

**Resolution 15.01**  
**Regarding Enabling Synod Council to Pursue Funding Strategies**

**Whereas,** The 2013 Synod Assembly passed Resolution 13.01 Regarding our Synod's 25<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Appeal calling for the Synod Council to explore the opportunity for a Southwestern Minnesota Anniversary Appeal; and

**Whereas,** Our synod's funding streams continue to change; and

**Whereas,** The Southwestern Minnesota Synod has been given an opportunity to apply for a significant grant from Lilly Endowment Inc. to develop new or strengthen existing programs to alleviate some of the financial pressures that inhibit effective pastoral leadership and to improve the financial literacy and management skills of pastoral leaders; and

**Whereas,** The Lilly grant will require a portion to be matched with new funds raised by the synod; and

**Whereas,** The Southwestern Minnesota Synod already has some dedicated financial resources to help fund this effort to deepen congregational ministry and mission; and

**Whereas,** The synod has nearly completed the anniversary appeal exploration phase authorized in 2013 and is currently testing the resulting case statement with leaders and donors across the synod; therefore be it

**Resolved,** That the Southwestern Minnesota Synod Council is authorized to proceed with the implementation, when ready, of "Equip God's People ✝ Embrace God's Mission", a multiple-stream funding strategy to serve our synod's mission and ministry; and further be it

**Resolved,** That this funding strategy will allow seeking available matching funds, if the second phase of the Lilly Project is granted.

*Submitted by Southwestern Minnesota Synod Council*

## **Background information:**

### **Resolution 13.01 Regarding our Synod's 25th Anniversary Appeal**

**Whereas,** In 2013 we are in the 25th anniversary year of our synod and the ELCA; and

**Whereas,** The ELCA Churchwide organization will be seeking to begin a five year anniversary campaign at the 2013 Churchwide Assembly this summer; and

**Whereas,** The Southwestern Minnesota Synod has an opportunity to develop a campaign that would invite endowment efforts and financial gifts for renewal and development of leaders and congregations into this Churchwide campaign; and

**Whereas,** Giving patterns are moving towards designated giving and this anniversary appeal may be a welcome opportunity to increase participation in our Synod's mission; and

**Whereas,** Our Synod desires to nurture and develop mission support, endowment gifts, annual fund giving, bequests to congregations and synod, partnerships with congregational endowment committees, designated giving by individuals and the possibility of capital campaigns for missional emphasis; therefore be it

**Resolved,** That the Synod Council be authorized to explore the opportunity for a Southwestern Minnesota Synod Anniversary appeal in partnership with the ELCA Anniversary Appeal for the next five years; be it further

**Resolved,** That funding for developing an Anniversary Appeal Committee, resources, and additional staff time comes from resources remaining from an existing Thrivent grant and a grant from our Synod General Endowment Fund; be it further

**Resolved,** That the Synod Anniversary Appeal invite gifts to our endowment funds and other programs of congregational and leadership renewal; be it further

**Resolved,** That we tithe 10% of all the non-designated gifts received by the synod to our Companion Synod of the Southeastern Diocese of the of Evangelical Lutheran Church in South Africa; be it further

**Resolved,** That the synod council be authorized to continue to develop this strategy for increasing the financial support of our synod, our churchwide expression and our mission to God's world.

*Submitted by Southwestern Minnesota Synod Council*

*Adopted as amended at the 2013 Southwestern Minnesota Synod Assembly*

\* \* \*

The Southwestern Minnesota Synod engaged Kairos & Associates to explore the possibility of moving forward with a capital appeal for expanding the resources needed to grow the Synod's mission. The Listening Project conducted in 2014 included three main components: conversations with synod staff and council, The Landscape survey with 804 respondents, and five bishop's summits that involved about 150 leaders.

The recommendations of the Listening Project state that this is an opportune time in the life of the Southwestern Minnesota Synod. The potential for significant growth and transformation is clear. There is a high level of trust, a sense of urgency to reimagine and develop new ways to live out the mission together, a significant amount of hopefulness and excitement for the future, and a clear need for added resources to usher this dream forward. Next steps include developing a case statement that outlines the dreams and initiatives that would result from a capital funding appeal and meeting with key leaders and major donors in the synod to gather feedback and reaction to the case statement.