

## CORE VALUES OF THE NEW JERSEY SYNOD, ELCA

Core values are guiding principles that are essential and enduring. Core values guide all aspects of an organization: policy, program, and operations. Core values express what the organization stands for and how it will conduct itself.

A set of Synod leaders, when asked to identify the core values of the New Jersey Synod, offered a variety of thoughts that were distilled into twenty value words.<sup>1</sup> Conventional wisdom proposes that an organization should have no more than six core values. The following core values with core values descriptive statements are offered as describing what we are deeply passionate about as a Synod:

### FAITHFULNESS

Rooted and nurtured in relationship with God through Word and Sacrament, we follow Jesus for the sake of the world. Daily prayerful *discernment* and striving for *excellence* in discipleship move us forward into God's future.

### RESPECT

This is about *justice*: justice for each child of God, honor especially for the least, and respect in all relationships so that they are life-giving, grace-filled, safe, and create peace, as the Creator intended.

### DIVERSITY

All of God's children together express the wonder and majesty of creation. Life in *community*, fully and richly *inclusive* and marked by unfailing *hospitality*, is a sign of God's Kingdom.

### GENEROSITY

To live is to give. Giving beyond expectation or reason can reflect the *grace* and *compassion* of the One in whose image we are made.

### CHANGE

The Gospel is about *transformation*, stirred by the power of life over death. *Hope*-filled people can change; hopeless people cannot.

### INTERDEPENDENCE

Synod literally means to walk together. Our journey together is experienced as *accompaniment*, committed to *collaboration*, marked by *multiplication*, and blessed with *synergy* as we engage in God's mission.

**Do these core values reflect adequately the passionate center of our life and ministry together? Are there modifications that would make this list stronger, more authentic?**

**Ask of each value the following:** Is this a widely held value that can be easily identified in the daily behavior of the Synod? Does this value inspire commitment and loyalty among staff, volunteers and stakeholders? Would you want this Synod to hold on to this core value no matter what? Would you reconsider your personal relationship with the Synod if this core value was abandoned?

1. The twenty originally identified *value words* are the six presented as core values plus those italicized in the values statements.