

### **Resolution # 3—Resolution for 2009 Synod Assembly Lutheran Disaster Response**

Whereas, the Church in Society unit of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) encourages us to be “a public church that witnesses boldly to God’s love for all that God has created,”

Whereas, the ELCA, over the last two decades, has developed a nationally recognized and effective tool for bringing comfort, healing and renewal to those affected by disasters known as Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR),

Whereas, thousands of ELCA members have been empowered to do God’s work through their hands, by being inspired, trained and deployed by LDR and its affiliates to provide life transforming ministry to those affected by disaster and offering on-going assistance to those in need well after others have left the area,

Whereas, the national Lutheran Disaster Response office provides national coordination but the primary preparedness and response happens through the LDR local affiliates,

Whereas, the scientific community is raising the alarm that natural disasters will be increasing due to climate change, and as a nation since September 11, 2001, we have become acutely aware of the potential for disaster created by acts of terror,

Whereas, the deficits in our national response to Hurricane Katrina visibly demonstrated our need to be better prepared and that research has demonstrated that preparedness is a primary predictor of survival and recovery in disaster,

Whereas, disasters can affect all – but disproportionately they affect the disenfranchised due to the historic location of poorer communities in vulnerable areas, mobility restrictions, and the lack of access to other resources,

Whereas disaster preparedness and response offer opportunities for the Church to manifest faith in action, growing spirituality, and striving for justice,

Whereas, professionals for local preparedness and response are integral for leadership and coordination of Lutheran congregations, agencies, institutions, volunteers and resources for best response,

Whereas, LDR is not a *line-item* in the Church wide budget and lacks the resources to support preparedness plans that would allow the Lutheran Church to be effective in ministering to people affected by disaster,

Therefore, be it

Resolved that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod memorializes the ELCA through the Church and Society Unit to affirm its commitment to the mission to faithfully prepare for and effectively respond to the needs of people affected by disaster by:

Committing appropriate resources to LDR to sustain and support the work of preparedness;

and,

Continuing the work of standardizing preparedness and response tools,

Be it further resolved that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod memorializes the Church and Society Unit to create an advisory committee to work with the staff of LDR to improve its funding streams and to support the ministry of LDR and its affiliates.

Be it further resolved that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod memorializes the Conference of Bishops and the Church and Society Unit to develop a conversation with ecumenical partners to create national service relationships in disaster response.

Be it further resolved that the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod memorializes the ELCA through the Church and Society Unit of the ELCA to direct and equip Lutheran Disaster Response to use the technological tools available to it to serve as a national communication link which connects those affiliates engaged in response with the resources throughout the national network.

The language of this resolution is an interim draft of a resolution being considered by several Synods. The submitters were concerned that final language would not be available before the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod deadline for submitting resolutions. In fact, final language was available and was submitted separately, received by the Synod Office as Resolution # 4 in the Assembly materials. The submitters have, therefore, requested that this resolution be withdrawn.

**The Committee on Reference and Counsel accepts withdrawal of this resolution.**