

Supporting ELCA Land Back Efforts and Indigenous Ministries

Social Policy Resolution CA22.03.14



Approved by the 2022 Churchwide Assembly.

RESOLVED:

To receive with gratitude the memorials from Northwest Washington Synod, Oregon Synod, and Southwestern Pennsylvania Synod concerning the Land Back movement;

To encourage all ELCA members, congregations, synods, ministries, colleges, campus ministries, seminaries, camps, associated organizations, and partners to explore including land acknowledgments which center Native voices as part of their public gatherings;

To encourage all ELCA members, congregations, synods, ministries, colleges, campus ministries, seminaries, camps, associated organizations, and partners to become educated about the Indigenous peoples who thrived, prior to European contact, on the land they currently inhabit;

To learn about, learn from, and be in deepening relationship with Indigenous people and tribal nations;

To encourage all ELCA members, congregations, synods, ministries, colleges, campus ministries, seminaries, camps, associated organizations, and partners, to support creative programs of restorative justice in partnership with Indigenous people, including, but not limited to, whenever considering a transfer or sale of real property, including returning land (and any structures built on it) after satisfying any financial obligations, to the appropriate Native nations, and when direct return is not feasible or not desired by the Indigenous people, to return the proceeds from the sale of the land to the ELCA Native American Ministry Fund or other local Indigenous led ministries or organizations;

To call upon the appropriate home areas and offices of the churchwide organization to work collaboratively with the relevant local synods and their local Indigenous partners to explore sources and needs in funding for the more than 30 ELCA Indigenous congregations and service ministries; and to direct the Resource Development and the Budget and Finance Committees of the Church Council to identify potential sources of sustainable funding for these congregations and service ministries; and for these synods, home areas, offices, and committees to present findings of possible funding of these ministries to the Church Council no later than its Spring 2025 meeting, with a commitment to implement proposed and sustainable actions for funding of these ministries during the 2026-2028 triennium budget cycle; and

To call upon the appropriate home areas and offices of the churchwide organization to first engage with the relevant local synods and their local Indigenous partners whenever planning or considering work related to Indigenous people or ministries.