



**Passed by Northwestern  
Ohio Synod Assembly  
15 May 2009**

## **RESOLUTION 09-01 15 May 2009**

### **ELCA Social Statement on Human Disability**

**WHEREAS**, an estimated 54 million children and adults within the United States live with a disability; and

**WHEREAS**, people who live with a disability have historically faced challenges in gaining equal access to education, employment, health care and accessibility and are more likely to live in poverty than people without disabilities; and

**WHEREAS**, because of ignorance, fear, and the perpetuation of myths, people with disabilities and their families have been stigmatized and discriminated against in church and society; and

**WHEREAS**, persons who live with a disability are active members and leaders in congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, yet many congregations struggle with issues of accessibility, accommodation and welcome; and

**WHEREAS**, in carrying out its mission to the world, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America commits itself to, "study social issues and trends, work to discover the causes of oppression and injustice and develop of programs of ministry and advocacy to further human dignity, freedom, justice, and peace in the world" (ELCA 4.03.1); and

**WHEREAS**, neither the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America nor its predecessor bodies has a social statement addressing the theological and social implications of human disability; and

**WHEREAS**, the *Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns* states that topics for social statements shall be approved by the Churchwide Assembly and development of a social statement shall be overseen by the Church in Society unit; therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, that the Northwestern Ohio Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to direct the Church and Society program unit to develop a social statement concerning persons with disabilities to be presented for consideration by the 2015 Churchwide Assembly; and be it further

**RESOVLED**, that the task force charged with the formation of this social statement pay special attention to the unique issues that face people with different types of disabilities, whether they be physical, sensory, psychiatric or intellectual.

**15 May 2009 MOTION PASSED**

**Card Vote – 1 red card**

As Submitted by:

Northwestern Ohio Synod ADAM Task Force

Members: Wanda Straub; Molly King; Carol Castello; Juanita Hollis;  
SuAnn Snider; and Ester Rochte

Date of Submission: 9 March 2009



**Passed by Northwestern Ohio  
Synod Assembly 15 May 2009**

## RESOLUTION 09-02

15 May 2009

### **A Resolution Acknowledging 2009 as the Year of the Parent**

**WHEREAS**, the teaching of this Church, in the fourth commandment and in Martin Luther's commentary on it in the Small and the Large Catechism, make it clear that the divinely-mandated role of parents is the rearing of their children, and

**WHEREAS**, circumstances exist in our culture that demean and diminish the role of parents who have the primary responsibility to bring their children safely to adulthood, and

**WHEREAS**, we believe that the local worshiping community is a fundamental base of support for parents, and

**WHEREAS**, we believe that in our teachings and practices we find the basic resources for encouraging and equipping fathers and mothers to be the parents God calls and intends them to be, and

**WHEREAS**, Bishop Marcus Lohrmann has joined fourteen other religious leaders in northwestern Ohio in a covenant\* declaring 2009 "The Year of the Parent," therefore be it

**RESOLVED** that the Northwestern Ohio Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America encourage the congregations of this Synod to acknowledge 2009 as The Year of the Parent, and be it further

**RESOLVED** that congregations observe September 20-26, 2009, Parents Week, with appropriate events to recognize and encourage parents, step parents grandparents and godparents and be it further

**RESOLVED** that the Northwestern Ohio Synod, through its newsletter and other appropriate means, communicate to its congregations and leaders the website address

for the Year of the Parent resources: <http://www.yearoftheparent.com>.

(\*The Covenant signed by the religious leaders concludes: "In this endeavor we seek divine guidance. May God look favorably on our commitment, strengthen us in our resolve, and grant us the means to accomplish the task." Amen, may it be so among us.)

