

## 3

## How is sexism personal, and how are we the body of Christ together?

### OPENING ACTIVITIES (UP TO 10 MINUTES)

Welcome to a conversation about understanding sexism and its connections to our relationships, families, communities and the way we see ourselves and others. This conversation helps us explore how sexism prevents us from being the whole person that God created us to be and is therefore sin. It also will help us discover how God's grace can give us freedom in Christ to think anew about our relationships, communities and bodies in ways that affirm, celebrate and include our whole selves.



**Opening prayer** \*(See Devotional Options.)

**Conversation covenant and module objectives** \*(Review both briefly.)

#### Scripture reading

As many of you as were baptized into Christ have clothed yourselves with Christ. There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus. (Galatians 3:27-28)

#### Moment of silent reflection

### I. WHAT IS SEXISM AND HOW DOES IT SHOW UP IN MY LIFE?

(10 MINUTES)

*\*(Note to leaders: Invite participants to spend a few minutes reading and reflecting on a couple of these questions. They are meant to help uncover how, when and where sexism might be infused in experiences, relationships and communities. Participants can write down their answers or share them with a partner.)*

1. When has someone doubted your ability to do something because of your gender?
2. When has someone assumed you could do something because of your gender?
3. When have you felt excluded from a conversation, situation, process or decision because of your gender?
4. When have you felt shame or inadequacy because you didn't live up to expectations placed on you because of your gender?
5. When have you felt uncomfortable or physically intimidated by another person's body language, either because of their gender or your gender?

#### In our time together, we will:

1. consider how gender-based stereotypes, social ideals and roles can empower or disempower.
2. discover where sexism shows up in our relationships, communities and culture.
3. learn how our unity and diversity in the body of Christ gives us new ways to think about our gendered bodies.

Sexism is that which promotes the silencing, controlling and devaluing of women, girls and **gender non-conforming people** and perpetuates male privilege and power.

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## Module 3: How is sexism personal, and how are we the body of Christ together?

*\*(Note to leaders: Read the following material aloud. If time is short, read only the paragraphs in green shading.)*

Everyone is affected by sexism, sometimes in subtle ways and sometimes in very obvious, painful ways. Sexism is not just about what individuals do or think but is perpetuated by our communities, institutions, systems and culture.

Identifying, discussing and pointing out sexism is almost always difficult and uncomfortable. It can be challenging to see how gender affects our interpersonal relationships, because naming, calling out or recognizing sexism and gender-based inequality is discouraged or even taboo in our congregations, communities and culture. It is almost always easier to find alternative explanations – to talk about individuals' personalities, or pinpoint other situational factors that help us avoid the difficult task of seeing and naming the patterns at work in sexism.

When we talk about sexism, it can feel as though we are blaming each other. But it's important to remember that we all participate in sexism – sometimes in obvious ways and sometimes unconsciously. In this tacit participation, we have all “fallen short of the glory of God” (Romans 3:23). At the same time, all of us are trapped and separated from one another and from God when we contribute to the problem of sexism. Women, girls and transgender people are objectified, excluded, exploited and ignored because of sexism. Because of sexism, men and boys are often pitted against one another, called on to “prove” their ability to be in control and dominant. No one wins.

### II. HOW DOES SEXISM WORK? (15 MINUTES)

#### How do stereotypes and social expectations about gender add to the problem of sexism?

*\*(Note to leaders: Invite participants to brainstorm a list of 10-15 stereotypes and characteristics associated with men and boys and another list for women and girls. Write their answers on a white board. Ask them to talk about the following questions related to the lists.)*

1. Where do you fit on the list? Do characteristics you identify with only appear on one list, or on both? What about your friends and loved ones?
2. What tends to happen in our culture when someone displays a characteristic associated with someone of a different gender? Can you think of an example?
3. Are any of these gendered characteristics more closely associated with people of specific racial or ethnic backgrounds? How do these harmful stereotypes based on race and ethnicity add to the problem of sexism?
4. Which of the characteristics on this list are associated with roles and positions of power, visibility and **AGENCY** (being empowered to make consequential decisions about one's own life)?

