



THE
LUTHERAN CHURCH
Missouri Synod

Date: July 13, 2011

To: Members of The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod and the Public at-Large

From: Herbert Mueller, First Vice-President and Secretary of the Praesidium of Synod

Re: Action on “Principles for Cooperation in Externals with Theological Integrity”

Dear Fellow Redeemed in Christ Jesus!

Grace and peace to you in Jesus, the Living One, who poured out His Spirit on His Church.

With this memo and the [attached document](#) we are reporting the actions taken by the Praesidium of Synod in response to the work of the Commission on Theology and Church Relations assigned to the CTCR and the Praesidium by the 2010 Synod Convention.

First, 2010 Resolution 3-03 reads as follows (“Resolveds” only):

Resolved, That the task force be thanked and commended for its work on identifying practical implications of the 2009 ELCA decisions on human sexuality; and be it further

Resolved, That, in keeping with the basic principles set forth in the task force statement, cooperation in externals with other churches, including the ELCA, continue with theological integrity; and be it further

Resolved, That we give thanks to God for the opportunity to give witness to God’s care for all people through such cooperative work; and be it further

Resolved, That the CTCR, in consultation with the Praesidium and other entities and individuals as needed, develop more in-depth theological criteria for assessing cooperative endeavors, determining what would necessitate termination of such cooperative efforts; and be it finally

Resolved, That the Praesidium, in consultation with the CTCR, provide an assessment of the current state of cooperation in externals and a full report of criteria for ongoing assessment of the same by July 13, 2011.

Second, in response to that assignment, the Commission on Theology and Church Relations prepared an excellent document, “Principles for Cooperation in Externals with Theological Integrity,” adopted by the CTCR in December 2010, which we have attached in its entirety to this memo.

Third, the Praesidium, meeting June 1-2, 2011, voted unanimously to endorse this document prepared by the CTCR. We take special note of the following questions on page 6 of the document:

1. *Is the purpose of the joint work fully consistent with the positions, policies and objectives of the Synod?*
2. *Do cooperative efforts imply doctrinal unity with the ELCA or endorsement of ELCA positions on same-sex relationships or other matters of disagreement with the LCMS?*
3. *Does the joint agency or organization distinguish itself as an entity from the churches that support it?*
4. *Are all the policies and programs of the organization consonant with the doctrinal position of the LCMS?*
5. *Do the individuals who lead the organization openly support and encourage efforts, positions, or policies which compromise the theological stance of the Synod?*

Note also the explication which follows for several pages, giving a number of examples of how these questions might be applied.

Fourth, having read and endorsed the document, the Synod Praesidium also adopted the following resolution:

Resolved. *That each LCMS Recognized Service Organization be evaluated on the basis of the theological criteria provided by the CTCR Document, [Principles for Cooperation in Externals with Theological Integrity \(2010 Res. 3-03\)](#), adopted by the CTCR in December 2010, and that on the basis of those evaluations and guided by the entire aforementioned document, approved also by the Praesidium in June 2011, recommendations be made to the various LCMS entities responsible for the various RSOs as to whether or not continued RSO status be granted or revoked.*

Therefore, all those charged with evaluating Recognized Service Organizations of the Synod as well as those involved in any cooperative endeavors with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America should use these criteria and guidelines in this CTCR document in their ongoing work to evaluate on the basis of Scripture and the Confessions whether or not a particular venture can be undertaken or sustained.

You may direct any questions you have about implementation to the President's Office and any questions about the contents of the document to the CTCR or to the President's Office. God's peace be with you in Jesus!

Yours in His Service,

+ Herbert Mueller
First Vice-President (Secretary of the Praesidium)
The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod