Agreement. Reaffirmed May 2000

02.06.2002 | Montana Lutheran Synod and Montana Association of Jewish Communi

Agreement

Between the Montana Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America and the Montana Association of Jewish Communities

Signed June 1995, Reaffirmed May 2000

PROLOGUE

Montana as every part of the world is affected by religious and cultural diversity. Different communities of faith may passively tolerate this

diversity, or they can actively welcome it as an opportunity to understand different faith traditions, and cooperate in the humane goals of civil life. This opportunity is being engaged enthusiastically by the Montana Association of Jewish Communities and Montana Synod Lutherans of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Lutherans and Jews alike find the basis of this engagement in our shared heritage and belief in one God who as Creator calls all persons to live together in justice and peace, with respect for humane and national rights. Our shared heritage dating to Abraham, bearing witness to God"s liberating and blessing actions in history, does not diminish our theological differences – such as beliefs about redemption, the Messiah, the doctrine of God or sacred land – but we experience a new day when condemnations, brutalities and

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stereotypes can themselves be denounced. We are beginning to talk and walk as equals, with interactions tainted much less by ignorance and claims of religious superiority. Christians are beginning to hear Judaism be defined by Jews, and Jews are beginning to hear Christianity be defined by Christians. We must continue to explore and deepen our appreciation of each other"s traditions and cultures.

In addition, since we live as neighbors in Montana, we have common civil challenges and duties for which Jews and Lutherans can make common cause. We need not share a common creed to share common deeds that enhance human welfare and strengthen the moral fabric of society.

AFFIRMATIONS

Together we affirm that:

- We build on a common heritage of the Hebrew Bible for Jews and the Old Testament for Lutheran Christians.
- The one God calls us to live together in dignity and with selfless respect for the sanctity of ethnicity and religious traditions.
- Our histories, though marred by ethnic and religious animosity and misunderstanding, should and are moving toward mutual concord and cooperation.
- The Jewish and Lutheran people of Montana have been blessed by God with a rich diversity of gifts for sharing and service with each other and all their neighbors.
- Within the territory of Montana

Jewish and Christian communities can be enriched by religious and moral cooperation.

OUR PLEDGE

Therefore we pledge that we will:

- In prayer seek God"s guidance for mutual understanding, and for the unity of the whole human family.
- Encourage the congregations of Montana Synod Lutherans and the congregations of the Montana Jewish community to participate in this Agreement with each other.
- Share, study and discuss declarations, reports and resources made available by

our religious bodies that promote rec onciliation and appreciation toward each other; in particular, issues regarding theology, Martin Luther, the Holocaust, and the Holy Land.

- Try to learn more of historical and theological d evelopments in Judaism and Christianity since Bible times.
- Work together for the common good and for peace and justice as our authentic response to the will of God.
- Invite each other to be present at worship in each tradition, observing official guidelines for such events.
- Agree to review this Agreement periodically,

and renew it
at a joint
service.

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