

DECEMBER 17, 2009 ACTION OF LORD OF LIFE LUTH. CHURCH COUNCIL
Regarding the recent ELCA Resolution on Human Sexuality

In response to multiple requests from our membership, the Lord of Life Lutheran Church Council has approved and put forward **for information and guidance the statement printed on the reverse** side. This proposal was offered by your pastors and discussed and prayed about for one month before being endorsed. The ELCA decisions did not require that action be taken by any congregation unless it wished to implement the resolutions. The approved statement simply serves as a summary of our own present reality as a congregation within the ELCA.

The **council wished to emphasize especially** for our congregational members:

1. Lord of Life Lutheran will continue to carry on its mission and ministry in the same manner that it always has.
2. Lord of Life Lutheran will continue to welcome everyone to worship and participation in the life of this congregation.
3. It is “good to be family in Christ.”
4. We celebrate the powerful mission that Christ is carrying out among us.
5. We affirm, as does the ELCA Resolution, that “marriage” is between a man and a woman.
6. For those who are “conscience bound,” regarding the tithe (10%) Lord of Life contributes to our ELCA Benevolence; they may request that the 10% portion of their own offerings either be directed to other Lord of Life benevolences, or be increased to the ELCA depending upon their perspective. Forms to request such a “bound conscience” designation may be obtained in the church office.

Submitted to you by
Pastor Darrell J. Pedersen
Pastor Erika R. Nilsen
Mr. Steve Mau, Council President
Lord of Life 2009 Church Council

PROPOSAL TO THE LORD OF LIFE CHURCH COUNCIL – Adopted on December 17, 2009

Our mission at Lord of Life Lutheran Church is for all people to grow in a deeper and richer connection to Christ, to our community, and to each other. As a vibrant and diverse group of believers, we claim the promise of the crucified and risen Christ and cling to the hope of life lived in its fullest here on earth today and forever with God in heaven. In response to God's amazing act of love in Jesus – we together proclaim Christ as Lord and go about the diligent work of living out our mission.

Our mission and ministry at Lord of Life is welcoming to all people, it is active and alive, it is rich with possibility and filled with the Spirit. On that we can agree. However, due to the recent action of the ELCA at its Church wide Assembly, how we move forward in ministry seems to be in question.

At its Church Wide assembly, the ELCA voted to “. . . find ways to allow congregations that choose to do so to recognize, support and hold publicly accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gendered relationships.” And to “. . . find a way for people in such publicly accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gendered relationships to serve as rostered leaders of this church.”

Before these two resolutions were ever voted upon, a resolution was voted in stating that we would bear one another's burdens, love the neighbor and respect the bound conscience of all.

That being said, after hours of conversations, prayer and scripture reading by your pastors and members of the congregation, and after 4 weeks of discussion in October, which involved over 50 members of the church focusing on the ELCA's social statement and its possible implications for ministry, it is very clear that Lord of Life Lutheran Church is not of 'one heart and mind' on this issue.

So, what are we to do?

The possibilities range from taking congregational action to "recognize, support and hold publicly accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gendered relationships" at one end, to doing absolutely nothing in the middle, and to leaving the ELCA at the other extreme.

To maintain the unity in Christ's mission that we as God's people share through Lord of Life Lutheran faith community:

1. Lord of Life will not seek to leave the ELCA, but in fact will continue to support it with a 10% benevolence, recognizing the powerful Christian ministry and witness of the ELCA throughout its history and into the future.
2. Lord of Life will provide an approach to giving – allowing 'conscience bound' individuals and families to designate what 10% of their offerings support, i.e. you could give your offering to Lord of Life and ask that none of it be included in the 10% benevolence we share through the ELCA or you could designate that a larger portion of your offering go to the ELCA..
3. Recognizing that any change to current practice/policy at our own congregational level would require a congregation meeting and potentially divisive vote – Lord of Life will not move forward regarding the new ELCA ministry policies. What does that mean? It means that Lord of Life will not, at this time, seek approval to formally, “. . . recognize, support and hold publicly accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gendered relationships.” Nor will we, at this time, seek candidates for ministry who are in such publicly accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gendered relationships to serve as rostered leaders of this church.
4. Lord of Life Lutheran Church will commit to focusing on its mission to help all people grow in a deeper and richer connection to Christ, our community and each other, trusting that God's Holy Spirit is guiding and leading us into future.