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*\*(Note to leaders: Read the following text aloud. If time is short, use only the paragraphs in green shading.)*

In order to work against sexism in ourselves, our relationships and our communities, we have to understand how sexism plays out in everyday life. Sometimes gender-based inequality is easy to see, but often it's not; sexism usually shows up in our subconscious attitudes and impressions of the people around us.

Sexism often shows up in the gender-based stereotypes and expectations we place on people. This means that when we have only limited information about a person, we often fill in the gaps with stereotypes according to that person's gender. At the same time, we often internalize social expectations about how people of specific genders should be and act in the world. When these are imbedded subtly in our impressions of people, they make us more critical and suspicious of those who violate these prescriptive norms.

Stereotypes and social expectations about gender shape our understandings of ourselves and others from a very early age. These biases give shape to norms or codes of conduct that we learn to grow into. Often, we grow to become the gendered people that we're expected to be, which can seem to confirm the stereotypes that formed us in the first place. For example, boys learn how to keep themselves from crying in public, and girls learn to pay careful attention to their appearance. These learned behaviors then feed into stereotypes about boys and girls.

Stereotypes and social ideals about gender can harm anyone and everyone, but they predominantly harm women and girls. They pressure women and girls to fill roles with less access to power and agency.

### How do gender roles add to the problem of sexism?

It can be difficult clearly to see and point out stereotypes and gendered expectations because they are so often unconscious. Yet, these biases are fed by and give birth to much more tangible manifestations of sexism in our lives: gender roles. Stereotypes and ideals work in tandem with gender roles to codify acceptable ways of being and acting for men and boys and women and girls. This happens in the household, in relationships, in congregations and in communities. Each of these roles is imbued with characteristics and expectations that come from and feed into stereotypes and cultural ideals.

Some gender roles have greater proximity to what is valued or has power in a community and culture. Stereotypes and expectations for men and boys often set them up to step into roles that afford them agency, decision-making power, leadership and visibility in our communities and societies. Some of these roles might be: provider, leader or protector.

For further personal reflection: When have gender expectations, stereotypes, and roles influenced your choices or the way you interact with others?

Stereotypes and expectations about femininity make it more difficult for women to step into leadership roles. In 2015, only 104 women held seats in Congress, comprising 19.4 percent of the 435 members. In the ELCA in 2015, only 9 (13.8 percent) out of 65 synodical bishops were women.

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Stereotypes and expectations for women and girls set them up to step into roles that give them less access to power, agency and visibility. Some of these roles might be: nurturer, caretaker, homemaker or supportive partner.

These roles are all good and essential to our communities; many women find fulfillment in supportive and nurturing roles as part of their vocation. However, as Lutherans, we recognize that vocation is not limited by the roles prescribed by unequal societies. When we limit ourselves and others to certain roles *because of gender*, we participate in the sexism that separates women, girls and gender-non conforming people from power and **AGENCY**.

### III. WHAT IS THE EFFECT OF SEXISM ON OUR BODIES? (10 MINUTES)

*\*(Note to leaders: In order to help participants feel grounded in their own bodies during this module, invite them to draw an outline of their hand in the middle of a blank piece of paper. As they listen to you and others read the following section about how sexism seeks to control our bodies, they can write down one method of control on each finger of the outline. Encourage participants also to jot down other words, images or statistics that are striking to them.)*

At age 13, 53 percent of American girls are "unhappy with their bodies." This grows to 78 percent by the time girls reach 17.<sup>1</sup>

It is hard to think of anything more personal than our own bodies, anything more deeply connected to our culture's understanding of gender. While our bodies do not directly determine our gender identities or the gender-based ways we move through life, our bodies are closely connected to sexism. Through sexist stereotypes and ideals, and sometimes even brute force, our society often controls the bodies of women, girls and gender non-conforming people. For this reason, we need to talk together about human bodies and sexism.

Individuals, systems and our culture often:

1. **Objectify** the bodies of women and girls by holding them to unrealistic expectations of beauty, often associated with thin, white women.

The results of this can be seen easily in the troubling number of young women who report suffering from eating disorders, depression and body dysmorphia (excessive preoccupation with perceived flaws in one's physical appearance). For women and girls of color, sometimes the result of this objectification is evident in the commonplace use of harmful skin-whitening and hair-straightening chemicals and processes.

