WHEREAS, We as a church body have the responsibility and privilege to provide a variety of resources for living out our Christian faith in all stages of life (1 Peter 2:9); and

WHEREAS, The objectives of Synod state that “The Synod, under Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, shall— … Aid congregations to develop processes of thorough Christian education and nurture” (Constitution Article III); therefore be it

Resolved, That Concordia Publishing House (CPH) continue to produce excellent user-friendly, searchable database of their discipling resources arranged according to stages of life:

• birth and baptism
• early childhood and elementary
• pre-teen
• teen and youth
• post-education young adult
• adulthood
• single adult
• single parent
• marriage and family
• career/vocation
• mid-life
• caring for aging parents
• grandparenting
• retirement
• end of life;

and be it further

Resolved, That pastors, directors of Christian education, teachers, and lay leaders make use of this searchable database of discipling resources; and be it further

Resolved, That CPH, in the process of creating a searchable database, identify areas where future resources are needed, seeking counsel from Synod stakeholders; and be it finally

Resolved, That thanks be rendered to CPH and Dr Bruce Kintz for the wealth of resources they provide for discipling Christians in all stages of life.

Accounting department staff, on behalf of the Finance Committee, projects no cost to Synod, although a cost may be incurred by Concordia Publishing House (estimate required by Bylaw 3.1.7 [g]).

To Strengthen the Family as the Center of Discipleship

RESOLUTION 12-07

Reports R1–1.2, R63, R65–66 (CW, 1–18, 343–84); Overtures 12-03–05 (CW, 551–53); President’s Report, Part 2 (TB, 1:19–26)

WHEREAS, The divine purposes for marriage are: 1) “for mutual companionship, help, and support that each person ought to receive from the other, both in prosperity and adversity”; 2) “that man and woman may find delight in one another … (and) shall take a spouse in holiness and purity, not in the passion of lust, for God has not called us to impurity but in holiness”; and 3) “for the procreation of children who are to be brought up in the fear and instruction of the Lord so that they may offer Him their praise” (LSB Agenda, 65; Lutheran Service Book, 275; Gen. 2:23–24; Matt. 19:4–6); and
WHEREAS, Scripture teaches that marriage between one man and one woman in life-long fidelity to each other is the very image and representation of the Gospel; that is, of Christ’s eternal fidelity and love for His bride, the Church (Eph. 5:22–33; Rev. 19:1–9); and

WHEREAS, It is the duty of parents to pass on the faith to their children: “Train up a child in the way he should go; even when he is old he will not depart from it” (Prov. 22:6), and as Paul says, “Fathers, do not provoke your children to anger, but bring them up in the discipline and instruction of the Lord” (Eph. 6:4); and

WHEREAS, Moses writes in Deut. 6:6–7, “And these words that I command you today shall be on your heart. You shall teach them diligently to your children, and shall talk of them when you sit in your house, and when you walk by the way, and when you lie down, and when you rise”; and

WHEREAS, If the duties of passing on the faith to the next generation are neglected, an entire generation of our children are at risk of not knowing the Lord, such as happened in the time after Joshua’s death, when a whole generation of Israelites did not know the Lord or the things He had done in their midst (Judges 2:10); and

WHEREAS, The Large Catechism comments on the promise God makes for those who keep this commandment in reference to Ex. 20:12 and from Eph. 6:3 saying, “From this you can see for yourself how serious God is about this commandment. He not only declares that it is well pleasing to Him and that He has joy and delight in it, but He also declares that it shall prosper us and promote our highest good, so that we may have a pleasant and agreeable life, furnished with every good thing” (LC I 131–132); and

WHEREAS, It is clear this command was not meant to be just for the next generation, but for succeeding generations, as Moses says, “Now this is the commandment—the statutes and the rules—that the LORD your God commanded me to teach you ... that you may fear the LORD your God, you and your son and your son’s son” (Deut. 6:1–2); and

WHEREAS, Mothers and fathers are members of the priesthood of all believers (1 Peter 2); and

WHEREAS, The 2016 convention resolved to add “strengthen and support the Lutheran family in living out God’s design” as a seventh priority of the Office of National Mission (Resolution 4-02A, 16-02A); and

WHEREAS, Faith formation has been misunderstood as primarily the responsibility of the church, while the above Scriptures, as well as sociological studies, show that parents are the primary influence on faith formation:

- when the father and mother attend church regularly, 33 percent of their children end up as regular churchgoers;
- when the mother attends regularly but the father is non-practicing, only two percent of their children become regular churchgoers;
- when the father attends regularly but the mother is non-practicing, 44 percent of the children become regular churchgoers, (Haug and Warner, Vol. 2 of Population Studies No. 31, [Strasbourg, 2000]);
- and the church’s responsibility lies in equipping the parents;

and

WHEREAS, Another study, focused on Sunday School, found similar results on the impact of parents:

- when both parents attend Bible study in addition to the Sunday service, 72 percent of their children attend Sunday school when grown;
- when only the father attends Sunday school, 55 percent of the children attend when grown;
- when only the mother attends Sunday school, 15 percent of the children attend when grown;
- when neither parent attends Sunday school, only six percent of the children attend when grown (Nick Cady, The Impact on Kids of Dad’s Faith and Church Attendance, June 20, 2016, www.nickcady.org);

and

WHEREAS, Additionally, the survey found that:

- if a child is the first person in a household to become a Christian, there is a 3.5 percent probability everyone else in the household will follow;
- if the mother is the first to become a Christian, there is a 17 percent probability everyone else in the household will follow;
when the father is first, there is a 93 percent probability everyone else in the household will follow;

WHEREAS, For the past three generations, The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod has retained only 35 percent of our confirmands into adulthood (President’s Report, Part 2); and

WHEREAS, Prayer has both the command and promise of God (LC III); therefore be it

Resolved, That the Synod in convention instruct the Office of National Mission’s Worship department to add a petition in each week’s Let Us Pray congregational prayers for the Lord’s assistance to fathers and mothers in the task of raising their children in the faith; and be it further

Resolved, That the congregations of Synod are hereby asked to use these prayers, or other such petitions, seeking this divine assistance for families within their daily family devotions and weekly worship services, beginning with this triennium; and be it further

Resolved, That pastors, teachers, directors of Christian education, family life ministers, other commissioned ministers, congregations, and schools make an intentional effort to focus on helping provide resources to fathers and mothers who will instill an active Lutheran faith and Christian piety in the home (daily family devotions of Scripture and prayer, meal time prayers, evening prayers, weekly church attendance, instruction in seeking the blessings of a godly spouse with whom you share the Lutheran faith, etc.); and be it further

Resolved, That pastors, teachers, directors of Christian education, family life ministers, other commissioned ministers, and lay leaders recognize the responsibility to reach present and future generations by equipping adults to be faith leaders; directing, equipping, and encouraging parents and grandparents, and additional faith leaders (such as aunts, uncles, foster parents, etc.) who may influence children of non-nuclear families, not only to share the Good News of Jesus Christ throughout the world, but especially in their own homes, to their own children, grandchildren; and be it finally

Resolved, That pastors, teachers, directors of Christian education, family life ministers, other commissioned ministers, and lay leaders are hereby encouraged to utilize the Making Disciples for Life website to find resources and to attend Making Disciples for Life regional conferences to network, share ideas, and learn best practices in order to create systems which embrace and help young people to be Godly daughters and sons, workers, husbands, wives, parents, role models, etc.