

**R-1: Growing in Faith: The diakonia™ Program
for 2023 Northern Illinois Synod Assembly**

Whereas, all of us are enjoined to live into our baptismal calling and grow in faith and service in the name of Christ; and

Whereas, Growing in Faith: The diakonia™ Program offers a 2-year program of faith formation which continues to be offered in 10 Synods of the ELCA and in the Northern Illinois Synod since 2003; and

Whereas, participants come together in a community of learning and caring for one another as they deepen their faith and commitment to Christ; and

Whereas, the **diakonia™** faith formation program is updating its curriculum to include *Christianity in a Lutheran Key; Cultural Diversity: Anti-bias Training; Healthy Congregation Dynamics; Religions of the World*; as well as updating its course curriculum; and

Whereas, teaching rostered ministers from our Synod enhance the program with a diversity of perspectives and teaching techniques; and

Whereas, the **diakonia™** faith formation adult education program has over two hundred and fifty graduates in the Northern Illinois Synod who enrich congregations and the Synod with their leadership and service; and

Whereas, at least 10 graduates have pursued rostered minister positions from the NIS and others have served/are serving as Synodically Authorized Ministers; and

Whereas, the need for creating lay leaders and equipping them for service has become more urgent in the 21st century life of the Church:

Therefore be it resolved, that this Assembly of the Northern Illinois Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

1. Affirm and celebrate that **Growing in Faith: The diakonia™ Program** is in partnership with NIS for adult faith formation and as a foundational resource for Synodically Authorized Ministers.
2. With the assistance of the Synod, fund special projects for the ongoing ministry of **diakonia™** (e.g. publicity, national website administrator, retreats, scholarships), with possibly having an annual **diakonia™** Sunday offering.
3. Encourage rostered leaders to invite parishioners to take part in this program of faith formation.

Submitted by the Northern Illinois **diakonia™** Steering Committee:
Dr. Trenton Ferro,
Ms. Nancy Lillevold,
Rev. Dr. Doug Liston,

Mr. Jon Petersen,
Rev. Dr. Denise Rode,
Rev. Dr. John Seraphine,
Ms. Barb Stark,
Rev. Bob Stark,
Rev. Kenn Storck,
Ms. Michelle Wandersee,
Mr. Doug Wood

Submitted: 3/27/2023

Action of the NIS Resolution Committee: **Recommend adoption of the resolution.**