

Northeastern MN Synodical Women's Organization

Tips on Writing Resolutions for Presentation to the Synodical Women's Convention

Among the benefits of participating in Women of the ELCA is the opportunity to have a voice in determining the activities and direction of the organization. Where we go and what we do as synodical organizations are very much up to you. That is why we meet in conventions, and at those conventions, we conduct business via resolutions and memorials.

Resolutions and memorials should be thought of as:

- a way to participate in the democratic process and have your voice heard.
- a means of educating women about a particular need or concern.
- a vehicle for inspiring others to take a particular action.

Some writing guidelines

If you are intimidated at the idea of writing a resolution, you shouldn't be. It isn't that difficult. Resolutions are really just a way to introduce and deliberate business when you assemble a fairly large number of people together.

Resolutions are also a way to plan and think ahead, and to hold ourselves accountable for the decisions we make: a resolution, when passed, is no longer an idea to consider—it is a commitment.

The goal of a resolution is to inform and educate the readers so that they are inspired to take action and approve the resolution. Therefore, every resolution should:

- have a clear and concise title;
- address only one issue, calling attention to a need for action on something in particular;
- call Women of the ELCA to action on something it can influence;
- address concerns relevant to Women of the ELCA that relate to our mission, purpose, ongoing activities or governance;
- propose an action or a solution to a problem;
- be based on sufficient background and analysis;
- provide enough background to give someone with little knowledge of the subject sufficient information to make an intelligent and informed decision; and
- be a source of direction; an instrument for planning.

A successful resolution will both identify and explain what you want addressed (the WHEREAS portion) and propose a solution, a plan of action (the RESOLVED portion).

The "Whereases" Portion

This first portion of a resolution is a sort of preamble. It consists of declarations of fact that you can support and back up. Opinions are not expressed in this portion of the resolution.

Each fact should be listed as a separate sentence or paragraph that begins with WHEREAS, followed by a semi-colon. The final WHEREAS ends with a semi-colon followed by "therefore be it."

The "Resolved" Portion

This second portion of the resolution states the action that you propose in order to address what you identified in the WHEREAS portion. When writing the RESOLVED section, a guide to keep in mind is that this section ought to be able to stand on its own. You shouldn't have to refer back to the WHEREAS section to understand what is being asked for.

This is the portion of the resolution where the author or authors express opinions. If more than one solution or action is proposed, each separate solution or action should be listed as a separate sentence or paragraph that begins with the word “RESOLVED.” When a resolution contains multiple “RESOLVED” statements, they are linked by the phrase “and be it further” at the end of each RESOLVED statement, except for the last one.

The background summary

This is the narrative portion of the resolution. It doesn’t have to be very long, but it should provide the rationale for bringing the resolution forward and include a brief summary of the facts supporting the resolution. It provides answers to the question, “where did this idea come from?” that go beyond simply the facts provided in the WHEREAS section. This is where you provide some context for your enthusiasm to bring forth the resolution.

This article an adaptation of an article from the April edition of *Interchange*, a publication of Women of the ELCA

Sample Resolution

TITLE: Don’t Sit on Your Brain

WHEREAS, THE Women of the ELCA is an organization that supports Raising Up Healthy Women and Girls, and

WHEREAS, long general sessions and plenary sessions keep us sedentary, and

WHEREAS, regular physical activity stimulates our brains to produce endorphins, therefore be it

RESOLVED, that the NE Minnesota Women of the ELCA Board find ways to incorporate short, physical activities into all segments of the Synod Women’s Convention.

Submitted by: _____ Church Name: _____

City/Town: _____ Conference: _____