2. **Police** the bodies of women and girls by creating shame around female sexuality.

One concrete way we might see evidence of this is in the rising number

of instances in which ex-partners expose risqué photos or videos of their ex online, using shame to get revenge. This is called revenge porn, or non-consensual porn, and an estimated 90 percent of victims are women.<sup>2</sup>

3. **Politicize** the bodies of women and girls by linking cultural and political controversy over abortion to all forms of reproductive health care, including contraception, access to necessary reproductive health care, and access to information about bodies.<sup>3</sup>

For example, laws that place major restrictions on clinics that provide abortions result in significant burdens for women trying to obtain reproductive health care.<sup>4</sup> This especially affects women with limited incomes who need all kinds of health services, including regular reproductive health check-ups and procedures.

4. **Dominate** the bodies of women, girls and gender non-conforming people through gender-based violence or the threat of violence. While violence is perpetuated by individuals, and sometimes against men or boys, gender-based violence functions as a whole to silence, shame, violate, exploit and terrify women, girls and gender non-conforming people.

There are many forms of gender-based violence, including but not limited to sexual harassment, sexual and intimate partner abuse, stalking, assault, rape, trafficking and murder.<sup>5</sup> (Read more about violence in Module 5 of this study.)

5. **Marginalize** the bodies of people who do not conform to binary gender identities or biology. This includes transgender people and **intersex people** (those whose reproductive or sexual anatomy doesn't easily fit into typically understood categories of male or female).

One result of this marginalization is evidenced by the fact that transgender people, especially people of color, are significantly more likely to be murdered than white **cisgender** people (people whose gender identity matches their biological sex assigned at birth).

In the United States, 1 in 6 women will be a victim of attempted or completed rape in her lifetime.<sup>6</sup>

Transgender people are 3.7 times more likely to be murdered by law enforcement, and over two thirds of anti-LGBTQ-related hate violence victimizes them.<sup>7</sup>

These problems are evidence of sin, not just because they deny the goodness of some bodies through control and domination, but also because they deny the diversity of human bodies. God's children do not fit easily into absolute, rigid dual categories of male and female, man and woman, masculine and feminine. Human beings are infinitely more complex and diverse than just these two poles allow us to be; we are wondrously diverse in our character, experiences, joys, sorrows, passions and vocations. When we attempt to force ourselves and each other to adhere to two extremes of human possibility, we are separated from who God has created us to be, and we participate in the sexism that harms God's children.

## IV. HOW CAN WE MOVE FORWARD TOGETHER? (10 MINUTES)

### The body of Christ

*\*(Note to leaders: To symbolize our diversity and unity in Christ through God's grace, invite participants to tape their hand outlines to the wall in the shape of a cross. Then read the following text aloud. If time is short, read only the paragraphs in green shading.)*

Through the birth, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ, God affirmed the goodness of our bodies, even in the face of all this objectification, shame, domination and marginalization. We are held together in God's promise of wholeness and healing.

In the face of this pervasive sexism, which is manifested in the objectification, domination and control of bodies, we can look toward Christ and to Scripture with questions about the inherent value and goodness of bodies. When we do so, we find our questions answered with the incarnation of Christ, the embodied Word of God. As the gospel writer of John explains, "And the Word became flesh and lived among us" (John 1:14). Jesus, fully human, was born, walked, sat, spat, ate, wept and shouted. After God raised Jesus' body from the dead, Jesus ate bread, spoke and even invited Thomas to put fingers in his wounds. Both in the incarnation and in the resurrection, God confirms for us what was stated in Genesis: The creation of our bodies is good.

We remember this promise again with the sacrament of Holy Communion. As we receive the real presence of the body and blood of Christ, together with the bread and wine, into our own bodies, we are simultaneously united in the body of Christ gathered around the table. God affirms both our diversity and our unity together in these moments.

As Christians, Lutherans and children of God, we are called to do the difficult work of embracing the gifts of our rich unity and diversity in the body of Christ by finding ways to include, affirm and uplift people of every gender and every body in our work in the world and in the life of our church.

