## Resolution #3 –Bridging the Racial Divide and Encouraging Racial Reconciliation in the Delaware-Maryland Synod

WHEREAS, the Delaware-Maryland Synod of the ELCA supports and encourages efforts to bridge the racial divide in many ways including dialogue/conversation about race, summits, inclusion and racial reconciliation as demonstrated in the 2008 Synod Assembly focus on anti-racism and the 2010 Synod Assembly action to pass the African Descent Strategy; and

WHEREAS, efforts are being made to break down the barriers of historical prejudices, address the important issues of justice, police/community relations and poverty; and

WHEREAS, churches, religious institutions and other faith based networks play a vital role in the development of the spiritual, socio-economic and moral fabric of a responsible citizenry; and

WHEREAS, there is the intentional need to have open dialogue among different ethnic groups and to provide skills and information to find ways to break down barriers to peaceful coexistence by spreading the Gospel of Jesus Christ; and

WHEREAS, there is a realization that new challenges and lack of civility threaten community safety and tranquility; therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the Delaware-Maryland Synod continue to collaborate with historic ecumenical partners to maintain a good quality of life for the members and provide forums where differing views and opinions may be heard in a manner of mutual respect and justice for all people; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Delaware-Maryland Synod continue to protect civil and human rights, facilitate positive community relations and promote social equity policies; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Delaware-Maryland Synod encourage symposiums, summits, monthly focus groups and an annual celebration of hope in January where traditions of worship would blend white and black Christian traditions, mass choirs, combined services aimed at promoting racial reconciliation; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the assembly urge the congregations of the Delaware-Maryland Synod to connect with the African Descent Lutheran Association (ADLA), the Racial Justice Ministry Team, and the African Descent Strategy Team for assistance in identifying tools and strategies to discuss the issue of race in the context of each congregation.

Respectfully submitted,

Mydea Karpeh, Chair- African Descent Lutheran Association (ADLA)

Rev. Eric Campbell, Coordinator- African Descent Strategy Implementation Team

Rev. Patrick Gahagen, Chair- Racial Justice Ministry Team

While Memorial #1 speaks to the ELCA, it is easy to forget that it speaks directly to us as well. Resolution #3 reminds us that racism and its ugly results are alive and well in every community in the Delaware – Maryland Synod. Members and leaders of our synod have been involved in efforts to promote healthy dialogue and develop life-changing relationships. However, there is a great need to continue these efforts and to create even more opportunities for growth.

Resolution #3 offers specific ways in which individuals and congregations throughout our synod can be involved in positive ways to learn from one another, build stronger relationships among diverse groups of people, and create healing moments in a broken world. The Resolution speaks not only to the congregations in Baltimore City, but it addresses those of us who are in the far western counties of Maryland, the shoreline of Delaware, and everywhere in between. We all need to be involved if change is ever going to happen.

The Gospel of John tells us that Jesus said, “I give you a new commandment, that you love one another. Just as I have loved you, you also should love one another. By this everyone will know that you are my disciples, if you have love for one another.” This is an opportunity to obey Jesus’ command.

The Reference & Counsel Committee recommends adoption of Resolution #3.