

All Are Called to Lives of Justice and Abundance

EXPLORE FAITH, SEXISM, AND JUSTICE: A CALL TO ACTION

“Gender justice is for all people and requires particular attention to seeking fuller justice for women and girls.” (FSJ, p. 14)

“In the Gospel of John, Jesus declares, ‘I came that they may have life, and have it abundantly’ (John 10:10b). Jesus put this into action by eating with everyone, including marginalized people. Jesus lived compassionately, healing and casting out evil spirits. Jesus criticized those who neglect justice and mercy and delivered God’s call to respond to the needs of anyone who is disadvantaged, marginalized, and unjustly treated.” (FSJ, p. 15)

“We believe all people are created equally in the image of God. Every individual is dependent upon God, and all share in the God-given vocation to contribute their gifts to help all of creation flourish. Being in the image of the triune God means that we humans are relational, that we are interconnected. Just as we interact with God, we are social creatures relating with each other and all of creation.” (FSJ, p. 15)

“Grounded in faith and love, we seek justice for ourselves and our neighbors within congregations, religious and secular institutions, governments, and societies. This love includes gender justice.” (FSJ, p. 21)

“Intersectionality describes the ways different forms of discrimination and systemic oppression affect each other and shape the lives of individuals and communities in distinct ways.” (FSJ, p. 77)

Participants are encouraged to read pp. 12-15 in *Faith, Sexism, and Justice*.

ENCOUNTER THE SCRIPTURES

Psalms 65:8-12: The author of this psalm celebrates the abundance of God’s care for creatures and creation.

Luke 1:46-55: In these verses, Mary expresses her joy at becoming Jesus’ mother and announces her desire for justice for all God’s people.

RESOURCES

Documents and history for *Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action* can be found at <https://www.elca.org/womenandjustice>.

Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action can be found at https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Faith_Sexism_Justice_Social_Statement_Adopted.pdf.

Fe, sexismo y justicia: Un llamado a la acción can be found at https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Fe_sexismo_y_justicia.pdf.

The study guide for *Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action* can be found at <https://www.elca.org/fsjstudyguide>.

The video for session one, “All Are Called to Lives of Abundance and Justice,” can be found at <https://vimeo.com/showcase/8989135/video/467778127>.

“God has told you, O mortal, what is good; and what does the Lord require of you but to do justice, and to love kindness, and to walk humbly with your God?”

—Micah 6:8



All Are Called to Lives of Justice and Abundance

IN THE COMING WEEK

- A** Take a photo of the sticky notes about gender justice on the board. During the week, share this photo with someone and discuss the words you wrote to describe justice, abundance, or injustice.
- B** Read Implementing Resolution #4, at the end of the social statement (FSJ, p. 81), which calls all ELCA members to reflect on their use of mass media and social media. Consider how the films, videos, TV shows, video games, or social media that you consume perpetuate gender injustice or advance gender justice for women and girls.
- C** Sometimes, as Pastor Thomas-Breitfeld said, intersecting factors related to who you are, such as your age, ability, race, economics, or ethnicity, shape your experiences of abundant life and justice. Take time this week and write down the intersecting aspects of your identity and one way each one affects something in your life, either positively or negatively. (*Faith, Sexism, and Justice* describes intersectionality as “the ways different forms of discrimination ... affect each other and shape the lives of individuals. ... All human identities ... are made up of many intersections” (FSJ, p. 77). Think about ways you can use your agency (no matter how limited) to act for justice for yourself or your neighbor.
- D** Investigate the resources in the Explore section at the end of this session.

If You Want to Know More About God's Justice and Abundance,

EXPLORE ...

... the ELCA's teachings about God's abundance toward creation, read: Genesis 1; Psalm 8; Psalm 33; Psalm 104; Isaiah 65; Isaiah 66; John 10; 1 Corinthians 12; 2 Corinthians 9; and see *Faith, Sexism, and Justice*, pp. 2, 12-15, 37, and 50.

... the ELCA's principles of justice (sufficiency, sustainability, solidarity, and participation), see: *Faith, Sexism, and Justice*, pp. 48-50. Also see the ELCA social statement *Caring for Creation: Vision, Hope, and Justice*, pp. 6-7, <https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/EnvironmentSS.pdf>.

... God's intended justice—including gender justice—for creation, read: Genesis 1:26-28; Isaiah 61; Isaiah 65; Micah 6; Luke 1; Galatians 3; and see *Faith, Sexism, and Justice*, pp. 14-15, 20-21, 48-49, and 59-60.