### As Lutherans, how can we move forward?

*\*(Note to leaders: Divide participants into small groups and instruct each group to choose one of the following three themes to read and discuss: the work and witness of Jesus, vocation of the baptized, or participation in the liberating work of God. Let participants know that these three theological emphases are critical resources for confronting sexism. They can help us turn from sin to love and from sexism to the work God calls us to do in ourselves, our relationships and our society.)*

### *The work and witness of Jesus*

Some Christian traditions and communities understand Jesus' maleness to mean that male bodies are closer to that of God incarnate or that male bodies are somehow more "good." In response to this, one might look toward Jesus' work and witness for clues about what Jesus' embodiment means specifically for women.

In the Gospels, a few patterns emerge. Jesus performs tasks that transcend strict binary gender roles; for example, he washes the feet of his disciples, a role that belonged to slave girls and wives.<sup>8</sup> Jesus goes out of his way to heal and celebrate women and includes women in his ministry. Jesus' ministry and work in the world embodies justice and peace for all; again and again, Jesus explains that the reign of God upsets any group establishing itself as privileged, central or superior. At the end of his ministry, Jesus once again subverts the patriarchal ideal of control and domination by dying on the cross.

#### **Discussion:**

When sexism in our culture tells us that the bodies of women, girls and gender non-conforming people should be controlled and dominated, how does God's incarnation in Jesus help us see an alternative? How can you go out of your way in the next week to affirm the goodness of all bodies, not just those that our culture already validates? Think about the media you consume, policies you might advocate for, or problems you can speak out against.

### *Freedom and vocation*

Luther's understanding that we are justified by God's grace through faith, rather than through the good works we do, redefined the role of works in Christian life. He offered the thesis that a Christian is paradoxically both perfectly free and dutifully subject to others.<sup>9</sup> Luther spoke of this freedom that results from justification as like a tree that brings forth good fruit.

Many interpret this to mean that we are empowered by the Holy Spirit to live into God's work, regardless of the norms, biases and roles of our context. At the same time, we are subject to God's will on behalf of our neighbors and all creation. We are shaped by God's relationship with us, to live our lives freely for the neighbor, and we have the ability to make decisions with consequences for those around us. Simultaneously, we are also called into relationships, places and roles that are not limited by the roles prescribed by our patriarchal world.

Discussion: In your life and context, what kinds of gender roles, stereotypes and expectations do you feel *freed from*? What work do you feel *freed for*?

### *Participating in God's liberating work*

Baptism affirms our vocation to work toward the liberation of all people of every gender, race and ethnicity, social class, immigration status, sexuality, age and ability. This is where we might draw on the theological traditions of **MUJERISTA**, **LIBERATION** and **WOMANIST THEOLOGY**, which have likened **JUSTIFICATION** to liberation from human systems that oppress people. Only God can usher in God's

Read more about Jesus' ministry and women in the Going Deeper section of this module.

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reign of justice and love, but we are called to ask how we can participate in God's work, seeking to establish justice and love in our society.

Discussion: Lutheran theologian Dietrich Bonhoeffer wrote: "We are not to simply bandage the wounds of victims beneath the wheels of injustice; we are to drive a spoke into the wheel itself." What does it mean to drive a spoke into the wheel of sexism and patriarchy? How might you drive a spoke in the wheel of sexism, as you begin to see it more clearly in your own life, family and communities?

### IN CLOSING (5 MINUTES)

*\*(Note to leaders: The leader should gather the group and read the following summary, guide the closing prayer, and point participants to the out-the-door activities.)*

#### What have we learned?

As sinners, we are plagued by sexism in our human relationships, in how we see ourselves and others, and in how we structure our households and communities. Yet, even in the face of this monumental and pervasive challenge, we are reminded again and again by the sacraments and by God's embodiment in the world through Jesus Christ that our gendered bodies and our rich diversity are beloved and held together in Christ. As we wrestle with the sexism in our contexts, we can look toward God's promise of wholeness and grace, empowered to be agents of God's freedom in our world, alleviating the suffering of all those controlled, ignored and dominated by sexism.