**15 May 2009 MOTION PASSED**



**Passed by Northwestern Ohio  
Synod Assembly 15 May 2009**

## **RESOLUTION 09-03 15 May 2009**

### **Cherish Our Children Initiative**

**WHEREAS**, in 2001 the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) adopted a *Message on Commercial Sexual Exploitation* [hereafter referred to as *Message*](found on [www.elca.org](http://www.elca.org) or [www.cherishchildren.org](http://www.cherishchildren.org)) "to raise awareness of an industry that sexually exploits vulnerable persons, principally women and girls, but also men and boys" (*Message*, page 1) and

**WHEREAS**, "people in the United States spend more on pornography than on movie tickets or on all the performing arts combined," (*Message*, page 3) and

**WHEREAS**, "the commercial sexual exploitation of children and youth is pervasive...Globally, two million girls and boys are forced or lured by false promises into prostitution every year," (*Message*, page 3) and of that number 300,000 children are exploited in the United States alone (Amy Hartman, National Director of Cherish Our Children), and

**WHEREAS**, "expanding cyberspace and other electronic media create new challenges to the protection of children and youth. [And electronic media] has the capacity to damage the normal sexual development in those who view it, often obsessively and in secret," (Proposed Human Sexuality Statement, page 23) and

**WHEREAS**, sexual exploitation of children throughout Northwestern Ohio is a significant issue as verified by numerous published articles and by various organizations, as well as by the experience of some members of the Northwestern Ohio Synod, and

**WHEREAS**, the Northwestern Ohio Synod of the ELCA has adopted the Cherish Our Children Initiative, and established a Cherish Our Children Task Force accountable to the Bishop of this Synod and the Northwestern Ohio Synod Council, charged with implementing the ELCA Message on Commercial Sexual Exploitation, therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, that the Northwestern Ohio Synod's Cherish our Children Task Force will encourage prayers, education, raising awareness, relationship-building, and related action among its congregations, and be it finally

**RESOLVED**, that the Northwestern Ohio Synod Cherish Our Children Task Force seek to involve 100 percent of its congregations in the Cherish Our Children Initiative by the year 2012, with annual status reports regarding the number of congregations involved provided to the Bishop, Synod Council and the Synod Assembly by the Cherish Our Children Task Force.

As Submitted by:

Northwestern Ohio Cherish Our Children Task Force

Nancy Atkins, Chair  
Pastor Martin Billmeier  
Pastor John Clausen  
Sherry Krieger  
Lorraine Mortemore  
Carol Pack  
Pastor Glen Stadler  
Joan Staib  
Pastor Lori Strang  
Yolanda Trotter  
Kathleen Lemmerbrock (Staff Liaison)

16 March 2009



Failed to Pass by Northwestern Ohio  
Synod Assembly 16 May 2009

**RESOLUTION 09-04 Substitute**  
15 May 2009

**A Memorial Concerning Human Sexuality  
from the Northwestern Ohio Synod to the 2009  
Churchwide Assembly**

**WHEREAS, the Task Force for ELCA Studies in Sexuality has earnestly studied and struggled with these matters for eight years, and their work models and invitations mutually respectful dialogue regarding sexuality throughout this church; and**

**WHEREAS, the proposed Social Statement powerfully proclaims this church's teachings on trust, love, and service to the neighbor as the proper foundation of sexuality, while honestly recognizing that there is no consensus regarding same-gender relationships or the rostered ministry of people in them; and**

**WHEREAS, the ELCA Church Council, at its March 2009 meeting, voted by an overwhelming margin to recommend to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly the proposed *Social Statement on Human Sexuality*, its implementing resolutions, and a *Recommendation on Ministry Policies*; and**

**WHEREAS, the *Recommendation on Ministry Policies* allows a way to maintain a uniform standard and process for candidacy and call throughout this church while respecting the bound consciences of all; and**

**WHEREAS, the time has come for both those in this church who support publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships and those who oppose them to join together in creating a means to continue living together faithfully in the midst of disagreement; now, therefore, be it**

**RESOLVED, that the Northwestern Ohio Synod, meeting in Assembly, memorialize the 2009 Churchwide Assembly as follows:**

1. To adopt the proposed Social Statement on Human Sexuality and its implementing resolutions, as recommended by the ELCA Church Council.

