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Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod Assembly
Roanoke College, Salem, VA
June 8-10, 2006

Reference and Counsel Number 2006-01 Secretary's number:

Title: Outdoor Ministries

Submitted by: The Rev. Arthur E. Cubbon, Shepherd of the Hills, Haymarket; The Rev. Joel Guttormson, New Jerusalem, Lovettsville; The Rev. Kathy F. Hlatshwayo, Bethany, Forestville

Received: March 6, 2006

WHEREAS, Mar-Lu-Ridge Camp and Conference Center and Camp Caroline Furnace are two of the approximately 145 outdoor ministry sites of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA); both being independent nonprofit corporations affiliated with the ELCA and specifically this synod [<http://www.elca.org/dcm/camps>]; and

WHEREAS, Outdoor Ministry in the ELCA seeks to “affirm and experience one’s interrelationship with all of God’s creation” and “encourage spiritual growth and enable people to live lives of service and witness” [<http://www.elca.org/dcm/camps>]; and outdoor ministries have for many years proclaimed gospel, enhanced faith journeys, enriched the life of the Christian community from a Lutheran perspective; made disciples of all ages; and

WHEREAS, a recent study of seminary students and summer camps revealed that 84% of seminarians indicated that “camp” was a crucial part of their faith formation that led to a discernment of call [Luther Seminary, Office of Communications, April 2002 survey], demonstrating the important role Outdoor Ministry has to producing future leaders; and

WHEREAS, both Mar-Lu-Ridge and Caroline Furnace are called to provide year-round camping and retreat facilities and programs for all ages; and

WHEREAS, Mar-Lu-Ridge and Caroline Furnace are funded primarily through usage fees, contributions, and gifts; which is a shift from significant synodical support which existed prior to and with the formation of the ELCA; and

47 WHEREAS, any revenue in excess of expenses is reinvested back into the
48 growth, development and upkeep of these ministries; therefore be it
49

50 RESOLVED, that this Synod in Assembly encourage its members, congregations,
51 divisions (and their programs), and related institutions to consider
52 carefully the stewardship aspects of retreats, conferences,
53 seminars and camping opportunities that are undertaken by our
54 congregations or sponsored by all portions of our synod; and be it
55 further

56
57 RESOLVED, that the members, congregations, divisions (and their programs),
58 and related institutions of the Metropolitan Washington, D.C. Synod
59 examine the outdoor ministry sites of this Synod for current facility
60 offerings, price and level of service whenever decisions are made
61 and give preference to utilizing Mar-Lu-Ridge and Caroline Furnace,
62 upholding these ministries when such outdoor ministry sites are
63 equal in functionality, location, quality, and price to commercial,
64 other denominations or independent camping, retreat and
65 conference facilities.