

Bibliography of Resources

about actions related to the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly

This list of resources was prepared by Bishop Peter Rogness. All of these resources can be accessed on the website of the Saint Paul Area Synod at www.spas-elca.org under Quick Links on the home page. If you have questions about additional resources, please call 651.224.4313 or email Beth Helgen at beth.helgen@spas-elca.org.

ACTIONS ADOPTED BY THE 2009 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY

Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust

This social statement was adopted by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly and serves as a teaching tool for pastors and congregations in discussions about sexuality. (PDF)

Brief Summary of Actions

Provides a brief overview of actions around both the social statement and ministry policies adopted by the Churchwide Assembly. (PDF)

Ministry Policies Resolutions (as adopted at the 2009 Churchwide Assembly)

The ministry policies as adopted, with vote totals included. (PDF)

BACKGROUND MATERIALS FOR 2009 CHURCHWIDE ASSEMBLY CONSIDERATION

In the last decade, the ELCA has engaged in study about sexuality. A number of resources were prepared (PDF):

- **Background Essay on Biblical Texts for “*Journey Together Faithfully, Part Two: The Church and Homosexuality*,”** by Arland Hultgren and Walter Taylor, 2003.
These highly respected biblical scholars have both have written previously on the subject of the Bible and our contemporary discussion of homosexuality from very different perspectives. In this essay they are not engaged in debate. Instead they provide an excellent account of how scholars have interpreted the texts that deal most directly with same-sex activity. In so doing they give us an important analysis of how different scholars studying the same texts, using comparable methods, can come to different conclusions.
- ***Journey Together Faithfully, Part One: ELCA Studies on Sexuality*** (2002)
- ***Journey Together Faithfully, Part Two: The Church and Homosexuality*** (2003)
This is the study that leads groups through the biblical texts most commonly cited as relating to homosexuality.
- ***Journey Together Faithfully, Part Three: Lutherans Talk about Human Sexuality*** (2006)

E-LETTERS

Remarks to the 11th Churchwide Assembly from Presiding Bishop Mark Hanson

Bishop Hanson delivered these remarks at the completion of business related to the social statements and the recommendations on ministry policies. (PDF)

Pastoral Letter from Bishop Robert Driesen, Upper Susquehanna Synod

Bishop Driesen, who did not support the ministry policies recommendations, reflects on what the changes mean for his ministry.

E-Letters from Bishop Peter Rogness

Bishop Peter Rogness sent e-letters—The Way It Looks from Here—about CWA actions to rostered leaders and others in late summer and early fall of 2009, and included thoughts about what it means to our ministry and mission together. (PDF)

- August 21, 2009: **Reflections from the 2009 Churchwide Assembly**
- August 26, 2009: **More Reflections from the 2009 Churchwide Assembly**
- September 29, 2009: **The Heart of the Decision**
- September 30, 2009: **Scripture as Authority**
- October 1, 2009: **Registering Dissent**
- November 12, 2009: **A Time of Holy Conversations**
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OTHER RESOURCES

Greeting from Ishmel Noko, general secretary of the Lutheran World Federation

Ishmel Noko addressed voting members and spoke to the effect of our actions on our global relationships (PDF)

Statement by the Rev. David Preus about 2009 CWA Actions

The Rev. David Preus served as president of The American Lutheran Church and reflects on his opposition to the changes, but his intention to remain in the ELCA. (PDF)

The Bible, the Church, and Faithful Discernment

Dr. Brian Peterson, professor of New Testament at Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary, discusses biblical texts in the light of the Churchwide Assembly actions.

Bound Conscience

The concept of “bound conscience” has been used to help Lutherans understand how the church can remain together despite two opposing views on homosexuality.

- **FAQ on Bound Conscience**
- **Essay on Bound Conscience** by Dr. Timothy Wengert, The Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia
- **Wengert Remarks on Bound Conscience to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly**

PLANNING A FORUM OR DISCUSSION IN YOUR CONGREGATION

Guidelines and Ground Rules for Discussion of Difficult Issues

Martin Luther refers to “the mutual conversation and consolation of the saints,” suggesting that when Christians engage in difficult discussions, such conversation becomes a holy, sacred thing. But such conversations aren’t easy...and in order to avoid internecine warfare that tears up the body of Christ, some guidelines for ground rules are included in this document.

A Possible Format for a Forum

You *could* launch a forum in your congregation without an agenda, but it’s a good idea to have a road map, so you have an idea of where you’re going and to make certain that you cover important topics. The attached document contains a possible format for a 90-minute forum, based on experiences of synod staff about what works well (and not so well!).

FAQ Sheet

As synod staff have talked with pastors and congregational leaders and participated in forums, a set of common questions has emerged. This document addresses some of these concerns.