

1 **Memorial on the ELCA's 50th anniversary of the ordination of women**

2 Moved,

3 To transmit the following memorial to the 2019 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran
4 Church in America:

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

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

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

11 Whereas we learned in the research related to the 45th anniversary of women's ordination of some
12 progress but also significant disparities for women in the areas of preparation for ministry, all calls
13 including first calls, mobility, compensation, ministry roles, and debt following seminary education
14 (<http://search.elca.org/Pages/Results.aspx?k=45th+anniversary+of+women%27s+ordination>); and

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

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

19 Whereas this church is simultaneously addressing justice and women in its social statement under
20 consideration and the 50th anniversary of the ordination of women;

21 Therefore be it resolved,

22 We call upon all synods in their 2020 assemblies to include celebration and special recognition of
23 ordained women upon the 50th anniversary of authorizing this ordination practice; and

24 We call upon our seminaries, colleges, campus ministries, outdoor ministries, social ministry
25 organizations, synods, and congregations to highlight women preachers, teachers and speakers
26 throughout 2020 in recognition of the diversity of gifts women's ordination has brought to our church;
27 and

28 We call upon congregations throughout the ELCA to participate in the 50th anniversary of the ordination
29 of women in our church through worship services, bible studies and other efforts to celebrate and
30 recognize the importance and contributions of ordained women; and

31 We call upon all members of this church to examine our consciences, and confess our sins and
32 complicity in whichever circumstances by the outright or silent actions women have faced including
33 barriers, discrimination, or sexual harassment as they prepared for and served as ordained women in
34 this church; and

49
50 We call upon this church to renew efforts in education on the intersection of the sins of sexism, racism,
51 homophobia, transphobia, and classism, and develop healing interventions offering hope and support to
52 those who experience these sins to the point of despair about ministry; and
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54 We call upon our seminaries to include intentional coursework and resources to equip pastoral leaders
55 in identifying and ministering in situations of gender-based discrimination and violence; and
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57 We urge all congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization in 2020 to conduct a gender
58 analysis wherein each can develop strategies to promote and protect gender equity and justice, with
59 particular focus on addressing the areas of preparation for ministry, call process including first calls,
60 mobility, compensation, ministry roles, and debt following seminary education; and
61
62 We call upon this church to establish goals and strategies in each synod of achieving for ordained
63 women comparable compensation with that of ordained men in all calls by 2025, reporting the outcome
64 of this action step at the Churchwide Assembly in 2026; and
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66 We call upon this church to establish goals and strategies in each synod of achieving for ordained
67 women access to ministry roles where women are currently underrepresented, with a particular focus
68 on the challenges faced by women of color receiving viable first and second calls; and
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70 We call upon the churchwide expression's Domestic Mission Unit to develop, undertake, and
71 successfully complete a strategy specifically related to the debt of women of color after seminary; and
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73 We call upon all candidacy committees to examine their practices in light of the findings in the 45th
74 anniversary research; and
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76 We request the Office of the Presiding Bishop to provide in 2025 updated research on achievement of
77 these initiatives and other matters pertinent to the full and just participation of ordained women in this
78 church; and
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80 We request all church publications to plan features in 2020 on the ordination of women, lifting up the
81 amazing talents and gifts this church has received from its ordained women, the barriers ordained
82 women still experience in this church, and the steps outlined in this memorial to overcome these
83 barriers; and
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85 We invite the prayers of all members of this church for the successful outcome of these initiatives.
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87 Contact People: The Revs. Drew Flathmann, Joanna Mitchell, Jen Nagel, and Pam Stalheim Lane
88 *This group collected more than the necessary 25 signatures, as required by the 2018 Guidelines for*
89 *Resolutions and Memorials. On April 11, 2018, the Minneapolis Area Synod Reference and Counsel*
90 *Committee determined this memorial to be in order.*