

# Resolution #2: Daycare Advocacy among Northwestern Minnesota Synod Churches

## Submitted by the Roseau Conference

- 1 WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church’s *Social Statement on Economic Life* stresses that  
2 our church promotes “sufficient, sustainable livelihood for all”<sup>1</sup>; and
- 3 WHEREAS the Northwestern Minnesota Synod has a heart for children, youth and the homes  
4 that nurture them;<sup>2</sup>
- 5 WHEREAS, northwestern Minnesota faces a daycare capacity shortfall of 39%, or 2,717  
6 children;<sup>3</sup> and
- 7 WHEREAS, west central Minnesota faces a daycare capacity shortfall of 26%, or 2,476  
8 children<sup>4</sup>; and
- 9 WHEREAS, there are twenty-five census tracts in our Synod that are considered “childcare  
10 deserts”<sup>5</sup>; and
- 11 WHEREAS, the typical cost for childcare averages between 10% to 17% of the median  
12 household income of a family<sup>6</sup>; and
- 13 WHEREAS, the ripple effects of inaccessible and unaffordable daycare strains young families’  
14 work, home life, and finances within our communities and our churches; and
- 15 WHEREAS, a number of congregations in our Synod<sup>7</sup> have opened their church spaces to  
16 daycare centers or preschools; and
- 17 WHEREAS other congregations in our synod have unused or under-used spaces in their church  
18 buildings that could be used to provide childcare or preschool opportunities; therefore be it
- 19 RESOLVED, that the Northwestern Minnesota Synod, in Assembly, encourage the  
20 congregations within this Synod to work toward local solutions to the daycare crisis within their  
21 communities; and be it further
- 22 RESOLVED, that the Synod Council be directed to convene a gathering of representatives of  
23 congregations of the synod to explore ways to advocate for public policy positions aimed at  
24 finding practical solutions for the childcare crisis on the territory of the synod.

---

<sup>1</sup> “A Social Statement on Sufficient Sustainable Livelihood for All,” ELCA Social Statement, passed by the sixth Churchwide Assembly of the ELCA, meeting in Denver, Colorado, August 16-22, 1999.

<sup>2</sup> “The purpose of the NWMN synod in this time and place, is to serve God’s mission by focusing its entire life on calling, raising up, forming in faith and spiritual leadership and sending the next generation of disciples of our Lord Jesus Christ.” (2011 synod assembly resolution)

<sup>3</sup> Center for Rural Policy and Development, “Child care’s quiet crisis, an update,” published 10/19/2017, <https://www.ruralmn.org/child-cares-quiet-crisis-an-update>. Accessed 2/13/2018.

<sup>4</sup> *ibid*

<sup>5</sup> Center for American Progress, “Childcare Desert Map.” <https://childcaredeserts.org/?state=MN>

<sup>6</sup> Center for Rural Policy and Development, “A quiet crisis: Minnesota’s childcare shortage,” published 9/1/2017. <https://www.ruralmn.org/a-quiet-crisis-minnesotas-child-care-shortage/>. Accessed 2/13/2018.

<sup>7</sup> Including, but not limited to, Grace of Hallock, Concordia of Fertile, First of Baudette, Calvary of Bemidji, Trinity of Moorhead, and Bethesda of Moorhead