

(Used by Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Maple Lake, MN)

Statement of Welcome and Teaching

Motion A-10

Whereas, our Lord Jesus Christ describes the mission of the Gospel in saying: *“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything that I have commanded you. And remember, I am with you always, to the end of the age;”* (Matthew 28:19-20)

And whereas, the *Augsburg Confession* defines our identity as a Christian congregation to be: *“The assembly of all believers among whom the Gospel is preached in its purity and the holy sacraments are administered according to the Gospel. For it is sufficient for the true unity of the Christian church that the Gospel be preached in conformity with a pure understanding of it and that the sacraments be administered in accordance with the divine Word”* (Augsburg Confession, Article 7);

And whereas, the congregation of Holy Cross Lutheran Church, Maple Lake, Minnesota, in its Mission Statement, confesses this same Gospel in its emphasis on both welcome and biblical teaching, saying: *“We believe that Jesus Christ is our Lord and Savior and that by God’s grace alone we have been saved. Through the gifts of the Holy Spirit, we share the message of the Gospel with all people”* and saying: *“We invite everyone to join with us in family-friendly worship, life-long learning, and open fellowship”* (Holy Cross Mission Statement – adopted 1997);

And whereas, the membership of Holy Cross Lutheran Church has always included believers who are *simul justus et peccator* (“simultaneously justified and sinner”), and welcomes all people on the same basis: as sinners in need of God’s grace and forgiveness, called to a life of faith and repentance;

Be it resolved that Holy Cross Lutheran Church continue to heed the call of Christ: *“that repentance and forgiveness of sins is to be proclaimed in his name to all nations”* (Luke 24:47), and as a congregation, continue to extend to all people the message of Christ’s forgiveness, as well as his call to repentance, by *“teaching them to obey all that [he] has commanded.”*

Be it further resolved that in recognizing the many forms and circumstances of human sin, sexual and otherwise, we will continue to preach and teach that the appropriate place for sexual activity is within the marriage of one man and one woman — according to the Word of Christ, when he said: *“From the beginning of creation, ‘God made them male and female.’ ‘For this reason a man shall leave his father and mother and be joined to his wife, and the two shall become one flesh.’ So they are no longer two, but one flesh. Therefore what God has joined together, let no one separate.”* (Mark 10:6-9)

Be it further resolved that as we *“invite everyone to join with us in family-friendly worship, life-long learning, and open fellowship,”* we include those who may be single, married, divorced, remarried, widowed, etc., as well as those who may be heterosexual or homosexual in orientation — while at the same time, taking care to insure that *“the Gospel be preached in conformity with a pure understanding of it and that the sacraments be administered in accordance with the divine Word.”*

Be it further resolved that the Church Council of Holy Cross be charged with the task of making sure this understanding of welcome and teaching be reflected in the official by-laws and policy statements of the congregation.