

Grand Canyon Women of the ELCA 2025 Convention: Resolution 2

TITLE: SUPPORTING OUR ELCA LEADERS OF COLOR/(BIPOC*)

WHEREAS, this is the first time in the history of the ELCA we have people of color/(BIPOC at the highest level of the organization: Presiding Bishop-Elect Yehiel Curry, Secretary Rev. Lucille “CeCee” Mills, and ELCA Church Council Vice President, Imran Siddiqui, and

WHEREAS, this is an opportunity for Women of the ELCA in all its expressions to become supportive allies to people of color in all leadership positions within the ELCA, and

WHEREAS, the Women of the ELCA has identified itself as being anti-racist since 2002, and

WHEREAS, the ELCA’s ministries of diverse cultures and communities works with seven ethnic communities to become more culturally diverse and anti-racist through the work of Racial Justice Ministries, committed to the work of confronting racism and moving toward fairness and justice in the church and society, and

WHEREAS, the Women of the ELCA is supportive of the work of the ELCA’s Racial Justice Ministries and is actively participating in the Racial Justice Network, and

WHEREAS, in 2023 it was reported that 2.3% of our ELCA rostered leaders were people of color, and

WHEREAS, it is noted that people of color among our ELCA rostered leaders have and continue to experience real world experiences of racism, assumptions they are not “real Lutherans,” assumptions they struggle with Lutheran theology, express difficulty in “being in white spaces,” and

WHEREAS, the ELCA authorized the TEEM (Theological Education for Emerging Ministries) in the ELCA Constitution in 2004 as a response to ministry needs of the ELCA. TEEM is a leadership formation process for those who meet established criteria. Candidates do not self-identify and every candidate must be serving in an emerging ministry site identified by a synod bishop as noted in the ELCA Candidacy Manual, and

WHEREAS, TEEM prepares individuals who are perceived by the ELCA to possess those leadership abilities that are needed in specific communities such as African American, Black, Asian and Pacific Islander, Hispanic, American Indian and Alaska Native, Arab Middle Eastern, deaf, remote rural and inner-city communities, and

WHEREAS, both Presiding Bishop-Elect Curry and Secretary Mills are from TEEM programs, and

WHEREAS, we recognize that having people of color in leadership roles is/will be a challenge, and

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WHEREAS, this is an opportunity to join together to help birth a movement to help people of color feel more comfortable and supported in their leadership roles within the church as well as encouraging young people of color in becoming leaders in the church. Therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that we as individuals in the Grand Canyon Synodical Women's Organization actively work to remove barriers to uplift and empower the gifts of people of color leaders needed and missing from the community, and be it

RESOLVED, what we learn more about and accurately communicate what the TEEM program is, and be it

RESOLVED, that we take individual steps in learning what "allyship" means to become allies through actions that include, but are not limited to:

- Lamenting the sin of racism
- Actively listening to our BIPOC leaders
- Receiving the gifts BIPOC leaders bring to their roles
- Continuing to educate ourselves by reading recommended resources, such as *See Me, Believe Me*, *Uprooting Racism*, etc.
- Taking a bystander training course and/or anti-racism training
- Starting or joining a book club with others who are seeking to become anti-racist
- Joining one of the ELCA's Ethnic Associations in their work on racial justice
- Supporting synods and congregations in making and changing policy re: racial justice
- Praying for our BIPOC leaders, and, be it further

RESOLVED that the Grand Canyon Synodical Women of the ELCA memorialize this resolution to the 2026 Triennial Convention of Women of the ELCA, encouraging each Synodical Women's Organization to adopt this resolution and report actions on this resolution to the 2027 and 2028 Conference of Presidents.

*(BIPOC: Black, Indigenous, People of Color)

Submitted by: Grand Canyon Women of the ELCA Synodical Board