#### Closing prayer

*\*(Note to leaders: See leader's guide for instructions on leading heart prayer.)*

#### Out the door

1. **Complete the response form** found on page 127 or online at <https://surveys.elca.org/scripts/rws5.pl?FORM=wjss3>.
2. Use this module's **Going Deeper** section to learn more about sexism and the body of Christ.
3. **Learn and discuss:** Watch the film, "Miss Representation," and use the ELCA Task Force on Women and Justice's study guide to continue conversations in your congregation about the representation of women and girls in the media. Download the study at [ELCA.org](http://ELCA.org). Follow licensing rules.



4. **Learn and reflect:** Spend one or two days paying careful attention to the way women and girls are represented and presented in the media you consume: television, news, movies, songs, books, magazines, social media, etc. What messages about women and girls are being communicated? What stereotypes and ideals are perpetuated? What happens when women and girls violate social expectations about gender? What about men and boys? Talk about your findings with family and friends.
5. **Learn and advocate:** Learn about the laws in your area that marginalize and harm transgender people. Is it legal in your state to discriminate on the basis of gender identity? Contact your legislators and tell them how important it is to you, as a person of faith, to support, include and protect transgender people in all aspects of public life.
6. **Learn and practice:** Practice care for the neighbor by being supportive of those who are most harmed by sexism. Call out sexism when you encounter it, and practice believing and respecting women, girls and transgender people when they say they are harmed by sexism in relationships, families, congregations, workplaces and in our larger society.

## GOING DEEPER FOR MODULE 3

**If you want to know more about intersectionality:** Sometimes it's difficult to tell if sexism is the main reason someone is treated in a certain way. Part of the murkiness is due to the reality that we all have many identities. Some of these identities afford people more authority and power. Some identities push people toward the margins of society. These identities, especially those having to do with race and ethnicity, ability, age, sexuality, class, nationality and immigration status intersect with gender in ways that are unique and complex. This is called **INTERSECTIONALITY**.

Here's an example: "I am a young, Asian woman, and it's often hard for me to pinpoint if my experiences are based solely on my race, my age or my gender. For example, one day, I was getting ice cream sundaes with some coworkers at a McDonald's when an elderly white man, who looked like anyone's grandpa, came very close to me. He said in a low, gravelly voice, 'I used to have pretty little things like you during the war all the time.' I was shocked, and I just walked away as quickly as I could, holding back humiliated tears."<sup>10</sup>

**If you want to know more about the importance of naming sexism:** Martin Luther argued in "The Heidelberg Disputation" that "a theologian of glory calls evil good and good evil. A theologian of the cross calls the thing what it actually is."<sup>11</sup> In this way we are called to recognize patterns of gender-based inequalities and to call them what they are: individual and shared sin that harms God's children. Naming and calling out sexism is almost always uncomfortable, but it is only through this naming and through identifying sexism as such an "evil" that we can begin to understand these forces and, through the grace and strength of God, work against them.

**If you want to know more about gender expectations and stereotypes about girls and women:** Gender expectations for women and girls are at once restrictive and contradictory; they devalue typically feminine characteristics and punish women and girls for acting or being in ways that are not feminine enough. For example, women and girls are pressured to be physically attractive in narrow, culturally defined ways. At the same time, women and girls are often criticized or stereotyped as vain and superficial.

Here's an example: "I used to get teased in my high school by girls because I didn't wear make-up, so eventually I caved and tried it out. At first I didn't like it. It made me feel like there was something wrong with my face as it was. Eventually I found that some days it can be fun to have my nails a wacky color, or to put on some cool eye make-up. But now I get comments, mostly from boys, that I must be dumb and shallow because I spend time in front of the mirror. I feel like I just can't win."<sup>12</sup>

What are examples of social ideals for women that are both expected and then also devalued in our culture? How is this different than expectations and stereotypes about men? Use your list of gendered characteristics to start your thinking.

**If you want to know more about gender roles and sexism today:** Sometimes, it's easy to imagine that, as a society, we've already solved the problem of sexism. However, even in the ELCA, sexism is still shaping people's lives.

Here's one example from an ELCA pastor: "I was turned down for a call in a congregation because I was a woman. The bishop had recommended me. The call committee had recommended me. Everything went well until the weekend of the vote. There was a whispering campaign, and I was voted down. 'What if her children need her?' 'Can she be a wife and a pastor at the same time?' I was astounded that these concerns were still being articulated 25 years after this church decided to ordain women."<sup>13</sup> This story is not unique. Do these gender role expectations shape your family, congregation or community?