... the ELCA's understanding of neighbor justice, read Leviticus 19; Mark 12; and Romans 13; and see *Faith, Sexism, and Justice*, pp. 20-21.

... how gender justice is connected to vocation, baptism, and Easter hope, read: the ELCA social statement *The Church and Criminal Justice: Hearing the Cries*, pp. 17-20, https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Criminal_JusticeSS.pdf.

... ELCA resources for advancing gender justice, go to: <https://www.elca.org/Resources/Justice-for-Women>.

... a Lutheran view of justice, read: the article “Foundations for a Neighbor Justice Ethic” by William Rodriguez, published in *Currents in Theology and Mission* (April 2020), <https://currentsjournal.org/index.php/currents/article/view/236/259>.

... the global Lutheran communion's commitment to gender justice, read the Lutheran World Federation's “Gender Justice Policy,” <https://www.lutheranworld.org/content/resource-lwf-gender-justice-policy>.



Patriarchy and Sexism Cause Injustice for Everyone

EXPLORE FAITH, SEXISM, AND JUSTICE: A CALL TO ACTION

“Particular sinful actions (sins) are expressions of our human life in a state of sin. Individuals, families, communities, institutions, governments, and societies can all sin. Sin is not only individual; it is also collective or communal. Sinful humans create structures, organizations, and societies that perpetuate sin, sometimes unintentionally. This is called ‘structural sin.’” (FSJ, p. 19)

“Patriarchy is a social system dominated by men, identified with men, and centered on men’s actions, voices, and authority. Patriarchy does not mean that males are bad and females are good, or that only males support this unfair system.” (FSJ, p. 31)

“Sexism is the reinforcement of male privilege, which leads to discrimination.” (FSJ, p. 31)

“Intersectionality refers to the ways in which various forms of discrimination and oppression, linked to aspects of a person’s identity, overlap. The concept of intersectionality helps to express the multiple discriminations many women face daily.” (FSJ, p. 25)

Participants are encouraged to read pp. 25-38 in *Faith, Sexism, and Justice*.

ENCOUNTER THE SCRIPTURES

Isaiah 1:1-6; 12-17: Through the prophet Isaiah, God pleads for justice and judges the people for not trusting God and for oppressing others.

RESOURCES

Documents and history for *Faith Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action* can be found at <https://www.elca.org/womenandjustice>.

Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action can be found at https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Faith_Sexism_Justice_Social_Statement_Adopted.pdf.

Fe, sexismo y justicia: Un llamado a la acción can be found at https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Fe_sexismo_y_justicia.pdf.

The study guide for *Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action* can be found at <https://www.elca.org/fsjstudyguide>.

The video for session two, “Patriarchy and Sexism Cause Injustice for Everyone,” can be found at <https://vimeo.com/468337999/9c30faa6f4>.

