

CANDIDACY AND LGTBQ INDIVIDUALS

An offered resource for ELCA Candidacy Committees from Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries

Short Glossary of Terms

Accompaniment: Program of Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries – walking with LGBTQ seminarians or candidates in the Lutheran candidacy and first call process.

Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries (ELM): ELM is a self-funded social ministry organization that affirms and supports publicly identified LGBTQ Lutheran rostered leaders and those pursuing a call to rostered leadership while engaging allied congregations and ministries to proclaim God's love and seek justice for all. Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries does this work through three main programs: Proclaim, Accompaniment, and Ministry Engagement. Through this work, ELM ensures that LGBTQ leaders and the ministries they lead can proclaim God's love and seek justice for all people.

Gender Identity: One's innermost concept of self as male or female or both or neither—how individuals perceive themselves and what they call themselves. One's gender identity can be the same or different than the sex assigned at birth. Individuals are conscious of this between the ages 18 months and 3 years. Most people develop a gender identity that matches their biological sex. For some, however, their gender identity is different from their biological or assigned sex. Some of these individuals choose to socially, hormonally and/or surgically change their sex to more fully match their gender identity.

Gender Expression: Refers to the ways in which people externally communicate their gender identity to others through behavior; clothing, haircut, voice, and other forms of presentation. Gender expression also works the other way as people assign gender to others based on their appearance, mannerisms, and other gendered characteristics. Sometimes, transgender people seek to match their physical expression with their gender identity, rather than their birth-assigned sex. Gender expression should not be viewed as an indication of sexual orientation.

Gender Role: This is the set of roles, activities, expectations and behaviors assigned to females and males by society. Our culture recognizes two basic gender roles: Masculine (having the qualities attributed to males) and feminine (having the qualities attributed to females). People who step out of their socially assigned gender roles are sometimes referred to as transgender. Other cultures have three or more gender roles.

LGBTQ: Often used as shorthand to refer to a variety of people with diverse sexual orientations and/or gender identity. The letters commonly refer to lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer.

CANDIDACY AND LGTBQ INDIVIDUALS

An offered resource for ELCA Candidacy Committees from Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries

Ministry Engagement: Program of Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries – connects and supports Lutheran ministries that are led by an LGBTQ rostered leader or who are open to calling LGBTQ rostered leaders.

Proclaim: Program of Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries – a professional community for Lutheran rostered leaders and seminarians who publicly identify as LGBTQ.

Queer: Anyone who chooses to identify as such. This can include, but is not limited to, gays, lesbians, bisexuals, transgender people, intersex people, asexual people, etc. This term has different meanings to different people. Some still find it offensive, while others reclaim it to encompass the broader sense of history of the gay rights movement. Can also be used as an umbrella term like LGBT, as in “the queer community.”

Sexual orientation: Sexual orientation is an enduring personal quality that inclines people to feel romantic or sexual attraction (or a combination of these) to persons of the opposite sex or gender, the same sex or gender, or to both sexes or more than one gender.

Transgender. Sometimes used as an umbrella to describe anyone whose identity or behavior falls outside of stereotypical gender norms. More narrowly defined, it refers to an individual whose gender identity does not match their assigned birth gender. Being transgender does not imply any specific sexual orientation (attraction to people of a specific gender.) Therefore, transgender people may additionally identify as straight, gay, lesbian, or bisexual.

Transsexual: Individuals who do not identify with their birth-assigned genders and physically alter their bodies surgically and/or hormonally. This physical transition is a complicated, multi-step process that may take years and may include, but is not limited to, sex reassignment surgery.

Additional definitions of terms related to sexuality and gender can be found here:

www.hrc.org/resources/entry/glossary-of-terms

www.genderspectrum.org

www.tolerance.org/LGBT-best-practices-terms

www.thegenderbook.com