

*AN OVERTURE Repenting of promulgating false teachings regarding the Office of the Holy Ministry*

Whereas, the Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope approvingly cites St. Jerome's teaching, "that it is by human authority that the grades of bishop and elder or pastor are distinct." (TR 63); And Whereas, the Treatise on the Power and Primacy of the Pope further states, "by divine authority the grades of bishop and pastor are not diverse," (TR 65); And

Whereas, the teachers of our church body have upheld and maintained Luther's statement, "To whom ever the office of preaching is committed, to him the highest office in Christendom is committed", citing CFW Walther's Essay, "The Ministry: the Highest Office in the Church, from Which All Other Offices in the Church Stem," and stating, "If the office of the Word is conferred on a man, there are conferred on him all offices which are administered in the Church through the Word" (see: Pieper, Christian Dogmatics, vol.3, p. 461-2); And,

Whereas, the Synod in convention in 2010 overwhelmingly passed Resolution 2-02, "To Assist Congregations and Support Workers in Planning and Implementing 'Reduction in Force' Policies"; and Whereas, the document promulgated under Resolution 2-02 misrepresents quotations from the CTCR document entitled, "The Divine Call,"; And

Whereas, the document promulgated under Resolution 2-02 erroneously attributes the statement, "A calling entity may terminate a call under the provisions of the entity's constitution and bylaw or policies in a spirit of Christian love and concern for the worker" to the CTCR document entitled, "The Divine Call,"; And

Whereas, in contradiction to our subscribed confessions, the document promulgated under Resolution 2-02 teaches that the, "divinely instituted or mandated . . . office of the pastoral or public ministry . . . is held by one man in each congregation, known as the Pastor, or with a number of pastors on staff, the Senior Pastor" (emphasis added); And

Whereas, in seeking to faithfully attend to their fiduciary duties, congregations and ministries have relied upon the "Theological Position of LCMS" (sic.) contained in the document promulgated under Resolution 2-02 and have undertaken a "Reduction in Force" that resulted in the removal of a duly called and ordained pastor; And

Whereas, Christ our Lord harshly judges those who would turn away those whom He sends as His representatives when He states, "I tell you, it will be more bearable on that day for Sodom than for that town [that does not receive you]. . . the one who rejects you, rejects me, and the one who rejects me, rejects him who sent me." (Luke 10:12,16); And

Whereas, Christ our Lord declares in no uncertain terms that judgment awaits those who lead others into sin saying, "Whoever causes one of these little ones who believe in me to sin, it would be better for him if a great millstone were hung around his neck and he were thrown into the sea." (Mark 9:42, cxref. Matthew 18:16);

Therefore be it

RESOLVED, That the Synod repudiates the false and misleading statements and conclusions asserted in the section entitled, "Theological Position of LCMS" (sic.) contained in the document promulgated under Resolution 2-02 of the Synodical Convention of 2010; and be it further

RESOLVED, That officers and employees of the Synod and its districts are directed to immediately cease distribution of the document shared under 2010 - Resolution 2-02 until it is revised to remove the section entitled, "Theological Position of LCMS" (sic); and be it further

RESOLVED, That any further distribution of the revised document be accompanied by a copy of the CTCR document entitled, "The Divine Call" as well as a copy of this resolution; and be it further

RESOLVED, That the current District President responsible for supervision of a congregation who has undertaken a Reduction in Force that resulted in the removal of a properly called and ordained servant of Christ is directed, (1) to send a copy of this resolution to the chair of the board of elders, the

president of the congregation, and the current senior pastor of the congregation, and (2) on behalf of the Synod to undertake the procedure outlined by our Lord in Matthew 5:23-24 and acknowledge the Synod's sin in not warning against the serious consequences of such an action and seek forgiveness from the congregation and to seek reconciliation with the ordained clergyman involved; and be it further

RESOLVED, That all current District Presidents are directed to send a copy of this resolution to any emeritus District President of their district who was responsible for supervision of a congregation who has undertaken a Reduction in Force that resulted in the removal of a properly called and ordained servant of Christ and strongly encourage the emeritus District President to, according to Matthew 5:23-24, acknowledge his failure to supervise the congregation according to the Holy Scriptures and the Confession of our church and to seek forgiveness from the congregation as well as to seek reconciliation with the ordained clergyman involved; and be it further

RESOLVED, That each congregation which has used "Reduction in Force" to remove one whom the Lord sent them be strongly encouraged to acknowledge their sin and to seek forgiveness from God, specifically naming the sin in an act of corporate confession, as well as to follow the dictate of our Lord in Matthew 5:23-24 by seeking to reconcile with the man whom they have wronged; and be it finally

RESOLVED, That the Synod in Convention, as representatives of the member congregations, confess our Synod's complicity in the sinful rejection of men whom the Lord placed into office and implore the Lord to forgive us according to His mercy in Christ for promulgating false doctrine in our midst to the hurt and harm of those whom He, in His divine wisdom, placed to labor in His harvest, and that this be done using a rite appropriate for that purpose developed by the convention chaplain.