



Manitoba/Northwestern Ontario Synod www.mnosynod.org

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Dear Synod family

Grace and peace be unto you!

This past weekend the ELCIC in convention approved the following resolutions which are a significant change in policy that will impact our work together.

It is the policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada that rostered ministers may, according to the dictates of their consciences as informed by the Gospel, the Scriptures, the ecumenical creeds and the confessions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church, preside at or bless legal marriages according to the laws of the province within which they serve. All rostered ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada are encouraged to exercise due diligence in preparing couples for marriage. All rostered ministers serving congregations are encouraged at all times to conduct their ministry in consultation with the lay leaders in the congregation and with sensitivity to the culture within which the congregation serves.

It is the policy of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada that sexual orientation is not in itself a factor which disqualifies a candidate for rostered ministry or a rostered minister seeking a call. Candidates and rostered ministers are in all cases expected to adhere to the qualifications and standards as set out in the constitution and bylaws of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada and of the synod within which they serve. Synods and congregations are expected to evaluate candidates for ordination or consecration and rostered ministers for call in accordance with a conscience informed by the Gospel, the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions.

The reality is that some will respond to these resolutions with joy, while others in disappointment. The purpose of my letter is to both inform congregations and leaders of these decisions and to encourage and remind everyone of this dual reality. I hope and pray we can be respectful of each other as we experience this dual reality both within and among our congregations and rostered leaders in the synod. My prayer is that we can find helpful and healthy ways to move forward in light of these actions.

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In the coming weeks, synod office will prepare an information package which will outline various options for congregations and rostered leaders as they discern how to respond to these motions. As with previous decisions that involved a major policy change in the church, i.e. women's ordination or sacramental practices, we know that each congregation needs to make decisions that will work for them in their own context. The information package will provide assistance through a Q & A format of frequently asked questions and through declaration and policy templates for your congregation.

Our immediate response is to offer conference level consultations in September. The following dates indicate when I and/or synod staff will be in your conference area:

At 7 p.m. (places to be announced)

Wed. Sept. 14	Metro Conference
Thurs. Sept. 15	Westman Conference
Tues. Sept. 20	Interlake Conference
Wed. Sept. 21	Agassiz Conference
Wed. Sept. 28	Brokenhead Conference

During conference convention:

Sat. Sept. 24	Aurora Conference
Fri. Sept. 30	Cambrian Conference

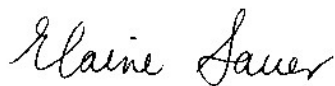
Please inform council and members of your congregation so that they can attend if they so choose. If there is a date/time conflict for the majority of your congregations within the conference, please contact the synod office as soon as possible so we can reschedule.

In the meantime, I ask for your prayers for our ELCIC, its leaders and congregations, as together we discern how MNO Synod will respond to the actions of the ELCIC in convention.

From the Evangelical Lutheran Worship, p. 317, we pray:

O God, you have called your servants to ventures of which we cannot see the ending, by paths as yet untrodden, through perils unknown. Give us faith to go out with good courage, not knowing where we go, but only that your hand is leading us and your love supporting us; through Jesus Christ our Lord. Amen.

May the peace of Christ be with you all.



Bishop Elaine Sauer