

Response to the ELCA

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The 2005 Worldwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in Orlando, FL, August 8-14.

The 2005 worldwide assembly of the ELCA declined to authorize a church-wide rite for blessing same-sex couples. At the same time, the recommendation was broad enough to allow for the blessing of same-sex couples in individual and local situations. Also the assembly chose not to recommend the ordination of people in a committed same-sex relationship. The resolutions, however, allowed for exceptions to this and were open to local solutions to the ordination of individuals in same-sex relationships. These resolutions are presenting views that are neither biblical nor Lutheran, but the ELCA does not speak for all Lutherans.

The Evangelical Lutheran Synod confesses that Scripture condemns homosexuality and extra-marital relations (fornication and adultery) as sin. (Romans 1:26-27, 1 Corinthians 6:9-11, 18 and 7:2-9, 1 Timothy 1:9-11, John 4:17-18)

We maintain that the divine institution of marriage is to be heterosexual, in which, according to God's design, one man and one woman may enjoy a life-long companionship in mutual love. (Genesis 1:27-28 and 2:18-24, Matthew 19:4-6)

We confess that the ordination of individuals in same-sex relationships is contrary to what the Holy Scriptures teach concerning homosexual behavior and concerning the biblical qualifications for the public ministry.

When an individual caught up in such sins truly repents, the forgiveness of the Gospel is to be fully applied. All sins have been washed away through the blood of Jesus Christ our Savior who died for all people on the cross. **For God so loved**

the world that He gave His only begotten Son, that whoever believes in Him should not perish but have everlasting life. (John 3:16, see also 1 John 1:9)

From the Doctrine Committee of the Evangelical Lutheran Synod