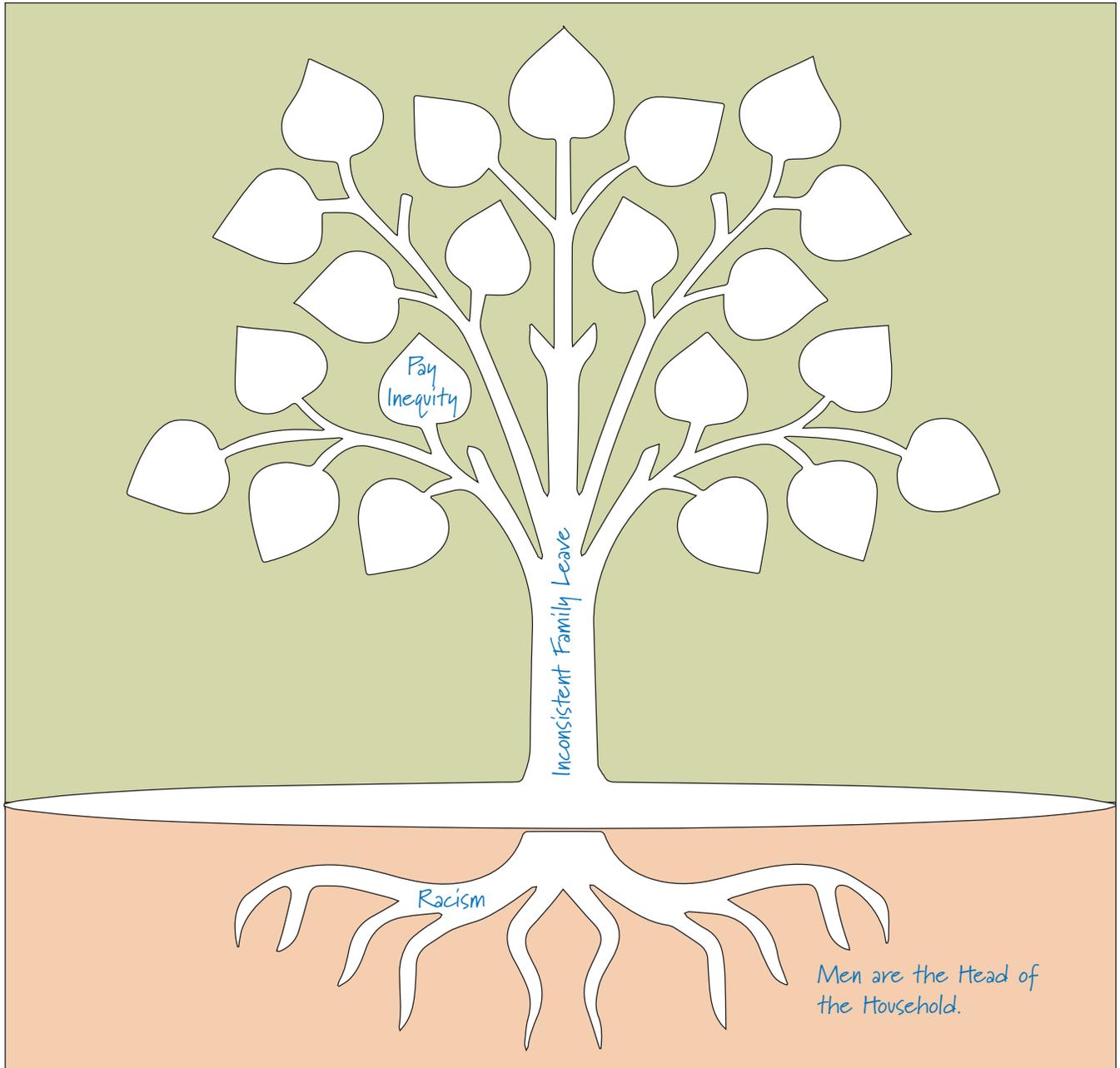


Patriarchy and Sexism Cause Injustice for Everyone

ACTIVITY

A metaphor for how patriarchy as a social system works

This image of a tree is a metaphor for how a patriarchal social system works.* It is a visual illustration to show how sin is not only individual but also systemic.



* The Tree as Metaphor – Allan G. Johnson, agjohnson.us



Patriarchy and Sexism Cause Injustice for Everyone

If You Want to Know More About Patriarchy, Sexism, and Gender Justice,

EXPLORE ...

... **experiences of women in the ELCA**, collected in “Our Voices, Our Stories” on the ELCA Justice for Women site. Go to <https://www.elca.org/justiceforwomen> and click on “Resources.” For more on ELCA rostered ministers, watch the video “Seriously?” at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=bTcaAkG86QQ&t=4s>.

... **the ELCA’s understanding of structural sin**, see the 1991 social statement *The Church in Society: A Lutheran Perspective* at <https://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Church-in-Society>.

... **patriarchy and sexism**, read *Faith, Sexism, and Justice*, pp. 25-38; see pp. 33-34 for the effects on men and boys.

... **addressing gender-based violence**, read the ELCA social message “Gender-based Violence” and foundational documentation and use the study guide, found at <https://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Messages/Gender-Violence>.

... **the perspectives of women of color related to patriarchy and intersectionality**, read “One Perspective on ‘Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action’ as a Beacon of Gospel Hope for the ELCA” by Viviane Thomas-Breitfeld, published in *Currents in Theology and Mission* (April 2020), <https://www.currentsjournal.org/index.php/currents/article/view/237/258>.

... **congregational youth group engagement with patriarchy, sexism, and intersectionality**, read the article “Identifying the Intersections: Youth Ministry and the ELCA’s Social Statement ‘Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action’” by Nicholas Tangen, published in *Currents in Theology and Mission* (April 2020), <https://www.currentsjournal.org/index.php/currents/article/view/233/262>.

... **intersectional analysis and Lutheran theology**, read the article “Luther/an(d) Feminist Intersectional Theology” by Caryn D. Riswold, published in *Religions* (January 2020), <https://www.mdpi.com/2077-1444/11/2/54>.

... **the intersection of racism, sexism, and colonialism**. Read the article “The Doctrine of Christian Discovery: Lutherans and the Language of Empire” by Tink Tinker, published in *Journal of Lutheran Ethics* (March 2017), <https://learn.elca.org/jle/the-doctrine-of-christian-discovery-lutherans-and-the-language-of-empire/>. Also see the ELCA’s repudiation of the doctrine of discovery, <http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/RepudiationDoctrineOfDiscoverySPR2016.pdf>.

