

RESOLUTION #8

Submitted by Rev. Nathan W. Loer, Zion Lutheran Church, Browerville

A Resolution Regarding the Use of the Word Adoption in the Church

- 1 **WHEREAS,** Adoption is a legal process which establishes a parent/child relationship between two people who
2 were not parent/child by birth which carries all the privileges, responsibilities, joys, and struggles
3 of a birth parent/birth child relationship; and
- 4 **WHEREAS,** Many in our churches and communities live within such parent/child relationships through legal
5 adoption; and
- 6 **WHEREAS,** Adoption language may be used carelessly and inappropriately in our culture when referring to
7 acts of care, support, nurture, and help that fall well short of the true definition of adoption (e.g.,
8 “Adopt-a highway,” “adopt-a-classroom,” “adopt-a-grandparent,” etc.); and
- 9 **WHEREAS,** Such casual adoption language is also present in our congregations and other ELCA
10 Organizations (e.g., “Adopt-a-camper,” “Adopt-a-Youth,” “Adopt-a-congregation,” etc.); and
- 11 **WHEREAS,** Such casual use of adoption language may serve to cheapen the loving, binding, and lifelong
12 relationship between adoptive parent and child and undermine those relationship as being less
13 than equal to the relationship between birth parent and child; and
- 14 **WHEREAS,** This casual use of adoption language may also undermine scripture’s use of adoption language as
15 a very positive metaphor for our relationship with God (see Romans 8:15, 23; 9:4; Galatians 4:5;
16 and Ephesians 1:5); therefore be it
- 17 **RESOLVED,** That the Northwestern Minnesota Synod in assembly speak highly of families formed by
18 adoption, including: parents willing to become adoptive parents; birth parents courageous enough
19 to recognize the necessity to place their children for adoption in certain circumstances; and the
20 children who thrive because of the new life adoption affords; and be it further
- 21 **RESOLVED,** That the Northwestern Minnesota Synod in assembly urge its synod STAFF, congregations,
22 camps, colleges, mission partners, and members to refrain from the use of adoption language
23 except when referring to the legal adoption of children by adoptive parents and the adoption of
24 resolutions, etc., by the church in its various forms and other official bodies; and be it further
- 25 **RESOLVED,** That the Northwestern Minnesota Synod in assembly show its support for words like, “sponsor,”
26 “support,” “gift,” “help,” and “nurture,” for acts of financial and emotional generosity, love, and
27 care which are important and wonderful – but are not legal acts of adoption; and be it further
- 28 **RESOLVED,** That the Northwestern Minnesota Synod in assembly urge its individual members to work to
29 eliminate the casual use of adoption language in their families, communities, and workplaces.