

## Write Your Resolution Right: A Quick & Easy Guide

1. Resolutions should be submitted by:

- Majority vote of a congregation of the synod at a regular or special meeting of the congregation;
- Approval by a two-thirds vote of a congregation council
- Majority vote of a committee of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod
- Majority vote of a conference assembly
- A group of at least ten members of congregations of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod elected to serve as voting members of the forthcoming synod assembly.

Minutes showing adoption of such proposed resolutions from a meeting of a congregation, congregation council, synod committee, or conference assembly must accompany the submitted resolution. The signatures, typed names, and telephone numbers must be provided by voting members (of the forthcoming synod assembly) submitting a resolution.

2. A resolution should be stated clearly and concisely.

3. Resolutions should be tested before they are submitted. Ask yourself...

- Is the information in the resolution complete and accurate?
- Is this a matter which pertains to the life and ministry of the synod?
- Is this a matter of significance requiring consideration by the synod assembly?
- Is the action requested one which the synod can appropriately and effectively implement?
- Is this concern directed to the appropriate unit? Would it be best directed toward the synod council, the executive committee, a synod committee, the synod staff, etc.?
- Do other people validate this idea? Have I tested it with other voting members, pastors, etc.?

- Does my resolution answer the following questions:

WHAT should be done? WHO should act? WHAT ENTITY should bear the cost, if any, and what cost is anticipated? WHEN should the action be done? TO WHOM should the results be reported?

- If the resolution demands changes to the constitution or bylaws, are the proposed changes included in the resolution?
- Does the resolution use specific, non-inflammatory language, including straightforward nouns and verbs?

### Remember - Direct Your Concern to the Appropriate Body!

The Churchwide Assembly receives many memorials. Many of these concerns could be better addressed by sending resolutions to the ELCA Church Council. Please keep in mind that memorials may not be the only route for a synod to express concern.

Resolutions may be passed that are addressed to a specific churchwide unit or to units that relate to a given concern. In the final "resolved" of such an assembly action, should be this provision:

For example:

RESOLVED, that the Southeastern Minnesota Synod Assembly direct the Southeastern Minnesota Synod Council to forward this resolution to the Church Council for consideration and possible action.

Resolutions follow a more direct route than memorials, which must go to the churchwide assembly, and await the assembly's response. Memorials should be reserved, insofar as possible, for broader policy issues that belong in the Churchwide Assembly. By contrast, resolutions may receive more immediate attention.

We are encouraged to route our resolutions through our synod council either to the church council or to the church council's executive committee. The churchwide policy affirms that:

- Synod assemblies address the churchwide assembly
- Synod councils address the ELCA church council
- Synod councils address churchwide units through the ELCA church council's executive committee, including forwarding actions of the synod assembly.



## Resolution Format Guide

A resolution must be written in the following format:

**WHEREAS:** The WHEREAS sections clearly state the REASONS for the resolution. Each reason should be a separate WHEREAS.

**RESOLVED:** The RESOLVED sections clearly state the action(s) desired – what should be done, who should do it, how it should be done, and when it should be done. Each action should be a separate RESOLVED so the assembly may deal with them individually.

If a resolution requires one action, use the following format:

RESOLVED, \_\_\_\_\_.

If a resolution requires more than one action, the following format is used:

RESOLVED, \_\_\_\_\_; and  
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, \_\_\_\_\_.

If a resolution is preceded by a reason for submitting it, the following format is used:

WHEREAS, \_\_\_\_\_;  
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, \_\_\_\_\_.

If a resolution is preceded by two or more reasons, the following format is used:

WHEREAS, \_\_\_\_\_; and  
WHEREAS, \_\_\_\_\_;  
THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, \_\_\_\_\_.

**You must always include with your resolution:**

- a title for your resolution
- name of congregation and city (or committee, or conference) from which the resolution was originated
- date the resolution was submitted

**If your resolution is being submitted by a conference or committee, you must also include:**

- typed name and signature of conference dean or committee chair,
- minutes from meeting at which the resolution was drafted/approved

**If your resolution is being submitted by a group of 10 voting members, you must also include:**

- signature(s) of all those submitting the resolution (and their names and phone numbers, typed)
- name of the congregation and city from which the resolution was originated
- signature of the pastor or congregational president of that congregation

For examples of past resolutions, see [semnsynod.org/assembly/past-assemblies/assembly-2011/resolutions](http://semnsynod.org/assembly/past-assemblies/assembly-2011/resolutions)