... **the intersections of white supremacy, sexism, and homophobia**, read Lenny Duncan’s book *Dear Church: A Love Letter from a Black Preacher to the Whitest Denomination in the U.S.* (2019).

... **reading the Bible with an analysis of patriarchy in mind**, see: “Of Many Generations: Mary, Elizabeth, and Lydia,” Women of the ELCA 2014 summer Bible study by Diane Jacobson, <https://www.gathermagazine.org/wp-content/uploads/2019/04/OfManyGenerations.pdf>.



Patriarchy and Sexism Cause Injustice for Everyone

IN THE COMING WEEK

- A** Take a photo of the illustration you filled out or the notes you made; then share it with someone who did not attend today's session. Add a caption about how you see individual and systemic sins working together. Add a caption about how you see race, age, or ability intersecting in your illustration.
- B** Spend 5 minutes each day looking at the news headlines and reflect on how women, girls, and gender non-conforming persons from a variety of economic means, abilities, races and ethnicities, and/or gender identities and sexualities are represented. Write down one thing you notice each day. With others or alone, reflect on what you notice.
- C** Read Implementing Resolution #7 (*FSJ*, pp. 81-82), which urges congregations, synods, and the churchwide organization to address their own inequities in compensation and the roots of this problem. Consider what your congregation, synod, organization, or workplace should do to provide equitable compensation.
- D** Read Implementing Resolution #16 (*FSJ*, p. 83), which calls all parts of the ELCA to integrate anti-sexism education and practices into their work, for the good of the whole church. Write down for yourself or talk with someone about where you would like to see this happen and what difference you want it to make.
- E** Become part of the World Council of Churches' "Thursdays in Black" campaign (<https://www.oikoumene.org/en/get-involved/thursdays-in-black> and <https://www.elca.org/thursdaysinblack>) and read Implementing Resolution #3 (*FSJ*, p. 81), which encourages congregations to take action to end gender-based violence.
- F** Investigate the resources in the Explore section at the end of this session.



Language and Images for God Matter

EXPLORE FAITH, SEXISM, AND JUSTICE: A CALL TO ACTION

“The Christian tradition confesses that God is infinite mystery beyond human comprehension. Human language and human concepts about God are never enough to know God.” (FSJ, p. 44)

“Insistence on predominantly male-oriented language and images restricts our understanding of God, who is beyond gender, to one human category. . . . The use of only male language leads us to forget the incomprehensible mystery of God and can reduce the living God to an understanding of God to the figure of an infinitely powerful man.” (FSJ, p. 44)

“[I]nsisting on only male language can make maleness itself a false idol. It can persuade Christians that men have more in common with God than women do and thus that maleness is a higher form of humanity.” (FSJ, p. 44)

Participants are encouraged to read article 18, which begins at p. 42 of *Faith, Sexism, and Justice*.

ENCOUNTER THE SCRIPTURES

In Isaiah 42, images for God alternate between typical masculine and feminine images, such as a soldier and a woman giving birth. (Isaiah 42:13-14)

But then in Chapter 46, it is as if God says something like, “You know what? You cannot compare me to anyone or anything that you know! I am beyond human understanding.” (Isaiah 46:3-9)

RESOURCES

Documents and history for *Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action* can be found at <https://www.elca.org/womenandjustice>.

Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action can be found at https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Faith_Sexism_Justice_Social_Statement_Adopted.pdf.

Fe, sexismo y justicia: Un llamado a la acción can be found at https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Fe_sexismo_y_justicia.pdf.

The study guide for *Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action* can be found at: <https://www.elca.org/fsjstudyguide>.

The video for session three, “Language and Images for God Matter,” can be found at <https://vimeo.com/showcase/8989135/video/471449111>.



Language and Images for God Matter

ACTIVITY

The following passages use inclusive and expansive language and images for God.

