# SOME GUIDELINES FOR WRITING RESOLUTIONS

Don't be intimidated at the idea of writing a resolution. It isn't that difficult. Follow along for some tips in resolution writing.

The goal of a resolution is to inform and educate the readers (in our case, the voting members) so that they are inspired to take action and approve the resolution. Therefore, every resolution should:

- have a clear and concise title.

- address only one issue—call attention to a need for action on something in particular.

- call Women of the ELCA to action on something it can influence.

- address concerns relevant to Women of the ELCA that relate to our mission, purpose, ongoing activities or governance.

- propose an action or a solution to a problem (or multiple actions or solutions).

- be based on sufficient background and analysis ... you have to persuasively back up the call to action.

- provide enough background to give someone with little knowledge of the subject sufficient information to make an intelligent and informed decision.

- be a source of direction, an instrument in planning.

A successful resolution does two things. It identifies and explains what you want addressed. This is the WHEREAS portion. Write as many WHEREAS sentences as needed to fully explain the issue. It also proposes a solution or a plan of action. This is the RESOLVED portion. Multiple RESOLVED sentences are appropriate, with each sentence addressing either a different solution or audience.

**The "Whereases"**
This first portion of a resolution is a sort of preamble. It consists of declarations of fact that you can support and back up. Opinions are not expressed in this portion of the resolution. Each fact should be listed as a separate sentence or paragraph that begins with WHEREAS, followed by a semi-colon. The final WHEREAS ends with a semi-colon followed by "therefore be it."

**The "Resolveds"**

This second portion of the resolution states the action that you propose in order to address what you identified in the WHEREAS portion. When writing the RESOLVED section, a guide to keep in mind is that this section ought to be able to stand on its own—you shouldn't have to refer back to the WHEREAS section to understand what is being asked for.

This is the portion of the resolution that includes calls to action. The calls to action can be directed at participants in Women of the ELCA, congregational units, synodical organizations or the whole churchwide organization. The calls to action can involve a single item or they can involve ongoing activities.

The RESOLVEDS can only obligate women within our organization. For example, a RESOLVED could not require United Methodist Women to do a particular thing, but a RESOLVED could require women in our organization to work with ecumenical partners on a particular matter. So, too, a RESOLVED adopted in our organization cannot demand the ELCA to take a stand, but it can direct participants in our organization to encourage their ELCA congregations to do so something.

When a resolution contains multiple "RESOLVED" statements, they are linked by the phrase "and be it further" at the end of each RESOLVED statement, except for the last one.


**A RESOLUTION TEMPLATE**

WHEREAS, … (this is the part of the resolution that explains the issue or problem); and

WHEREAS, … (each resolution should address only one issue or problem); and

WHEREAS,  …(each "Whereas" statement should address only one fact, idea or supporting argument related to the issue or problem); therefore be it

RESOLVED, that … (this is the part of the resolution that restates the basic issue or problem and proposes a solution to the issue or problem identified in the "Whereas" statements); and be it further

RESOLVED, that … (each "Resolved" statement should address a separate action to be taken or solution proposed to resolve the issue or problem); and be it further

RESOLVED, that … (the "Resolved" statement should stand alone and the action proposed therein should be clearly understood by the reader without having to refer back to the "Whereas" statements).