

Resolution 2023-03

Facilitating Healthcare Options for Rostered Ministers

WHEREAS healthcare premiums for Sierra Pacific Synod rostered ministers as offered through Portico Benefit Services (the benefits ministry of the ELCA) have increased substantially over the past decade; and

WHEREAS, increasingly, Sierra Pacific Synod congregations are looking to extend less-than-full-time calls to rostered ministers due to financial constraints; and

WHEREAS numerous Sierra Pacific Synod congregations struggle to call and/or retain rostered ministers due in part to recommended participation in the benefits plan offered by Portico Benefit Services; be it therefore

RESOLVED that the Sierra Pacific Synod in Assembly memorialize the Churchwide Assembly to create a new Task Force to explore alternative healthcare offerings for ELCA congregations and their rostered ministers, with particular attentiveness to those serving in less-than-full-time calls, potentially taking into account more affordable plans that may be available in each state and working with our ecumenical partners to create larger plan-participant pools.

Offered by St. Stephen's Lutheran Church, Santa Cruz CA

Vetted by the Resolutions Committee on August 2, 2023

Resource-Impact Note: The Resolutions Committee anticipates that adoption of this resolution (and its subsequent memorial) would generate significant study-related costs for both the churchwide expression of the ELCA and Portico Benefit Services. While the authorial intent of the resolution (and its subsequent memorial) is that its adoption might ultimately reveal avenues for significant financial savings to congregations, such a result cannot be presumed.