Moses proclaims to all of Israel: “As an eagle stirs up its nest, and hovers over its young; as it spreads its wings, takes them up, and bears them aloft on its pinions, the LORD alone guided [Jacob]; no foreign god was with him.” (Deuteronomy 32:11-12)

“You were unmindful of the Rock that bore you; you forgot the God who gave you birth.” (Deuteronomy 32:18)

“You are a hiding place for me; you preserve me from trouble; you surround me with glad cries of deliverance.” (Psalm 32:7)

“As the eyes of servants look to the hand of their master, as the eyes of a maid to the hand of her mistress, so our eyes look to the LORD our God, until he has mercy upon us.” (Psalm 123:2)

God says: “For a long time I have held my peace, I have kept myself still and restrained myself; now I will cry out like a woman in labor, I will gasp and pant.” (Isaiah 42:14)

God says: “As a mother comforts her child, so I will comfort you; you shall be comforted in Jerusalem.” (Isaiah 66:13)

God says about Israel: “Yet it was I who taught Ephraim to walk, I took them up in my arms; but they did not know that I healed them. I led them with cords of human kindness, with bands of love. I was to them like those who lift infants to their cheeks. I bent down to them and fed them.” (Hosea 11:3-4)



The LORD says to Israel of those who are wayward, “I will fall upon them like a bear robbed of her cubs, and will tear open the covering of their heart; there I will devour them like a lion, as a wild animal would mangle them.” (Hosea 13:8)

Jesus says, “Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often I have desired to gather your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!” (Matthew 23:37)

“Which one of you, having a hundred sheep and losing one of them, does not leave the ninety-nine in the wilderness and go after the one that is lost until he finds it? ... Or what woman having ten silver coins, if she loses one of them, does not light a lamp, sweep the house, and search carefully until she finds it?” (Luke 15:4, 8)



Language and Images for God Matter

IN THE COMING WEEK

- A** Send a message (handwritten or electronic) with one of today's passages from the Scriptures to someone who was not at the session. Tell them why it matters to you and invite them into a conversation about this passage.
- B** Go through your congregation's worship bulletin, website, or building and look at what they communicate about God and humans (gender, race and ethnicity, age, ability, etc.).
- C** Read Implementing Resolution #8 (*Faith, Sexism, and Justice*, p. 82), which calls on bishops, synods, and the churchwide organization to use gender-inclusive and expansive language for God. Identify one way you can support this commitment.
- D** Read *Faith, Sexism, and Justice*, Article 18, beginning at p. 42. Circle words or phrases that catch your attention.
- E** Investigate the resources in the Explore section at the end of this session.

If You Want to Know More About Inclusive and Expansive Language for God,

EXPLORE ...

... **ELCA worship resources with expansive and inclusive language and images**, see *All Creation Sings: Evangelical Lutheran Worship Supplement* (Augsburg Fortress, 2020). It includes a catalog of images for God from the Scriptures, with a selection of 100 images from the New Revised Standard Version. See an article highlighting this new resource and its connection to *Faith, Sexism, and Justice* here: <https://blogs.elca.org/worship/2688/>.

... **how language shapes worship**, see "Language and the Christian Assembly" in *Principles for Worship* (Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, 2002), https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Principles_for_Worship.pdf.

... **Lutheran interpretation of the Bible**, see session seven of "Faith, Sexism, Justice: Conversations Toward a Social Statement," 2016, available in pdf at <https://www.elca.org/Resources/Justice-for-Women>.

... **the global links between theology and patriarchy**, read the Lutheran World Federation document "'It will not be so among you!' A Faith Reflection on Women and Power," esp. pp. 27-34, at <https://www.lutheranworld.org/content/resource-it-will-not-be-so-among-you-faith-reflection-gender-and-power>.

... **biblical female images of God**, watch Elizabeth A. Johnson at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=wkGM8rWVF80>.

... **God as Mother in the Scriptures and how biblical translation matters**, watch Wil Gafney at <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=zLfpaRhsSUI>.

... **Lutheran perspectives in the dialogue about language for God**, read the article "Magnifying the Mystery" by Gail Ramshaw, published in *Currents in Theology and Mission* (March 2020), <https://www.currentsjournal.org/index.php/currents/article/view/231>, and read the special issue on God language in *Currents in Theology and Mission* (June 2016), <https://www.currentsjournal.org/index.php/currents/issue/view/4>.

... **how one womanist theologian explores language for God**, read the article "Womanist Theology: Black Women's Voices" by Delores S. Williams, published in *Christianity and Crisis* (March 1987), <https://www.religion-online.org/article/womanist-theology-black-womens-voices/>.

... **the ecumenical and scholarly conversation on this topic**, read the book *Quest for the Living God* by Elizabeth A. Johnson, published by Continuum (2008).



Creation Is Diverse, as Is the Body of Christ

EXPLORE FAITH, SEXISM, AND JUSTICE: A CALL TO ACTION

Faith, Sexism, and Justice celebrates the diversity of God's creation. "The Scriptures reveal the diversity and interconnectedness of creation. God creates a teeming universe filled with plants and animals ... and humans—all remarkably diverse. We believe God creates humanity in diversity. Scientific research in conversation with the Christian tradition shows that this diversity encompasses a wide variety of experiences, identities, and expressions, including sex (human biology), gender (how humans understand and express themselves), and sexuality (sexual attraction)." (FSJ, p. 17).

