

SUBSTITUTE RESOLUTION

A Resolution Requesting a Social Message on Artificial Intelligence (AI)¹

WHEREAS, the rapid adoption of Artificial Intelligence brings up perplexing questions within congregations, seminaries, and the pulpit, and

WHEREAS, AI is often described as set to have the same level of impact on the world as the Industrial Revolution, the invention of the internet or the printing press, or even the discovery of fire, and

WHEREAS, AI promoters promise that it will be a tool that sorts through the near infinite amount of information produced in our world, creates more efficient offices and electrical grids, and widens access to healthcare and education, and

WHEREAS, AI skeptics warn that it will leave large percentages of young people unemployed, cause irreparably damage to the environment, create unintended cultural chaos, give cover for illegal activities, and make decisions without responsibility and have authority without accountability, and

WHEREAS, this Church has wise things to say about truth, vocation, personhood, and idolatry, be it

RESOLVED that the New Jersey Synod Assembly direct the New Jersey Synod Council to request the ELCA Church Council to authorize development of a social message on artificial intelligence.

¹ Here are two definitions of AI from the ELCA's Corporate Social Responsibility Issue Paper on AI:

"AI is generally considered to be a discipline of computer science that is aimed at developing machines and systems that can carry out tasks considered to require human intelligence."

"AI refers to the theory and development of computer systems that can perform tasks that typically require human intelligence, such as speech recognition, decision-making, and pattern identification. AI encompasses a broad spectrum of capabilities, from mimicking human actions and thought processes to acting and thinking rationally."