018).

From ELCA Policies and Procedures for Addressing Social Concerns (2018), p. 25

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Review procedure:

...2. The director for theological ethics shall bring a recommendation to the Church Council regarding which resolutions should remain in force and those that should be archived in the category of historical documents.

The recommendation should be guided by comments from those consulted and the following criteria:

- Relevance to the ELCA’s contemporary mission.
- Continued significance for society.
- Congruence with ELCA social teaching.”

Key to chart: Only those marked Yes are proposed for archiving; sm indicates social message; ss indicates social statement

Name	Year	Archive?	Why?	Description
Conflict in the Middle East	1991	Yes	updated by sm & strategy	Advocates for nonviolent resolutions to conflicts in the Middle East and strive for continued peacekeeping efforts from the United Nations.
Racism	1989	Yes	updated by racism ss	Names racism as a sin and commits to addressing in all aspects of life and work the destructive results of racism.
Central American Refugees	1989	Yes	updated by immigration sm, Blueprint for Action strategy & AMMPARO	Supports extending hospitality to Central American refugees who seek sanctuary in the US.
Health Care	1989	Yes	updated by health care ss	Supports access to quality health care for everyone, regardless of income, and urges Congress to pass legislation to achieve this goal.

Sexual Abuse and Harassment	1991	Yes	updated by g-b violence sm	Addresses issues related to sexual abuse and harassment and calls on the CWO to develop educational materials to address this within the church.
Sexual Harassment	1989	Yes	updated by g-b violence sm	Commits to making the ELCA a safer place by eliminating sexual harassment and refusing to tolerate any abuses of this kind in congregations and synods.
Welfare	1989	Yes	updated by economic life ss	Commits to seeking a just and equitable welfare system and supports all those involved with welfare reform in the US.
AIDS Crisis	1991	Yes	Updated by 2009 HIV/Aids Strategy adopted by CC	Addresses the AIDS epidemic by calling on the church to express concern and extend welcome to those specifically affected by AIDS.
Ministry with Persons with Disabilities	1991	Yes	updated by People Living With Disabilities sm	Encourages congregations and members to develop an awareness of the abilities and needs of persons with disabilities and encourages congregations to seek out and include people with disabilities in the full life and ministry of the ELCA.
Middle East	1993	Yes	replaced by Peace Not Walls strategy adopted by CWA 2005	Affirms the principles of the "Declaration on Christians in the Holy Land" and "Crisis in the West Bank and Gaza" and requests that more action continue to be taken to continue to advocate for justice and peace in the Middle East.
Health and Human Resources	1991	Yes	replaced by health care ss	Affirms organizations working towards achieving universal health care for citizens of the US.
Central America	1989	Yes	historically outdated; effectively updated by Blueprint for Action approved by CC in 1990.	Advocates for US military aid for the nations of Central America suffering from war, poverty, hunger and oppression.
Conscription and Conscience	1991	Yes	historically outdated; concern also dealt with in For Peace ss	Encourages congregations to share with their young members information on the church's position on conscientious objection to military service and on the availability of nondirective counseling, in regards to the Minneapolis Area Synod's memorial on this subject.
China	1989	Yes	historically outdated	Pledges to stand in solidary with the Chinese people in the midst of their suffering because of the government of the People's Republic of China.

Domestic Hunger, Poverty, and Substandard Housing	1991	Yes	historically outdated	Endorse and encourage the ELCA to more adequately address the issues of domestic poverty, hunger, and substandard housing in the US.
Liberia	1991	Yes	historically outdated	Commits to being in solidarity with the people of Liberia (especially the Lutheran Church of Liberia) as they face war in their nation and calls upon the US government to aid Liberia.
Prisoners of War in Southeast Asia	1989	Yes	historically outdated	Supports efforts to find missing US personnel in Southeast Asia and encourages the continued cooperation of the Vietnamese government in these efforts.
U.S. Military Aid to El Salvador	1991	Yes	historically dated	Commits to pray and work for a negotiated and just solution to the conflict in El Salvador, specifically through the support of Campaign of Prayer, Fasting, and Vigils.
Domestic Violence	1989	Yes	g-b violence sm replaces	Attempts to raise awareness and reduce incidents of domestic violence, as well as provide compassion for its victims.
Human Sexuality/Homosexuality	1993	Yes	answered by sexuality ss	Encourages members to continue the process of developing a social teaching statement on human sexuality, particularly as it pertains to homosexuality.
Organ Donation	1989	Yes	replaced by the more comprehensive social policy resolution "The Donation of Organs, Tissue, and Whole Blood"	Calls upon congregations to lift up the need for organ donation and encourages members to consider organ donation as part of their stewardship of life's resources.
1992: Year of Remembrance, Repentance, and Renewal	1991	No		Considers the past injustice and harm inflicted on the Native American people in the United States and pledges to improve relationships with members of these communities.
Ban Weapons	1989	No		Encourages ELCA members to consider stricter gun control and a ban/regulation on weapon sales.
Civil Matters	1987	No		Resolves to recommendations of privileged communication with clergypersons, chaplaincies supported by government, civil disobedience, and the bearing of arms.

Community Violence-Gun Control	1993	No		Urges government officials to reconsider the widespread availability of handguns and military assault weapons and supports the Brady Bill and other controls over the manufacture, sale, and private ownership of handguns and military assault weapons.
ELCA Deaf Community	1993	No		Calls for developing ministry and specific engagement with those within the deaf community.
Environmental Concerns	1989	No		Commits to placing an emphasis on recycling and other increased efforts for sustainability, and discontinues the use of non-biodegradable and non-recyclable products.
Harassment Sexual Orientation	1993	No		Opposes all harassment to LGBTQ persons on the basis of sexual orientation and supports legislation which affirms the civil rights of all persons.
Housing Homelessness	1989	No		Commits to seeking adequate housing for all and encourages congregations and other organizations engaged with this ministry to continue this work.
Immigrants and Refugees	1991	No		Affirms the ongoing resettlement and advocacy work being done for immigrants and refugees, with particular gratitude to LIRS.
Israel and Occupied Territories	1989	No		Affirms the Church Council's 1989 action on "The Israeli/Palestinian Conflict" and to encourage members/congregations to engage with this peacekeeping work.
LGBT Military	1993	No		Supports Bishop Chilstrom's letter to President Clinton asking to raise the ban on homosexual individuals in the US military and to advocate for the civil rights for gay and lesbian persons.
Ministry to the Deaf Community	1991	No		Prioritizes providing ministry to the US deaf community and calls for the CWA to establish a desk for deaf ministry in the ELCA.
Rural Congregations	1989	No		Affirms the contributions of small rural churches and congregations in the ELCA and commits to addressing the needs and concerns of these areas specifically.

Social Statements	1987	No		Resolves that the Constituting Convention of the ELCA receives the social statements of the existing churches as historical documents of the predecessor bodies and instructs the Commission for Church in Society to set priorities in regard to the issues to be studied.
Workers' Rights	1991	No		Resolves to commit to the rights of those in the workforce, particularly through public policy advocacy and negotiated settlements for workers.