

**Memorial on the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America's (ELCA's)  
50<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Year of the Ordination of Women**

**WHEREAS**, in their 1970 national conventions, two of the ELCA's predecessor church bodies, the Lutheran Church in America and the American Lutheran Church voted to ordain women; and,

**WHEREAS**, the ELCA rejoices in these actions of its predecessor church bodies and expresses profound gratitude for the many and varied ways the gifts of ordained women have advanced God's mission through this church; and,

**WHEREAS**, the ELCA should celebrate the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of the ordination of women in 2020; and,

**WHEREAS**, the ELCA task force, One in Christ, has released a draft of a social statement on women and justice (<https://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Current-Social-Writing-Projects/Women-and-Justice>); and,

**WHEREAS**, research related to the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of women's ordination reveals some progress towards equity among rostered leaders, but also demonstrates 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; therefore, be it

**RESOLVED**, that all ELCA synods in their 2020 assemblies include celebration and special recognition of ordained women upon the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary year of the ordination of women; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that we request all ELCA seminaries, colleges, campus ministries, outdoor ministries, social ministry organizations, synods, and congregations to publish features and plan events in 2020 that highlight and recognize the diversity of gifts this church has received from its ordained women; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that all members of this church examine our consciences, and confess our sins and complicity in any circumstances, whether by outright or silent actions including sexual harassment, discrimination, and other barriers women have faced, and continue to face as they prepare for and serve as ordained leaders in this church; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that we urge all ELCA synods in 2020 to conduct a gender analysis wherein each synod can develop strategies to promote and protect gender equity and justice, with particular focus on addressing the areas of preparation for ministry, call process including first calls, mobility, eliminating compensation disparity, ministry roles in which women are underrepresented, and debt following seminary education, and report their findings to the churchwide organization; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that all ELCA synods examine their practices in light of the findings of the 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary research; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that all ELCA synods establish goals and strategies addressing challenges faced by women of color receiving viable first and second calls, and eliminating seminary debt; and be it further

**RESOLVED**, that we request the Office of the Presiding Bishop to provide in 2025 updated research on achievement of these initiatives and other matters pertinent to the full and just participation of ordained women in this church; and be it finally

**RESOLVED**, that this resolution be memorialized to the 2019 Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

Submitted by the Lake Superior Conference