The social statement affirms that all Christians are equal members of the body of Christ. "In baptism, all Christians are unified in Christ and are equal members of the body of Christ. The apostle Paul compared the early Christian community to the human body. He wrote that Christians are united in the body of Christ, that this body has many diverse parts, and that the members of the body need one another." (FSJ, p. 24).

Faith, Sexism, and Justice affirms LGBTQIA+ and gender non-conforming persons as equal members of the body of Christ. "We must continue to embrace our unity and diversity so that we welcome and uplift people of every sex (biological) and gender—indeed, every body—in our work together as the body of Christ in the world." (FSJ, p. 48).

Read pp. 9, articles 31 and 32; pp. 15-18; 24; 33-36; and 47, article 20 in *Faith, Sexism, and Justice*.

ENCOUNTER THE SCRIPTURES

Psalm 104: 1, 10-11, 14-15, and 20-24

The author of this psalm celebrates the diversity of God's creation.

1 Corinthians 12:1-18

In his letter to the Christians at Corinth, the apostle Paul teaches that the members of the body of Christ are diverse and interdependent.

RESOURCES

Documents and history for *Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action* can be found at <https://www.elca.org/womenandjustice>.

Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action can be found at https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Faith_Sexism_Justice_Social_Statement_Adopted.pdf.

Fe, sexismo y justicia: Un llamado a la acción can be found at https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Fe_sexismo_y_justicia.pdf.

The study guide for *Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action* can be found at <https://www.elca.org/fsjstudyguide>.

The video for session four, "Creation Is Diverse, as Is the Body of Christ," can be found at <https://vimeo.com/showcase/8989135/video/468338842>.

"Women, girls, and people who identify as non-binary must not be deprived of their human or civil rights."

(FSJ, p. 9)



Creation Is Diverse, as Is the Body of Christ

IN THE COMING WEEK

- A** Contact a friend and ask them to take the quiz on gender injustice. Review your answers together. Then discuss what steps you can take to promote gender justice for women and girls and for LGBTQIA+ and gender non-conforming people.
- B** Track the hours you and your partner spend on housework, childcare, or eldercare in the coming week. Does one of you perform more work than the other? What assumptions about sex and gender might lead to this inequity?
- C** Implementing Resolution #15 calls the ELCA to oppose discrimination and renew its efforts to welcome, care for, and support LGBTQIA+ persons (*FSJ*, p. 83). What could your congregation do to pursue gender justice and to identify and support individuals and groups as they work for gender justice in the ELCA? Consider discussing this with your congregational leaders or with others in your congregation.
- D** Investigate the resources in the Explore section at the end of this session.

If You Want to Know More About the Diversity of Creation and the Diversity of the Body of Christ, EXPLORE ...

... the diversity of creation in the Scriptures.

See Genesis 1-2; Psalm 8; Psalm 104; Job 38-39; Acts 2; and Galatians 3.

... the New Testament's description of the body of Christ. See Romans 12; 1 Corinthians 6:12-20; 1 Corinthians 12; and Ephesians 4. In *Faith, Sexism, and Justice* see pp. 24, 42-46, and 57.

... the stories of LGBTQIA+ and gender non-conforming Lutherans. Read the article "Equal Participants in the Body of Christ" by Sarah Carson, published in *Living Lutheran* (February 2017), <https://www.livinglutheran.org/2017/02/equal-participants-body-christ/>.

... the ELCA's 2009 social statement on human sexuality. See *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust*, <https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/SexualitySS.pdf>.

... how biological sex and gender are viewed in Faith, Sexism, and Justice. Read the article "A New Creation: Sex and Gender in 'Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action'" by Mary Elise Lowe, published in *Currents in Theology and Mission* (April 2020), <https://www.currentsjournal.org/index.php/currents/article/view/230/266>.

... queer theology by and for queer people of color. Read Patrick S. Cheng's book *Rainbow Theology: Bridging Race, Sexuality, and Spirit*, published by Seabury Books, 2013.

... the terms lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, queer, intersex, and gender non-conforming. Refer to the [glossary](#) of *Faith, Sexism, and Justice*. And explore the GLAAD Media Reference Guide, 10th edition, for more on these preferred terms at <https://www.glaad.org/reference>.

