



2019 Churchwide Assembly

Actions Coming to Assembly

- Entrance Rite for Deacons
- Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Lutheran Call to Action
- Inter-Religious Policy Statement

Recommendation of the Entrance Rite Discernment Group



- Background
 - 1993 until 2016 four public ministry rosters
 - Ordained Ministers
 - Associates in Ministry
 - Deaconesses
 - Diaconal Ministers
 - 2016
 - Ministers of Word and Sacrament (pastors and bishops)
 - Ministers of Word and Service (deacons)
 - Entrance Rite Discernment Group was formed to recommend
 - Entrance Rite
 - Symbols
 - Representational Principle



Report and recommendations

- Resources to Review
 - <https://www.elca.org/Resources/Word-and-Service-Roster>
- What to read?
 - Final Report and Recommendations
 - Word and Service Group FAQ's
 - Other readings are helpful
- What are the high level recommendations?
 - Ordination
 - Stole and Cross pin
 - That Deacons not be counted as Lay members

Future Hopes and Dreams Going Forward



- The Entrance Rite Discernment Group envisions a future where deacons and pastors are equally valued as leaders of the church, sharing one ministry of the gospel with distinctive and mutually complementary emphases.
- We envision renewed congregational vitality expressed in outward facing communities engaged in lively mission in the world. We envision that integrating diaconal witness and leadership more deeply into the life of this church will strengthen its diaconal commitment as an essential part of the Christian life. The life of faith is a relationship embracing both confidence in God, often manifest by creeds and confessions, and also the response to God's call expressed in every Christian's vocation.

Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Lutheran Call to Action



- To recommend the following for adoption by the 2019 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
- To adopt the proposed social statement Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Lutheran Call to Action as a social statement of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in accordance with the “Policies and Procedures of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for Addressing Social Concerns” (2018)

What is Social Statement?



- “This church shall develop social statements ... that will guide the life of this church as an institution and inform the conscience of its members in the spirit of Christian liberty.” (ELCA social statement, “[The Church in Society: A Lutheran Perspective](#)”)
- ELCA social statements are teaching and policy documents that provide broad frameworks to assist us in thinking about and discussing social issues in the context of faith and life. They are meant to help communities and individuals with moral formation, discernment and thoughtful engagement with current social issues as we participate in God’s work in the world. Social statements also set policy for the ELCA and guide its advocacy and work as a publicly engaged church. They result from an extensive process of participation and deliberation and are adopted by a two-thirds vote of an ELCA churchwide assembly.

Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Lutheran Call to Action



- You need to read and be familiar with the statement
- <https://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Current-Social-Writing-Projects/Women-and-Justice>
- Structure
 - Short Statement
 - Full Statement
 - Reference Materials
 - Implementing Resolutions (these will be voted on separately)

Structure



- 7 Sections

- Preface A Shared Vision: We trust God's promises, and we hope for justice.,
- Section I Fundamental Teaching: God desires abundant life for all.
- Section II Analysis of the Problem: Sin subverts human flourishing in many ways.
- Section III The Christian Tradition: It is both challenge and resource.
- Section IV Response: The ELCA is called to new commitments and action as a church.
- Section V Response: The ELCA calls for action and new commitments in society.
- Conclusion A Shared Challenge: Living in hope, we are called to action

Structure



- 40 Articles
 - Examples
 - We of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America believe God's intention revealed through the Scriptures is that all people have life abundantly and flourish.
 - We believe that the Church is called to live as the body of Christ in the world even while we struggle with the realities of sin. As Lutherans, we recognize that acting justly within family, church, and society for the common good is central to the vocation to which God calls all people.
 - The experiences of women and girls from a variety of backgrounds, both in the past and in the present moment, reveal that they have often been restricted in realizing abundant life on the basis of sex (biological) or gender.

Structure



- Implementing Resolutions (17)

- Examples

- To urge members, congregations, synods, churchwide ministries, social ministry organizations, church-related institutions, ecumenical partners, and all people of good will to be guided by this statement's convictions and commitments to resist and dismantle patriarchy and sexism, and to transform life in the church and in society;
 - To commend the ongoing ministries of Women of the ELCA and Lutheran Men in Mission, and to encourage participation in their work, especially as they address the issues identified in this social statement;
 - To call upon rostered and lay congregational leaders, synod and CWO staff, social ministry organizations, and faculty and staff at ELCA colleges, seminaries, and universities to renew their efforts to welcome, care for, and support the lives and gifts of LGBTQIA persons and to oppose discrimination against these persons so that they may live into the promise of gender justice envisioned in this social statement;

Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Lutheran Call to Action



- Resources to Review
- <https://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Current-Social-Writing-Projects/Women-and-Justice>
- What to read?
 - The Proposed Social Statement
 - Implementing Resolutions

Inter-Religious Policy Statement



- Common basis for our inter-religious relations across the diverse ministries and contexts of this church.
- In 1991, the second Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America adopted, “A Declaration of Ecumenical Commitment: A Policy Statement of the ELCA.”
- Acknowledging the important distinction between seeking unity amongst Christians and “the responsibility of the Church to enter into conversations and reach greater understanding with people of other faiths,” the Declaration called for a “separate, official statement to describe [the ELCA’s] commitments and aspirations” in the area of inter-religious relations.

Inter-Religious Policy Statement



- The Task Force worked for a year to develop a draft, which was completed by late 2017.
- From January through June 2018, individuals, congregations, networks, and institutions of this church shared their input and feedback with the Task Force. Over the summer months of 2018, the drafting team worked to revise the document accordingly.
- In October 2018, the ELCA Conference of Bishops strongly encouraged the ELCA Church Council to recommend the proposed policy statement for adoption by the 2019 Churchwide Assembly. In November 2018, the ELCA Church Council unanimously took this action.
- It now comes to the Churchwide Assembly

Inter-Religious Policy Statement



- Resources for review
- <https://www.elca.org/Faith/Ecumenical-and-Inter-Religious-Relations/Inter-Religious-Relations/Draft-Policy-Statement>
- What to read
 - The Statement
- There will be forums at the Assembly before the vote to ask questions