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The constitution of the North American Lutheran Church authorizes the Joint Commission on Theology and Doctrine to “consider topics of a theological nature” and to “draft statements of a theological nature.”

In July 2014, the Joint Commission presented its document, a reflection piece on “Christian Care for the Poor” to the NALC Executive Council. For its part, the Executive Council reviewed the document and directed that it be distributed to the congregations of the NALC for study and reflection.

The Joint Commission hopes that both individuals and groups within NALC congregations will review the document and reflect prayerfully on the church’s concern for the poor among us.

“Christian Care for the Poor” notes that the most important way by which Christians care for the poor is by sharing the Gospel with them and by nurturing their life within the Christian community. The document goes on to describe the church's ministry in response to the material needs of the poor — from personal acts of mercy to support for government actions that address poverty both domestically and globally.

Far too many people in North America, including members of the church, suffer under the burden of poverty, often through no fault of their own. “Christian Care for the Poor” is a timely reminder that the church bears a special responsibility to support, sustain, and stand with the many people who lack access to the necessities of life.

The Joint Commission trusts that this theological reflection paper will stimulate individuals and congregations to a more vigorous response to the needs of the poor among us.

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