Our communities and culture have made great strides toward gender equity in the last hundred years. A few prominent examples are the passage of the 19th Amendment, Title IX, increased participation in the workforce, government and in academia, and, in the ELCA, the ordination of women. However, a great deal of work still needs to be done, especially when gender identity intersects with other marginalized identities and further disadvantage women of color, lesbian and bisexual women, transgender women, women with disabilities, women who are undocumented immigrants, and women who face other challenges in a world still struggling with sexism and inequality.

**If you want to know about sexism and Scripture:** Scripture is a precious gift and is at the heart of our life and mission together in Christ's church. It deserves our very best attention. Even as we affirm the great diversity and unity of our siblings in Christ, and even as we commit ourselves to struggle against the forces of sexism and inequality, we must face those sections of Scripture that have, for centuries, been used by many to enforce and sustain sexism.

One way to grapple with the problems in these texts is to study them with a historical lens. When we attempt to reconstruct the historical factors at play in these texts, we can uncover new understandings of the text's intended audience and purpose. Sometimes, this can shed light on how the text might reveal good news for us today. We can also examine these passages with a theological lens, using our own confessional tradition to help us with interpretation. When we affirm and confess that we are justified by grace through faith, when we look to Scripture to interpret Scripture, and when we can identify what proclaims Christ, our answers to the question of women and justice look different than those in these problematic texts. When we read Scripture using a neighbor-justice lens, we can come to different conclusions.

For example, a text like Galatians 3:28, "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus" proclaims Christ more clearly and helps us love our neighbors more faithfully than some of the texts that have been used to suppress or harm women, girls and transgender people. With our unity in Christ held at the forefront of our exegetical work, we are freer to interpret problematic texts as fragments of a pervasive patriarchy – one that still plagues us today. We become free to ask a critical question: "What does the Bible point us to?" We are free to ask, "What does this passage mean for us today?"

Women, justice and Scripture will be discussed in further detail in Module 7 of this study.

**If you want to know more about Jesus and women:** The question, “What does the Bible point us to?” opens our purview to examine many parts of Scripture, not just problematic texts. Then, we are free to look toward Christ as the seat of revelation for God’s will and activity for women and justice. In addition to affirming the goodness of our bodies, held together in our Baptism and Communion, we might ask questions such as, “What did Jesus say about and do for women?” The Gospels include scores of examples of Jesus loving, affirming, supporting, healing and revealing the love and grace of God especially to women.

- Jesus *heals* women. Throughout the synoptic Gospels we have several examples of Jesus healing women and girls, concerned with the health and bodies of women.
- Jesus *affirms* women and presents them as models of faith.
- Jesus *reveals* truth to women. He speaks with the Samaritan woman at the well, revealing to her that he is the Messiah, to Mary and Martha in Luke 10, and to Mary Magdalene, who became a disciple of Jesus’ ministry. Perhaps most significantly, it is to women that Jesus’ resurrection is first revealed.

Just as we can turn from problematic texts to Jesus’ embrace of women’s bodies, faith and ministry, so too can we pivot from the texts of patriarchal cultures to the promises of God’s care, healing, inclusion and revelation for women.

## ENDNOTES

<sup>1</sup> An estimated 85 to 95 percent of people with anorexia or bulimia are female. Twenty percent of people suffering from anorexia will prematurely die from complications related to their eating disorder, including suicide and heart problems. See "Eating Disorders Statistics," National Association of Anorexia Nervosa and Associated Disorders, <http://www.anad.org/get-information/about-eating-disorders/eating-disorders-statistics/>.

<sup>2</sup> Mary Anne Franks, "Drafting an Effective 'Revenge Porn' Law: A Guide for Legislators," *The Cyber Civil Rights Initiative*, published Nov. 2, 2015, p. 10, <http://www.cybercivilrights.org/guide-to-legislation/>.

