



# North Carolina Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

October 26, 2023

Dear Governor Cooper and members of the North Carolina General Assembly,

Our biennial business assembly of the North Carolina Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), a denomination with congregations in this state approaching 280 years old and consisting of just shy of 200 congregations from coast to mountains, was held this past June in Greensboro, N.C.

At that time, we celebrated much and debated some, and this year the topic and legislation around access to abortion and a woman's right to choose was the topic of debate, especially regarding North Carolina law. We considered, debated, and voted on a resolution submitted by Christ the King Lutheran Church in Cary, N.C. with some vigor. There were certainly voices on both sides of the issue, as you might imagine in a context of that size and diversity—over 500 voting members.

After someone called the question, the following resolution was passed and is the purpose of this letter now:

*THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that by written statement the North Carolina Synod of the ELCA communicate with Governor Roy Cooper and The North Carolina General Assembly*

- informing them that recent changes in NC law limiting access to abortion is inconsistent with the teachings of the ELCA and*
- urging them to enact social programs that support those who choose to carry pregnancies to term, ensuring that new parents and children of all socioeconomic backgrounds have the resources necessary to lead prosperous lives.*

If you are interested, the above-referenced teachings, which we call social statements, and the one on abortion in particular, can be found at <https://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Abortion>. We do indeed urge support of the social programs we reference so that if, as the mantra goes, “life is sacred,” then that continues far beyond the womb and throughout our lives. We are grateful for your attention to this issue, and I would be happy to address any questions or responses you might have to this communication.

Your partners in caring,

The Rev. Dr. Timothy M. Smith  
Bishop, North Carolina Synod, ELCA

Office of the Bishop

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