... the ELCA's social statement on race and ethnicity. See *Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture*, <https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/RaceSS.pdf>.

... more about bodies, violence, and gender justice. Read Evangeline Anderson-Rajkumar's article "Mapping Patriarchal Patterns in Violence: Some Lessons for a Theology of Gender Justice," published in *Journal of Lutheran Ethics* in September 2013, <https://learn.elca.org/jle/mapping-patriarchal-patterns-in-violence-some-lessons-for-a-theology-of-gender-justice/>.

... ELCA resources for advancing justice for persons with disabilities. See the ELCA's social message "A Message on People Living With Disabilities," https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/People_with_DisabilitiesSM.pdf.



Creation Is Diverse, as Is the Body of Christ

GENDER INJUSTICE QUIZ (4 MINUTES)

Circle the correct answers.

- 1 How many **more** hours a week does the average 35- to 44-year-old woman spend caring for children and maintaining the home when compared to the housework and childcare performed by the man in the same home?¹
 - A 1.5 hours
 - B 2 hours
 - C 3.5 hours
 - D 5 hours
- 2 What percentage of LGBT persons have experienced discrimination at work?²
 - A 15%
 - B 20%
 - C 27%
 - D 41%
- 3 What percentage of transgender individuals report that a doctor has refused to see them because of their identity?³
 - A 8%
 - B 12%
 - C 21%
 - D 29%
- 4 In 2021, 145 ELCA congregations had a weekly attendance of 500-plus people. Of these large congregations, what percentage were led by a pastor who is a female?⁴
 - A 8%
 - B 10%
 - C 13%
 - D 17%
- 5 How much more likely are lesbian, gay, or bisexual youth to attempt suicide than their heterosexual peers?⁵
 - A none; the rates are the same
 - B 1.5 times as likely
 - C twice as likely
 - D three times as likely

1. <https://iwpr.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/01/IWPR-Providing-Unpaid-Household-and-Care-Work-in-the-United-States-Uncovering-Inequality.pdf>
2. <https://williamsinstitute.law.ucla.edu/publications/employ-discrim-effect-lgbt-people/>
3. <https://www.americanprogress.org/issues/lgbt/news/2018/01/18/445130/discrimination-prevents-lgbtq-people-accessing-health-care/>
4. This data is from the ELCA Office of the Secretary in August 2021.
5. <https://www.cdc.gov/msmhealth/suicide-violence-prevention.htm>

QUIZ ANSWERS

- 1 C. Women perform 3.5 hours more work than men.
- 2 C. 27% of LGBT persons experience workplace discrimination.
- 3 D. 29% of transgender persons report that a doctor refused to see them.
- 4 C. 13% of large ELCA congregations in 2021 were led by a pastor who is a female.
- 5 C. LGBT youth are twice as likely to attempt suicide.



Lutheran Insights Promote Gender Justice

EXPLORE FAITH, SEXISM, AND JUSTICE: A CALL TO ACTION

God is known on the cross and present in human suffering. “[A] theology of the cross can remind us that Jesus Christ suffers on our account. ... We might endure violence because we confess faith in Jesus Christ, ... but women and girls are not called to endure gender-based violence. ... [A] Lutheran view of the cross reminds us that we see God hidden in suffering. ... [W]e can confess that God is present even in the depths of our worst experiences.” (FSJ, p. 42)

Justification leads to freedom. “Lutherans confess that we are justified by God’s grace through faith in Jesus Christ. ... This promise means we are freed from bondage to the people and things we trust and love more than God or the ways we try to justify ourselves. ... God’s grace frees us and empowers us to love others.” (FSJ, p. 2)

Freedom is part of serving the neighbor. “Because we are freed in Christ for others, we are able to respond to God’s call to love our neighbor as ourselves. In society, neighbor love takes the form of neighbor justice.” (FSJ, p. 20)

Neighbor justice is lived out in the world. “We respond to ... God’s gift by loving others. ... [T]his responsive love takes the form of justice for the neighbor in an unjust world. ... [W]e seek justice for ourselves and our neighbors within congregations, religious and secular institutions, governments, and societies. This love includes gender justice.” (FSJ, p. 21)

Participants are encouraged to read pp. 42-43 and 53 on a theology of the cross, pp. 20-21 and 46-47 on justification; pp. 18, 20, 41, and 47 on freedom; and pp. 20-21 and 36-37 on neighbor justice in *Faith, Sexism, and Justice*.

ENCOUNTER THE SCRIPTURES

1 Corinthians 1:18, 21-25: The apostle Paul explains the centrality of the cross to the Christians of Corinth.

Romans 3:23-26, 28: The apostle Paul teaches the Christians in Rome that they are justified by God’s grace.