<sup>3</sup> The ELCA's social statement on *Abortion* states that, with regard to public policy, "any proposed regulation [on abortion] should contribute toward the intended goals without generating problems worse than those it seeks to address." The statement also argues, "Laws should be enacted and enforced justly for the preservation and enhancement of life, and should avoid unduly encumbering or endangering the lives of women. Because of our conviction that both the life of the woman and the life in her womb must be respected by law, this church opposes ... laws that deny access to safe and affordable services for morally justifiable abortions." See *Abortion*, (Chicago: Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 1991), 9-10. The social statement can be accessed in English and Spanish at <http://www.ELCA.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Abortion>.

<sup>4</sup> According to a 2016 American Public Health Association study, targeted regulation of abortion provider laws enacted in Texas have "resulted in significant burdens for women able to obtain care." Forty-four percent of women whose closest clinic closed since 2013 now live more than 50 miles away from the nearest clinic, have out-of-pocket expenses greater than \$100, and report that it is somewhat or very hard to get to the clinic. See Caitlin Gerds, Liza Fuentes, Daniel Grossman, Kari White, Brianna Keefe-Oates, Sarah E. Baum, Kristine Hopkins, Chandler W. Stolp and Joseph E. Potter, "Impact of Clinic Closures on Women Obtaining Abortion Services after Implementation of a Restrictive Law in Texas," *American Journal of Public Health* 106, no. 5 (2016): 857-864, <http://ajph.aphapublications.org/>.

<sup>5</sup> The ELCA's social message Gender-based Violence includes a more exhaustive list of types of gender-based violence. Download the message at [www.ELCA.org/socialmessages](http://www.ELCA.org/socialmessages).

<sup>6</sup> Patricia Tjaden and Nancy Thoennes, *Prevalence, Incidence, and Consequences of Violence Against Women* (Washington, D.C.: U.S. Department of Justice, 1998), 11.

<sup>7</sup> "Hate Violence Against Transgender Communities," National Coalition of Anti-violence Programs, [http://www.avp.org/storage/documents/ncavp\\_transhvfactsheet.pdf](http://www.avp.org/storage/documents/ncavp_transhvfactsheet.pdf).

<sup>8</sup> Ruth Habermann, "Gospel of John: Spaces for Women," in *Feminist Biblical Interpretation*, ed. Luise Schottroff and Marie-Theres Wacker (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 2012), 673.

<sup>9</sup> Martin Luther, "Treatise on Christian Liberty," 1520, LW 31.

<sup>10</sup> Monologue adapted from "A Young, Asian Woman," in *Our Voices, Our Stories, Sexism in Church and Society*, ed. Mary J. Streufert (Chicago: Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 2009), 17-18.

<sup>11</sup> Martin Luther, "The Heidelberg Disputation," 1518, LW 31:40.

<sup>12</sup> This illustration is based on an experience of a member of the task force. Names have been altered for the sake of anonymity.

<sup>13</sup> Monologue adapted from "Who Says?" in *Our Voices, Our Stories, Sexism in Church and Society*, ed. Mary J. Streufert (Chicago: Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 2009), 26.

## RESPONSE FORM

### How is sexism personal, and how are we the body of Christ together?

1. What is the name of your congregation, school, group or organization?

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2. What is the ZIP code?

3. Is this response from an individual or group?

- Individual
- Group: how many people are in the group?
- 2 – 5
  - 6 – 10
  - 11 – 20
  - 21 or more

4. How valuable did you find Module 3: How is sexism personal, and how are we the body of Christ together?

	Not valuable	A little valuable	Moderately valuable	Valuable	Very valuable
I. What is sexism and how does it show up in my life?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
II. How does sexism work?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
III. What is the effect of sexism on our bodies?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
IV. How can we move forward together?	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

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**Module 3: How is sexism personal, and how are we the body of Christ together?**

5. As a result of participating in this module, what did you learn?

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6. What do you see as the greatest strength of this module on personal sexism?

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7. What do you see as the greatest weakness of this module on personal sexism?

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8. Based on your conversations during this module, what would you like our church (the ELCA) as part of Christ's body to say and do?

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The form is complete – thank you!

Please send the completed form to:  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
Research and Evaluation  
8765 W. Higgins Rd.  
Chicago, IL 60631-4101