As Submitted by:

Pastor Wendy Sherer

Pastor Mary Lou Baumgartner

Respectfully submitted,

Submitted by:

Howard Abts	St. Lucas, Toledo
Mary Lou Baumgartner	Salem , Toledo
Julie Beitelschees	All Saints, Toledo
Martin Billmeier	St. Lucas, Toledo
Deb Conklin	Peace, Bowling Green
Karen L. Krause	Redeemer, Toledo
Cynthia A. Ritter	St. Mark, Toledo
Wendy Sherer	St. Lucas, Toledo
Lori Strang	Redeemer, Toledo



\_\_\_\_\_Signature/Name of Individual Submitting  
Resolution      Wendy Sherer



**Failed to Pass by Northwestern Ohio Synod  
Assembly 16 May 2009**

## RESOLUTION 09-05

### **Resolution Rejecting Proposed Social Statement and Affirming Current Teaching Documents on Sexuality**

**WHEREAS**, the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly will consider the adoption of *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* as a possible Social Statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and

**WHEREAS**, “Social statements and other resources on social concerns build on the rich legacy of the church bodies that united to form the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. As a confessional church with an historical sense, this church continues to look to the social statements of The American Lutheran Church and the Lutheran Church in America for guidance, while it develops its own social statements and further deliberates on social concerns” (*Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns*); and

**WHEREAS**, the Lutheran Confessions state: “We believe, teach, and confess that the only rule and guiding principle according to which all teachings and teachers are to be evaluated and judged are the prophetic and apostolic writings of the Old and New Testaments alone” (*Book of Concord, Formula of Concord, Epitome, Rule & Norm*); and

**WHEREAS**, the Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America states: “This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life” (*ELCA Constitution, 2.03*); and

**WHEREAS**, in addition to Scripture and the Lutheran Confessions, the current teaching of the ELCA on human sexuality is guided by the ELCA Messages *Sexuality: Some Common Convictions* (1996) and *Commercial Sexual Exploitation* (2001); and by the social statements of the ELCA’s predecessor churches: *Sex, Marriage, and Family - A Social Statement of the Lutheran Church in America* (1970); *Human Sexuality and Sexual Behavior - A Social Statement of The American Lutheran Church* (1980); and *Teachings and Practice on Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage - A Social Statement of*

*The American Lutheran Church* (1982); and

**WHEREAS**, the adoption of *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* as a Social Statement of the ELCA would replace the ELCA Message *Sexuality: Some Common Convictions* and the predecessor church statements with a document that is less helpful than its predecessor documents and distances the ELCA from Scripture and from the rich legacy of the church bodies that united to form the ELCA; therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, that the Northwestern Ohio Synod Assembly thank the members of the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality for their work; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the Northwestern Ohio Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to reject *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* as a proposed Social Statement for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the Northwestern Ohio Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to express the ELCA's intention to continue to rely on the social statements of its predecessor churches — *Sex, Marriage, and Family - A Social Statement of the Lutheran Church in America* (1970); *Human Sexuality and Sexual Behavior - A Social Statement of The American Lutheran Church* (1980); and *Teachings and Practice on Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage - A Social Statement of The American Lutheran Church* (1982) — as historical documents expressing faithful Christian teaching on human sexuality.

Submitted by:

Pastor Paul Gruetter (Grace, Fremont)  
Pastor George Zornow (First, Leipsic)  
Pastor Larry J. Smith (Epiphany, Toledo)  
Pastor Mark Brodbeck (First, Tiffin)  
Pastor Gerhardt Gosnell (Saint Paul, Clyde)

Date of submission

April 13, 2009



**Passed by Northwestern Ohio Synod  
Assembly 16 May 2009**

## RESOLUTION 09-06 15 May 2009

### **Resolution Rejecting Recommendations on Ministry Policy and Affirming Current ELCA Policy**

**WHEREAS**, the 2007 ELCA Churchwide Assembly voted “to direct the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality specifically to address and to make recommendations to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly on changes to any church policies that preclude practicing homosexual persons from the rosters of this church;” and

**WHEREAS**, the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly will consider recommendations from the *Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies* from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality; and

**WHEREAS**, the *Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies* asks the ELCA to change its teaching and policy to affirm the possibility of same-sex sexual relationships for pastors and other rostered leaders in the ELCA; and

**WHEREAS**, the Confession of Faith of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America states: “This church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith, and life” (*ELCA Constitution, 2.03*); and

