

Eastern Washington – Idaho Synod Assembly 2018
Memorial 1
Concerning Thrivent Financial

1 **WHEREAS** over the years Thrivent Financial, a member owned, fraternal organization, and its
2 predecessors have been financial advisors, sold insurance and other financial products to
3 Lutherans and their families; and many Lutherans have served on its boards at the local, regional
4 and national levels, helping to distribute funds to charities and individuals in need either through
5 direct grants or service products; and,

6 **WHEREAS** Thrivent Financial has provided funds and resources to local programs such as
7 Habitat for Humanity, regional Lutheran camps, local and regional food banks, local
8 congregations, church schools and other ministries; and

9 **WHEREAS** Thrivent has opened its membership to other Christians and moved from local
10 branch decision making regarding many of its grant distributions to Regional Member Networks
11 that may not necessarily appreciate ELCA positions on social issues; and,

12 **WHEREAS** Thrivent has changed its method of fund dispersal to a more individual basis such
13 as Choice Dollars but has limited their use to 501c3 organizations “whose principal purpose is
14 [not] to influence law, policy or church doctrine or practice”¹ thus prohibiting funds to
15 organizations that are dedicated to civil rights, environmental concerns, LGBTQ+ rights, or
16 women's reproductive rights while allowing Choice Dollars to be contributed to such
17 organizations as Christian Life Resources and Focus on the Family, both of which say
18 homosexuality is a sin that can be cured, and want to limit reproductive choice and

19 **WHEREAS** such activities run counter to the ELCA positions on Church in Society; Human
20 Sexuality; Reproductive Choice; and Women and Justice (pending)

21 **THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED** that the Presiding Bishop express our concern to the
22 Thrivent Financial Home office, about how Thrivent Choice Dollars are being restricted from
23 organizations that support civil rights and congregational inclusion for LGBTQ+ people, and
24 women's reproductive rights; and be it further

25 **RESOLVED** that Thrivent Financial be encouraged to develop a more open and transparent
26 policy allowing individuals to contribute to 501c3 organizations without restrictions as long as
27 they meet IRS criteria and are domiciled in the United States; and be it further

28 **RESOLVED:** that regional bishops, pastors and congregations and especially Thrivent Members
29 contact the Thrivent Financial regional vice presidents/general agents, the Regional Member
30 Networks and local agents to express their concerns about how Choice Dollars are limited from
31 progressive charitable organizations; and be it further

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32 **RESOLVED** that the ELCA, its synods, its clergy and member congregations and other
33 ministries be encouraged to refrain from activities that promote Thrivent Financial until such
34 concerns are determined to be satisfactorily addressed by the ELCA Church Council.

35 <https://www.thrivent.com/making-a-difference/files/28339C.pdf>

36 <http://www.christianliferesources.com/article/q-a-on-homosexuality-1466>

37 <https://www.focusonthefamily.com/pro-life/pre-born>

38 http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Church_SocietySS.pdf?_ga=2.161719736.566966633.1518061216-1986472510.1510789217

40 http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/SexualitySS.pdf?_ga=2.161079609.566966633.1518061216-1986472510.1510789217

42 http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/AbortionSS.pdf?_ga=2.135980597.566966633.1518061216-1986472510.1510789217

44 http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Social_Statement_DRAFT_on_Women_and_Justice.pdf?_ga=2.158589502.566966633.1518061216-1986472510.1510789217

Submitted by:

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