

September 2009

Letter to the editor: (printed in the Charlevoix Courier, Preque Isle newspaper (Rogers City) and the Petoskey News Review)

I feel compelled to personally clarify the recent news regarding the Lutheran Church, and to be more specific, the largest Lutheran denomination in America, the ELCA (Evangelical Lutheran Church (of) America). The recent decision of their church body in convention was to allow homosexual pastors within their church to have same sex partners.

This is not the position of the other Lutheran bodies in America. I serve as the Pastor of Faith Evangelical Lutheran Church of East Jordan. I also serve Trinity Ev. Lutheran of Rogers City, MI. My congregations belong to the Evangelical Lutheran Synod (ELS) which has its headquarters in Mankato, Minnesota. The ELS is in fellowship with the Wisconsin Evangelical Lutheran Synod (WELS) which is the third largest Lutheran denomination in America. The WELS and the ELS continue to teach and preach that homosexuality is a sin and that those who continue in such sin and do not repent shall not be members of our congregations and fellowship, and certainly not be a member of the clergy.

(Note that the second largest Lutheran denomination in America, the Lutheran Church - Missouri Synod (LC-MS) also teaches that homosexuality is a sin.)

The Bible clearly condemns homosexuality as a sin. For example, Romans chapter one contains a very clear condemnation of homosexuality.

The ELCA is not the only denomination with a blind eye to God's Word. ELCA is now in complete fellowship with the United Methodists as well as the Episcopal church and the Reformed Church of America. It would appear these church bodies have no problem with homosexual members and clergy as well.

It is a mystery to me how any Christian church or any Christian can ignore or deny the clear words of the Scripture and give their approval of homosexuality by allowing unrepentant gay members to remain in their church and even serve as leaders.

In my church and denomination we do preach forgiveness of sins which include sexual sins. Christ died for the sins of adulterers, child molesters and homosexuals as well as all other sins. In repentance God calls such sinners to end their wickedness and strive to live decent lives in accord with God's word. Normally, believers want to obey their God out of appreciation for his gift of forgiveness. They also realize that God's commands are intended to bring peace and joy in this life.

I would be very willing to discuss this issue with anyone who would like clarification or more information. My phone number is 231 547 7992 and my email is Londgren@msn.com.

One final comment - I do not hate those who commit homosexual acts or any other sinful deed. I pity them and offer them Christian love. I would like them to find help and forgiveness for their problem in Jesus Christ, and I am very willing to assist anyone who seeks my help. My congregations and church body welcome all who wish to find deliverance and hope for real life, eternal life in heaven, in Jesus.

Pastor Jeff Londgren
Charlevoix, Michigan