**WHEREAS**, many ELCA members and most Christian churches — including most churches in the Lutheran World Federation — believe that Scripture is clear in its teaching about marriage and homosexual behavior; and

**WHEREAS**, a synodical or congregational option on ministry standards would represent a real change in the teaching of our church forcing even those synods and congregations that do not agree with this change implicitly to accept the notion that Scripture is not clear in its teaching about marriage or about homosexual behavior; and

**WHEREAS**, the interdependent relationship between the churchwide, synod, and congregational expressions of the ELCA requires one Office of Ministry, one roster of pastors, and one set of expectations for pastors and other rostered leaders throughout the ELCA; and

**WHEREAS**, the ELCA currently expresses its expectations of pastors and other rostered leaders through documents called *Vision and Expectations* and *Definitions and Guidelines for Discipline* which have served the ELCA well for most of its history; therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, that the Northwestern Ohio Synod Assembly thank the members of the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality for their work; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that the Northwestern Ohio Synod Assembly memorialize the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to reject the proposals in the *Report and Recommendations on Ministry Policies* from the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality.

Submitted by:

Pastor Paul Gruetter (Grace, Fremont)  
Pastor George Zornow (First, Leipsic)  
Pastor Larry J. Smith (Epiphany, Toledo)  
Pastor Mark Brodbeck (First, Tiffin)  
Pastor Gerhardt Gosnell (Saint Paul, Clyde)

Date of submission  
April 13, 2009



**Passed by Northwestern Ohio Synod  
Assembly 16 May 2009**

## **RESOLUTION 09-07**

15 May 2009

### **Resolution Calling for a Super Majority to Change Ministry Policies**

**WHEREAS**, the 2007 ELCA Churchwide Assembly voted “to direct the Task Force for ELCA Studies on Sexuality specifically to address and to make recommendations to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly on changes to any church policies that preclude practicing homosexual persons from the rosters of this church;” and

**WHEREAS**, the Constitutional and Legal Committee of the ELCA Church Council recommended that “any motion to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church’s current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption;” and

**WHEREAS**, the ELCA Church Council voted to delete this provision and is recommending rules of procedure for the 2009 Churchwide Assembly which would require only a simple majority vote to change ELCA standards to allow pastors and other rostered leaders to be in same-sex sexual relationships; and

**WHEREAS**, a two-thirds majority vote is usually required for major decisions including the adoption of an ELCA social statement and for amendments to the ELCA constitution and bylaws; and

**WHEREAS**, a decision to change church teaching and policy to allow pastors and other rostered leaders to be in same-sex sexual relationships holds the potential to be very divisive in ELCA synods and congregations and to cause both membership and financial losses for synods and congregations; and

**WHEREAS**, the ELCA is seeking ways to make decisions on a consensus basis rather than by close votes; and

**WHEREAS**, a super majority vote — such as a two-thirds majority — would require an overwhelming majority of Churchwide Assembly voting members to make such a significant change to church teaching and practice;

**WHEREAS**, the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly will adopt its rules for the assembly and could set a two-thirds majority for adoption of any changes to standards for pastors and other rostered leaders; therefore be it

**RESOLVED**, that the Northwestern Ohio Synod Assembly endorse the following provision as an addition to the rules of procedure for the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly: “Any motion to come before this Churchwide Assembly regarding changes in this church’s current policy and practice for the rostering of ordained ministers, diaconal ministers, associates in ministry, and deaconesses shall require a two-thirds vote by the assembly for adoption”; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that this synod assembly urge that the voting members from the Northwestern Ohio Synod present the above addition to the rules of procedure at the time the 2009 Churchwide Assembly considers the rules of procedure for the assembly.

Submitted by:

Pastor Paul Gruetter (Grace, Fremont)  
Pastor George Zornow (First, Leipsic)  
Pastor Larry J. Smith (Epiphany, Toledo)  
Pastor Mark Brodbeck (First, Tiffin)  
Pastor Gerhardt Gosnell (Saint Paul, Clyde)

Date of original submission  
April 13, 2009