

# RESPONSE TO SAINT PAUL AREA SYNOD COUNCIL RESOLUTION ON "VISIONS AND EXPECTATIONS"

Social Policy Resolution  
CC00.11.67



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.

## Adopted by the 2000 Church Council.

### Resolved

To receive the response of the Division for Ministry prepared in consultation with the Conference of Bishops to the resolution of the Saint Paul Area Synod Council requesting an amendment to "Vision and Expectations: Ordained Ministers in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America;"

To acknowledge that "Vision and Expectations" was originally adopted and may be amended in accordance with ELCA constitutional provision 7.31. and bylaws 7.31.11. and 7.31.13.f.; however, to respond that the Church Council declines the request from the Saint Paul Area Synod and does not recommend the constitutional changes necessary to amend "Vision and Expectations" in the manner requested by the Saint Paul Area Synod because, as the Division for Ministry observed in its report to the 1999 Churchwide Assembly, "...there is no shared understanding among the members of this church in regard to how same-gender relationships should be understood or acknowledged" and a need exists "...to seek a common understanding regarding same-gender relationships of sexual intimacy and the blessing of same-sex unions before addressing the question of ordaining non-celibate gay or lesbian persons;"

To express gratitude that conversations related to human sexuality have occurred in many areas of this church, including the Saint Paul Area Synod, but to express deep concern that there are many places across the ELCA where these conversations have yet to begin;

To reaffirm the commitment of this church "...to continue thoughtful, deliberate, and prayerful conversations throughout the ELCA about human sexuality, including homosexuality, and the inclusion of gay and lesbian persons in our common life and mission and to encourage the participation of congregations, synods, seminaries, and churchwide units in this process" (CC00.04.17), with annual reports to the Church Council and biennial reports to the 2001 and 2003 Churchwide Assemblies; and

To request that the response of the Division for Ministry [as above] and the action of this Church Council be reported to the synod.