

**METROPOLITAN WASHINGTON, D.C. SYNOD ASSEMBLY**  
**National Conference Center Leesburg, Virginia**  
**June 19-20, 2015**

**Reference & Counsel Number: 2015-004**

**Secretary's Number: 6.4**

**Title: Call For An Ecumenical Council to Address World Problems**

**Submitted: The Reverend John Wetzel and Ms. Sarah Leonard, Christ the Servant  
Lutheran Church, Reston, Virginia**

**Received: April 30, 2015**

**Whereas** the world is facing enormous crises that threaten peace and stability between peoples and between nations--interreligious strife, climate change, depletion of the world's natural resources, food insecurity, vast numbers of people unprepared for meaningful employment in the industries of the twenty-first century, and the immense economic divides between the wealthiest few and the vast majority of the world's citizens; and,

**Whereas** well-meaning and caring people can be found in all groupings of society; and,

**Whereas** science and technology, when properly applied, can assist humans in being good stewards of God's gifts and in determining the future of our planet; and,

**Whereas** a powerful and benevolent voice is necessary to overcome the resistance to joining disparate groups together; therefore, be it

**RESOLVED,** that the Metropolitan Washington, D. C. Synod Assembly requests that His Holiness, Pope Francis, as the leader of the world's largest religious organization, call an ecumenical council to bring together leaders of all major world religions, skeptics, agnostics and atheists in a concerted effort to deal with the enormous crises the world now faces; and, be it further

**RESOLVED,** that the Metropolitan Washington, D. C. Synod Assembly directs the bishop of the synod to communicate this request directly to Pope Francis in writing, as in the attached letter.

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35 His Holiness Pope Francis

36 Apostolic Palace

37 00120 Vatican City

38 Your Holiness:

39 We, the members of the Metropolitan Washington D.C. Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran  
40 Church in America are grateful to you for your leadership in recapturing the essential message  
41 of Jesus as together we seek to care for this God-given planet of ours and to serve humanity,  
42 especially the outcast, the poor, the homeless, the alienated.

43 We are writing to implore you, as the leader of the world's largest religious organization, to call  
44 an ecumenical council which would bring together leaders of all major world religions, skeptics,  
45 agnostics and atheists to join in a concerted effort to deal with the enormous crises the world  
46 now faces: religious strife, global warming, depletion of the world's natural resources, food  
47 insecurity, vast numbers of people destitute because they are unprepared for meaningful  
48 employment in the industries of the 21<sup>st</sup> century, and the huge and growing economic divides  
49 between the wealthiest in every nation and the vast majority of the world's citizens. These are  
50 just some of the challenges that combine to create a questionable future for our planet.

51 Well-meaning and caring people can be found in all groupings of society. How can we come  
52 together to design and implement measures that will reduce the dangers we face? Science and  
53 technology, when properly applied, can allow us to become stewards of God's gifts in  
54 determining the future of our planet. We need a voice powerful and benevolent enough to bring  
55 us together. Please call for an ecumenical council to tackle these issues before it is too late.

56 Our prayers are with you as you walk in the footsteps of Jesus.

57 Sincerely,

58 The Reverend Richard H. Graham, Bishop

59 on behalf of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

60 Metropolitan Washington, D. C. Synod

6/8/2015