

Dear Bishop Mark Hanson, Bishop Jon Anderson, and all the leaders of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America,

This letter comes to you out of my sense of peace, and cautious joy, as I have heard the recent decisions about leadership in the ELCA. I, the undersigned, have come to an understanding that homosexuality is a part of the society in which we live. I am thankful that, due to recent decisions, people of homosexual orientation who are in committed long-term relationships may now serve in the ELCA as pastors and as lay rostered leaders.

I believe that the Bible (the inspired Word of God) has little to say about the current understanding of homosexual orientation. I read that it condemns homosexual practices by heterosexuals. In light of the lack of testimony about people who understand themselves to be of a homosexual orientation, I look to God's Word to help me understand this orientation. I look to the example of Christ welcoming the people who society has rejected. I remember the story of the woman at the well (John 4) and the story of Jesus eating with Zacchaeus (Luke 19), just to name a few. I also use the testimony of Peter's vision, "What God has made clean, you must not call profane," which shows me a clear and consistent movement towards loving and accepting all of God's people. And so, I am in favor of and support the decision made at the Churchwide Assembly.

In the past, in our church and society, homosexuals have had to hide their orientation. This has caused pain to many who have been called into the ministry. I love Jesus because He first loved us. I choose to be a member of the ELCA. I am excited that people will be able to honor themselves and their call to serve God and God's people.

I am aware that these decisions will be difficult for some. I will continue to pray for the ELCA and all its leaders. I am confident that in this matter God has been and continues to be at work. I commit myself to be faithful to Jesus Christ and to follow his lead.

In Christ,

A member of American Lutheran Church,
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