

MEMORIAL 1: THE ELCA'S 50TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE ORDINATION OF WOMEN

Whereas in 1970 both the Lutheran Church in America and American Lutheran Church in their national conventions voted to ordain women; and

Whereas the ELCA rejoices in these actions of its predecessor church bodies and will recognize the 50th anniversary in 2020 of the ordination of women; and

Whereas we express our profound gratitude for the many and varied ways the gifts of ordained women have advanced God's mission through this church; and

Whereas we learned in the research related to the 45th anniversary of women's ordination of some progress but also significant disparities for women in the areas of preparation for ministry, all calls including first calls, mobility, compensation, ministry roles, and debt following seminary education (<http://www.elca.org/About/Leadership/Womens-Ordination-research>); and

Whereas the same research uncovered denigrating and discriminatory experiences of many ordained women, some particularly acute for ordained women of color; and

Whereas the church is called to reflect in church and society its roles of advocate and model for the respect, dignity, and equal rights due all women, including the ordained women of this church; and

Whereas this church is simultaneously addressing women and justice in its social statement under consideration and the 50th anniversary of the ordination of women; therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Metropolitan New York Synod Assemble memorialize the 2019 Churchwide Assembly to:

- 1 Call upon all synods in their 2020 assemblies to include celebration and special recognition
- 2 of ordained women upon the 50th anniversary of authorizing this ordination practice; and

- 3 Call upon our seminaries, colleges, campus ministries, outdoor ministries, social ministry
- 4 organizations, synods, and congregations to highlight women preachers, teachers, and speakers
- 5 throughout 2020 in recognition of the diversity of gifts women's ordination has brought to our
- 6 church; and

- 7 Call upon congregations throughout the ELCA to participate in the 50th anniversary of the
- 8 ordination of women in our church through worship services, bible studies and other efforts to
- 9 celebrate and recognize the importance and contributions of ordained women; and

- 10 Call upon all members of this church to examine our consciences, and confess our sins and
- 11 complicity in whichever circumstances by the outright or silent actions women have faced
- 12 including barriers, discrimination, or sexual harassment as they prepared for and served as
- 13 ordained women in this church; and

- 14 Call upon this church to renew efforts in education on the intersection of the sins of sexism,
- 15 racism, homophobia, transphobia, and classism, and develop healing interventions offering hope

- 16 and support to those who experience these sins to the point of despair about ministry; and
- 17 Call upon our seminaries to include intentional coursework and resources to equip pastoral
18 leaders in identifying and ministering in situations of gender-based discrimination and violence;
19 and
- 20 Urge all congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization in 2020 to conduct a gender
21 analysis wherein each can develop strategies to promote and protect gender equity and justice,
22 with particular focus on addressing the areas of preparation for ministry, call process including
23 first calls, mobility, compensation, ministry roles, and debt following seminary education; and
- 24 Call upon this church to establish goals and strategies in each synod of achieving for ordained
25 women comparable compensation with that of ordained men in all calls by 2024, reporting the
26 outcome of this action step at the Churchwide Assembly in 2025; and
- 27 Call upon this church to establish goals and strategies in each synod of achieving for
28 ordained women access to ministry roles where women are currently underrepresented, with a
29 particular focus on the challenges faced by women of color receiving viable first and second
30 calls; and
- 31 Call upon the churchwide expression's Domestic Mission Unit to develop, undertake, and
32 successfully complete a strategy specifically related to the debt of women of color after
33 seminary; and
- 34 Call upon all candidacy committees to examine their practices in light of the findings in the
35 45th anniversary research; and
- 36 Request the Office of the Presiding Bishop to provide in 2025 updated research on
37 achievement of these initiatives and other matters pertinent to the full and just participation of
38 ordained women in this church; and
- 39 Request all church publications to plan features in 2020 on the ordination of women, lifting
40 up the amazing talents and gifts this church has received from its ordained women, the barriers
41 ordained women still experience in this church, and the steps outlined in this memorial to
42 overcome these barriers; and
- 43 Invite the prayers of all members of this church for the successful outcome of these
44 initiatives.

Note: A helpful tool for the gender analysis urged above is a one-page flyer entitled *A Radical Act of Love: Gender Analysis for Everyone* (published by The Justice for Women Working Group of the National Council of the Churches of Christ in the USA), freely available from the ELCA at http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Gender_Analysis_Brochure.pdf?_ga=2.250219270.1683371274.1522685592-2123560546.1497101385

The Rev. J. Elise Brown
Advent Lutheran Church, Manhattan
Chairperson of the ELCA Task Force for the 50th Anniversary of Women's Ordination

The Rev. Ann Tiemeyer, Interim Pastor
Trinity Lower East Side Lutheran Parish, Manhattan

The Rev. Kevin O'Hara, Pastor
Lutheran Church of Our Savior, Patchogue

The Rev Dr Katrina D Foster, Pastor
St. John's Lutheran Church, Greenpoint, Brooklyn

The Rev. Stephanie Kershner, Pastor
Grace Lutheran Church, Scarsdale

The Rev. Christopher Mietlowski, Pastor
Gustavus Adolphus Lutheran Church, Manhattan

The Rev Margay Whitlock, retired
Advent Lutheran Church, Manhattan

The Rev. Dr. Thomas S. Taylor, Pastor
Advent Lutheran Church, Manhattan, and Lutheran Counseling Center

The Rev. Robert Wollenburg, Interim Pastor
St. Lydia's, Brooklyn

The Rev. Leo E. Longan, Jr., Pastor
Trinity Evangelical Lutheran Church of Middle Village

The Rev. Dr. Gary E. Mills, Pastor
St. Jacobi Lutheran Church, Brooklyn and Advent Lutheran Church, Manhattan

The Rev. Harriet J.R. Wieber, Pastor
Holy Redeemer Lutheran Church, Flatbush and coverage at
Lutheran Church of Holy Redeemer and St. James Lutheran Church

The Rev. Deborah Hafner DeWinter, Pastor
First Evangelical Lutheran Church, Poughkeepsie

The Rev. David C. Parsons, Pastor
St. John-St. Matthew-Emanuel Lutheran Church, Brooklyn

The Rev. James Sudbrock, retired
Advent Lutheran Church, Manhattan

The Rev. Danielle Miller, Pastor
Advent Lutheran Church, Manhattan

The Rev. James Klockau, Pastor
Grace, Astoria

The Rev. Kathleen Rystad Koran, retired
Emanuel Evangelical Lutheran Church, Pleasantville

The Rev. Brooke L. Swertfager, Pastor
Christ, Manhattan

The Rev. William Baum, Pastor
Saint Barnabas Church, Howard Beach, Queens

The Rev. Rebecca Seely, Executive Director
Lutheran Ministries in Higher Education of NYC

The Rev. John Jurik, Interim Pastor
Ascension Lutheran Church, Franklin Square

The Rev. March Drege, Executive Director
Seafarers & International House, Manhattan