

Resolution #7

2009 Southwestern Washington Synod Assembly

Resolution on Faith and Science

WHEREAS, we believe that God is Creator, Redeemer and Living Presence as revealed in the Bible, our Lutheran Confessions, our personal experiences, and the natural processes of our material world; and

WHEREAS, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America has a long history of academic leadership in the field of Biblical studies and theological education, and

WHEREAS, we believe that among God's good gifts are human minds capable of critical thought and that by fully employing our gift of reason we practice the faithful stewardship of that unique blessing; and be it

RESOLVED, that we urge public school leaders across this country to preserve the integrity of the science curriculum by affirming the teaching of the theory of evolution as a core component of human knowledge; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we encourage the young people in our faith communities who have a passion and aptitude for science to pursue those interests with intellectual and spiritual integrity recognizing that science and faith remain two very different, but complementary forms for understanding truth; and be it further

RESOLVED, that we affirm our God-given curiosity through the pursuit of credible science as a means by which reason can work in concert with faith to further celebrate our Creator and to discover God's hidden gifts yet to be revealed; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Southwestern Washington Synod, endorse the Clergy Letter Project, (see attached) and stand in solidarity with the 12,000 + pastors, rabbis, theologians and a judicatories who have expressed similar affirmations.

-Pastor Allen Cudahy and the Church Council of
First Lutheran Community Church, Port Orchard

Resolution Committee Recommendation: No Recommendation

CLERGY LETTER PROJECT
Michael Zimmerman, Butler University
www.evolutionweekend.org

Within the community of Christian believers there are areas of dispute and disagreement, including the proper way to interpret Holy Scripture. While virtually all Christians take the Bible seriously and hold it to be authoritative in matters of faith and practice, the overwhelming majority do not read the Bible literally, as they would a science textbook. Many of the beloved stories found in the Bible – the Creation, Adam and Eve, Noah and the ark – convey timeless truths about God, human beings, and the proper relationship between Creator and creation expressed in the only form capable of transmitting these truths from generation to generation. Religious truth is of a different order from scientific truth. Its purpose is not to convey scientific information but to transform hearts.

We the undersigned, Christian clergy from many different traditions, believe that the timeless truths of the Bible and the discoveries of modern science may comfortably coexist. We believe that the theory of evolution is a foundational scientific truth, one that has stood up to rigorous scrutiny and upon which much of human knowledge and achievement rests. To reject this truth or to treat it as “one theory among others” is to deliberately embrace scientific ignorance and transmit such ignorance to our children. We believe that among God’s good gifts are human minds capable of critical thought and that the failure to fully employ this gift is a rejection of the will of our Creator. To argue that God’s loving plan of salvation for humanity precludes the full employment of the God-given faculty of reason is to attempt to limit God, an act of hubris. We urge school board members to preserve the integrity of the science curriculum by affirming the teaching of the theory of evolution as a core component of human knowledge. We ask that science remain science and that religion remain religion, two very different, but complementary, forms of truth.