

To Stimulate Training for Witness

RESOLUTION 1-01A

Report R1.2.1 (CW, 15–16)

WHEREAS, Christians as God's people are to "proclaim the excellencies of him who called [us] out of darkness into his marvelous light" (1 Peter 2:9) and to maintain constant preparation "to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you" (1 Peter 3:15); and

WHEREAS, As Martin Luther observed, it might seem "best for God to take away our breath and let us die as soon as we are baptized and have begun to believe. But He lets us live here in order that we may lead other people to believe, doing for them what He has done for us" (*What Luther Says*, [CPH, 1959] number 3021; WA 12:267); and

WHEREAS, Christians know and interact with many non-Christians and unchurched people through their vocations and daily lives (e.g., family, coworkers, classmates); and

WHEREAS, Most people who attend church for the first time or for the first time in a long time do so at the invitation of a member who has a relationship with them; and

WHEREAS, In this sinful world, Christians often fear to speak of Christ with others; and

WHEREAS, Such fear can be addressed through teaching and learning not only the biblical message of the Gospel but also particular ways to become conversant concerning it; and

WHEREAS, There are resources for learning such as Synod's *Every One His Witness* (E1HW), both its core module and a growing number of context modules that help prepare Christians for witness to people from various specific backgrounds; therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod encourage its congregations and its institutions of higher education to make diligent and widespread use of E1HW; and be it further

Resolved, That the Synod encourage its pastors and other church workers to inculcate a desire in people to witness, consistent with the Lutheran Confessions, particularly to non-churched people; and be it further

Resolved, That the Synod encourage all the baptized members of her congregations to recognize they are Christ's witnesses wherever they are; and be it further

Resolved, That the Synod encourage its congregations, their pastors, and other church workers to take serious and realistic stock of how often and how well they employ recurring parish education opportunities (including, but not limited to: Bible and catechism classes, youth ministry, retreats, etc.) to teach church members key witnessing skills (such as listening discerningly to non-churched people, beginning a spiritual conversation, making a simple statement of the Gospel, defending the resurrection), including the provision of opportunity to practice such skills; and be it further

Resolved, That the Synod instruct its districts to encourage and assist congregations as they train their members to tell the Good News about Jesus, Christ crucified for sinners; and be it finally

Resolved, That the Synod's districts and its institutions of higher education be required to include in their reports to the 2026 Synod convention the steps they have taken to implement this resolution.

Action: Adopted as amended (3)

The resolution was read and introduced by the committee. It was moved and adopted by consent to amend the second last resolve to add the appositive "Christ crucified for sinners." Upon closure of debate as suggested by the chair, the resolution was adopted as amended by voice vote.