

## Reference and Counsel – Motion 1.4

### MOTION 1.4

**RELATING TO:** Confronting and dismantling racism in the Eastern Synod, ELCIC, and upholding the ELCIC's commitment to inclusiveness and diversity.

**SUBMITTED BY:** Director of Public Policy and Service Ministries, Eastern Synod, ELCIC

### PREAMBLE:

Understanding that inclusiveness and diversity are gifts of God, as declared and adopted by the ELCIC with the Statement on Inclusiveness and Diversity: Gifts of God (<http://elcic.ca/Public-Policy/documents/900.21984-AStatementonInclusivenessandDiversity.pdf>), that each human being is created in the image of God, and that “all human beings belong to a single species... they are born equal in dignity and rights and all form an integral part of humanity” <sup>1</sup> we acknowledge that:

In Christ, the creation broken by sin is restored to fullness as people are reconciled to God and to one another. Through God's gift of the Holy Spirit, the people of God's church are empowered to live as one people celebrating the fullness of God's creation. In Christ all divisions among people are broken down. The church is God's instrument for reconciliation in the world also as it witnesses through its life to the new creation in Christ. <sup>2</sup>

Through Christ, we are summoned to live out God's vision of the dignity and worth of every human being, and, as such, we are urged to stand and work in solidarity with racialized persons or racialized groups within our church and society. As the Eastern Synod, we have begun to take steps in the journey of right relationships with Indigenous peoples through the framework of the 94 Calls to Action from the final report of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission. However, we acknowledge the difficult yet crucial challenges of continuing to dismantle privilege, eliminate racism, and embrace diversity. Confession and repentance of racist attitudes and actions and continued reflection and action are necessary to respond to communities that continue to experience the debilitating effects of racism.

### MOTION:

We, as Synod, ministry areas, congregations, and individual members, commit to the vital and urgent work of confronting the sin of racism and to the dismantling of racist and colonial attitudes present in ourselves, our church, and our society by upholding Eastern Synod Assembly Motion 1.3 ([http://www.easternsynod.org/sites/default/files/content/assembly\\_2012\\_motion\\_1.3\\_0.pdf](http://www.easternsynod.org/sites/default/files/content/assembly_2012_motion_1.3_0.pdf)), the Statement on Inclusiveness and Diversity: Gifts of God and our commitment to right relationships with Indigenous peoples (<http://elcic.ca/CompassionateJustice/IndigenousRightsandRelationships.cfm>).

---

<sup>1</sup> Declaration on Race and Racial Prejudice, General Conference of UNESCO, 20<sup>th</sup> Session, 27 November 1978

<sup>2</sup> Racism in Church and Society” LWF Report: Budapest 1984 Proceedings of the Seventh Assembly. February 1985. No.19/20 p.244

We commit ourselves to:

1. in depth self-reflection and learning with respect to the issues of racism, privilege, diversity, and right relationships,
2. individual and corporate confession of racism as a structural sin which exists in our churches and communities,
3. “after the process of confession, repentance, self-learning, and reflection to humbly respond to invitations from communities that experience the debilitating effects of racism and with communities that live with privilege, to find ways to journey together, confronting the reality of racism.”<sup>3</sup>
4. reacquainting and recommitting ourselves with the ELCIC’s Statement on Inclusiveness and Diversity, the ELCIC’s Resolution on the Doctrine of Discovery (see <http://elcic.ca/Public-Policy/documents/DoctrineofDiscoveryMotionFINAL.pdf>), using them, among others, as tools in the work of dismantling racism,
5. using specially marked times, such as Black History month (February), or the International Day for the Elimination of Racial Discrimination (March 21), National Indigenous Peoples Day (June 21), among others, to corporately focus our work on diversity and inclusiveness,
6. establishing a Racial Justice Advisory Committee under the portfolio of the Director of Public Policy and Service Ministries to provide resources (written, experiential, video, etc.) for the continued work of dismantling racism and privilege,
7. and, for ministry area representatives to report and provide feedback annually to the Director of Public Policy and Service Ministries on learning, steps, and actions taken on the issues of racism, diversity, culture, and right relationships.

**RECOMMENDATION:**

Adoption

---

<sup>3</sup> Motion 1.3, Eastern Synod Assembly, 2012