

2010 NORTHWEST WASHINGTON SYNOD ASSEMBLY

B – To memorialize the 2011 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to Rescind Resolution 4

Source: Barbara Wilson, Oak Harbor Lutheran Church, Oak Harbor

WHEREAS the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly adopted Resolution 4, which states:

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America call upon its members to commit themselves to respect the bound consciences of those with whom they disagree regarding decisions on the call and rostering of individuals in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships, in this church and with churches ecumenically and globally; and be it further,

RESOLVED, that this church, because of its commitment to respect the bound consciences of all, declare its intent to allow structured flexibility in decision-making regarding the approving or disapproving in candidacy and the extending or not extending of a call to rostered service of a person who is otherwise qualified and who is living or contemplates living in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America make provision in its policies to eliminate the prohibition of rostered service by members who are in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America make provision in its policies to recognize the conviction of members who believed that this church should not call or roster people in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the appropriate churchwide unit(s) be directed to develop, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, and the Church Council be directed to approve, appropriate guidelines for a process by which congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization could hold people publicly accountable in their relationships who are in or contemplate being in lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships and who seek to be on the rosters of this church; and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Committee on Appeals be directed to develop, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, and the Church Council be directed to approve, appropriate amendments to “Definition and Guidelines for Discipline”

and the Vocation and Education program unit be directed to draft, in consultation with the Conference of Bishops, and the Church Council is directed to approve, appropriate amendments to the “Vision and Expectations” documents and the Candidacy Manual to accomplish the intent of this resolution; and be it further

RESOLVED, that additional policies be developed, as necessary, so that those whom this church holds responsible for making decisions about fitness for rostered ministry in general and for call to a ministry may discern, and have guidance in discerning, the fitness for ministry of a member living in a publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationship; and be it finally

RESOLVED, that this church continue to trust its established processes and those to whom it has given the responsibility to discern who should and should not be rostered or called to public ministry in this church. “Adopted by a vote of 667-307 as amended: This resolution called upon members to respect the bound consciences of those with whom they disagree; declared the intent to allow structured flexibility in decision-making about candidacy and the call process; eliminated the prohibition of rostered service by members in publicly accountable, lifelong, monogamous same-gender relationships; recognized and committed to respect the conviction of members who believe that the ELCA should not call or roster people in committed same-gender relationships; called for development of accountability guidelines; directed that appropriate amendments to ministry policy documents be drafted and approved by the Church Council; and urged that this church continue to trust congregations, bishops, synods and others responsible for determining who should be called into public ministry.”

WHEREAS the aforementioned action makes it possible for people in publicly-accountable lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships to serve as rostered leaders in the ELCA; and

WHEREAS the culture we live in accepts the gay community/lifestyle, but it is inconsistent with Biblical teaching;

WHEREAS the Bible is the basis for the Christian faith, and requires Christians to believe in, and attempt to live up to a higher standard than society’s standards; and

WHEREAS the ELCA professes to be a Christian church founded on the truth of the Bible, both the old and new testaments, the Bible clearly condemns the homosexual act; and

WHEREAS all people are sinners and we accept all sinners to worship in ELCA churches;

WHEREAS the homosexual lifestyle is not the model to serve as pastor in a Christian church. ELCA pastors and people in leadership must hold themselves to a high standard;

WHEREAS this decision does not represent or respect the bound conscience of all, and it will cause divisiveness within the ELCA;

WHEREAS there is a large group of faithful, long-time ELCA members who cannot and will not continue to be members of the ELCA after Resolution 4 is implemented; therefore

BE IT RESOLVED that the 2010 Northwest Washington Synod Assembly memorialize the 2011 ELCA Churchwide Assembly to rescind Resolution 4 adopted by the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly.

Implications of resolution (If adopted):

1. What is the financial impact of this resolution on the synod budget?

It will improve finances ELCA-wide because members will stay with the ELCA rather than taking their offerings to other churches when they leave ELCA congregations.

2. What are the personnel implications within our synod (or churchwide)? Who will be responsible for implementation of the resolution?

It should save jobs for congregations and the synod.

3. How does this resolution enhance and forward the mission of the church and our synod?

This resolution enhances and forwards the mission of the church and our synod because it more closely adheres to the teachings of Christ and the Bible, the basis for our faith.