

The background of the page is a solid yellow color. Overlaid on this is a large, faint watermark of the University of Regina logo. The logo is an oval shape containing a cross with decorative ends. The text "UNIVERSITY OF REGINA" is written around the inner border of the oval, and the year "1960" is at the bottom. At the top of the oval is a small triangle with a circle inside it.

TRAFFIC SAFETY

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TRAFFIC SAFETY

(A statement approved by the Fourth General Convention of The American Lutheran Church, October 16-22, 1968, with the recommendation that it "be commended to the congregations for study." Address Commission on Research and Social Action, 422 South Fifth Street, Minneapolis, Minnesota 55415, for suggestions for supplemental materials and resources which may be helpful in such study.)

1. The toll in injury, death, and destruction that traffic exacts on American streets and highways should deeply concern The American Lutheran Church. What should especially distress us is that so much of this pain, grief, heart-break, loss, and destruction is utterly needless. For, as we see it, traffic accidents result in large part from ignorant, thoughtless, careless, rash, impetuous, reckless, or irresponsible behavior.

2. We teach that Christ expects His followers to lead disciplined, controlled, responsible lives. He calls upon each of His own to govern themselves by the effect of their actions upon other persons. We believe that the fruits of His Spirit—"love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self control"—are as much in place behind the steering wheel as before the altar.

3. We believe, too, that effective law and authority are needed to curb dangerous practices and to foster wholesome behavior in traffic. We support sound legislation designed to promote traffic safety. In particular we endorse legislation that will effectively curb the menace of driving under the influence of alcohol or drugs. We uphold that exercise of public authority which enforces such sound legislation with honor, justice, integrity, consistency, and impartiality.

4. Many other groups beyond the legislative and the enforcement agencies also must be mobilized in the fight for traffic safety. We urge particularly that those with commercial interests at stake—automobile manufacturers and dealers, petroleum and rubber industries, service station and repair businesses, truck and bus operators, contractors for street and highway construction, beverage alcohol venders, and insurance underwriters, for example—marshal their resources for a coordinated attack on the evils that imperil our traffic on streets and highways.

5. Members of The American Lutheran Church should support informed, decisive, and constructive action toward improving traffic safety. Such action needs to move simultaneously on many fronts, which will seek to:

- a. engineer maximum safety features into streets and highways, signs and markers, road surfaces, and access to highways, including the setting of realistic speed limits;
- b. design motor vehicles to insure safety, to foster comfort, and to guard against foreseeable contingencies;

- c. train and screen drivers more thoroughly in order to weed out the incompetent, irresponsible, or error-prone;
- d. educate pedestrians to avoid thoughtless and hazardous actions and to keep from bringing upon an innocent driver the anguish of a pedestrian accident he could not prevent;
- e. improve legislative, enforcement, and judicial controls so as to win and maintain citizen respect for just laws and for their fair and impartial administration;
- f. expand research efforts to provide valid answers to questions basic to the broad scope of traffic safety;
- g. provide increased funding for public and private agencies, through both taxes and voluntary contributions, necessary to finance a comprehensive attack on traffic evils;
- h. develop an enlightened public opinion which will give the tone, dimension, and support needed to effect responsible programs for traffic safety.

6. Traffic safety starts with each driver and each pedestrian. The American Lutheran Church urges each of its members to take to heart and to put into practice these points of personal action for traffic safety:

- a. Know and obey all laws for drivers and pedestrians;
- b. Use available safety devices, such as seat belts;
- c. Keep yourself and your car in error-free control;
- d. Avoid compulsive driving under such emotional conditions as anger, hostility, depression, or exhilaration;
- e. Stay alert for the other person's error;
- f. Practice the "Golden Rule" in all situations;
- g. Never drive when drugs or alcoholic beverages may impair your abilities;
- h. Ride only with a driver you know to be competent and law-abiding;
- i. Inform yourself about and support sound proposals for improving traffic safety;
- j. Influence others to support effective programs of engineering, education, and enforcement;
- k. Express to public officials your opinion on needed measures to improve traffic safety;
- l. Accept willingly your share of the financial costs of realistic programs for traffic safety;
- m. Pray daily for God's protection upon you and others who use the streets and highways and for His guidance to those who must seek sound solutions for the problems of traffic safety.

**COMMISSION ON RESEARCH
AND SOCIAL ACTION
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