

1  
2  
3  
4  
5  
6  
7  
8  
9

**MEMORIAL TO  
THE LOWER SUSQUEHANNA SYNOD  
CONCERNING  
LUTHERAN DISASTER RESPONSE  
FROM  
LUTHERAN SOCIAL SERVICES – SOUTH CENTRAL PA  
CORPORATE ADMINISTRATION COMMITTEE**

10 **WHEREAS**, The Presiding Bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) encourages us to  
11 be “a public church that witnesses boldly to God’s love for all that God has created;” and  
12

13 **WHEREAS**, over the last decade the ELCA, in co-operation with The Lutheran Church-Missouri Synod, has  
14 developed a nationally recognized and effective tool for bringing comfort, healing, and renewal to those affected  
15 by disasters known as Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR); and  
16

17 **WHEREAS**, thousands of ELCA members have been empowered to do God’s work through their hands by  
18 being inspired, trained and deployed by LDR and its affiliates to provide life transforming ministry to those  
19 affected by disaster and offering on-going assistance to those in need well after others have left the affected  
20 area; and  
21

22 **WHEREAS**, disasters can affect anyone - but disproportionately they affect the disenfranchised due to the  
23 historic location of poorer communities in vulnerable areas, mobility restrictions, and the lack of access to other  
24 resources; and  
25

26 **WHEREAS**, disaster preparedness and response offer opportunities for members of the Evangelical Lutheran  
27 Church to manifest faith in action by growing spiritually and in striving for justice; and  
28

29 **WHEREAS**, disaster preparedness and response offers opportunity for the Church to bear witness to the love of  
30 Christ through diverse efforts but coordinated response; and  
31

32 **WHEREAS**, the scientific community is raising the alarm that natural disasters will be increasing due to  
33 climate change and as a nation since September 11, 2001, we have become more acutely aware of the potential  
34 for disaster created by acts of terror; and  
35

36 **WHEREAS**, the deficits in our nation’s response to Hurricane Katrina visibly demonstrated our need to be  
37 better prepared and research has demonstrated that preparedness is a primary predictor of survival and recovery  
38 in disaster; and  
39

40 **WHEREAS**, professionals for local preparedness and response are integral for leadership and coordination of  
41 Lutheran congregations, agencies, institutions, volunteers and resources for best response; and  
42

43 **WHEREAS**, the national Lutheran Disaster Response office provides national coordination but the primary  
44 preparedness and response happens through the LDR local affiliates and congregations; and  
45

46 **WHEREAS**, LDR lacks the resources to support preparedness plans that would allow the Lutheran Church to  
47 be more effective in ministering to people affected by disaster; therefore be it  
48

49 **RESOLVED**, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to request  
50 that the Church in Society Program Unit create an advisory committee charged with crafting a clear vision for  
51 LDR to help frame the expectations and requirements of LDR affiliates throughout the country and that the  
52 committee continue to develop guidelines to help affiliates create standard preparedness and response tools; and  
53 be it further

54  
55  
56  
57  
58  
59  
60  
61  
62  
63  
64  
65  
66  
67  
68  
69  
70  
71  
72  
73  
74  
75  
76  
77  
78  
79  
80  
81

**RESOLVED**, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to reaffirm its commitment to the mission of disaster preparedness through the Church in Society Program Unit by empowering the advisory committee to work with the staff of LDR to improve its funding streams to assure sustainability of the ministry and the work of LDR and of LDR affiliates; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod in assembly memorialize the ELCA in assembly to request the Conference of Bishops and the Church in Society Program Unit to collaborate in facilitating national and local conversation with ecumenical partners to create national and local coordinated service relationships in disaster response; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the Lower Susquehanna Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly to encourage the Lutheran Disaster Response to use the technological tools available to it to develop, support and maintain a national network to connect those affiliates engaged in response with the resources (equipment, supplies, and work teams) throughout the national network.

Adopted by the Corporate Administration Committee of Lutheran Social Services of South Central Pennsylvania  
April 17, 2009

**RECOMMENDATION ON MEMORIAL 5:**

**The Committee on Memorials recommends the adoption of MEMORIAL 5.**

John B. Ferra, Jr., chair  
Thomas McKee, scribe  
May 5, 2009