Galatians 5:1, 13-16a: Paul teaches the Christians of Galatia about Christian freedom and how it leads to serving the neighbor.

RESOURCES

Documents and history for *Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action* can be found at <https://www.elca.org/womenandjustice>.

Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action can be found at https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Faith_Sexism_Justice_Social_Statement_Adopted.pdf.

Fe, sexismo y justicia: Un llamado a la acción can be found at https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Fe_sexismo_y_justicia.pdf.

The study guide for *Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action* can be found at <https://www.elca.org/fsjstudyguide>.

The video for session five, “Lutheran Insights Promote Gender Justice,” can be found at <https://vimeo.com/showcase/8989135/video/470365669>.

“This church’s commitment to neighbor justice compels us to expose how patriarchy and sexism are woven into individual, social, and religious life, causing harm to all people.”

(FSJ, p. 36)



Lutheran Insights Promote Gender Justice

IN THE COMING WEEK

Discuss the word association and mapping activity that we completed with someone who did not attend today's session.

- A** Article 26 of the social statement states: "Teachers and theologians need to be honest about how church teachings have been misused to support patriarchy and sexism" (FSJ, p. 52). Now ask yourself, what teachings about the Scriptures or from theology do you think have been misused to support patriarchy and sexism? Consider discussing your reflection with a friend.
- B** Read a womanist reading of *Faith, Sexism, and Justice* in "Silent Voices, Still...But Faith... Lifting Up the Voices of the Daughters of Hagar in *Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action*" by Beverly R. Wallace, published in the journal *Currents in Theology and Mission* (April 2020), <http://currentsjournal.org/index.php/currents/article/view/235/260>.
- C** As you think about Christian freedom, consider your personal privilege(s). Recognize that individuals have differing degrees of privilege because of their biological sex, race, age, ability, gender, income, education, or citizenship status. Read the glossary entry on the concept of privilege in *Faith, Sexism, and Justice* (FSJ, p. 79), and then reflect on the following questions.
- Where do I experience a loss of freedom or privilege because of my identity?
 - Where do I enjoy unearned advantages or privileges in my daily life?
 - How might I live in Christian freedom—even if it feels limited—to support self and others in the quest for gender justice?
- D** Investigate the resources in the Explore section at the end of this session.

If You Want to Know More About a Theology of the Cross, Justification, Freedom, and Neighbor Justice,

EXPLORE ...

... how Lutherans understand justification, read Psalm 51; John 1; Romans 3; Romans 5; Galatians 3; and Galatians 5. Also explore "The Augsburg Confession," article IV, "Of Justification," <https://bookofconcord.org/augsburgconfession.php#article4>.

... the ELCA's understanding of neighbor justice, read pp. 20-21, 23, 48, and 60 in *Faith, Sexism, and Justice*. Jesus told the parable of the Good Samaritan when he was asked, "Who is my neighbor?" See the Gospel of Luke 10:25-37.

... how Lutherans understand justification, read the article "Learning Lutheran Identity" by Kathryn Kleinhans, published in *Living Lutheran* (August 2019), <https://www.livinglutheran.org/2019/08/learning-lutheran-identity/>.

... a theology of the cross, see "Lutheranism 101: Culture or Confession?" by Kathryn Kleinhans, published in *Living Lutheran* (May 2007), <https://www.livinglutheran.org/2007/05/lutheranism-101/>.

... how one's Christian freedom connects to gender justice, read the article "The Freedom of a Christian to Address Sexism" by Mary J. Streufert, published in the journal *Currents in Theology and Mission* (April 2020), <https://www.currentsjournal.org/index.php/currents/article/view/229/267>.

... Martin Luther's understanding of Christian freedom, read his work "The Freedom of a Christian," https://www.elca500.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Freedom-of-a-Christian_final-proof_3.17.20201.pdf. Also explore the study guide written by Carmelo Santos, [Freedom-of-Christian-Final-7.28.2020.pdf](https://www.elca500.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/04/Freedom-of-Christian-Final-7.28.2020.pdf) (elca500.org).

... privilege, read pp. 31-36 in *Faith, Sexism, and Justice*.



Lutheran Insights Promote Gender Justice

ACTIVITY

<p>A Theology of the Cross</p>	<p>Justification</p>
<p>Freedom</p>	<p>Neighbor Justice</p>



God Calls Us to Action in Community

EXPLORE FAITH, SEXISM, AND JUSTICE: A CALL TO ACTION

“The aim is for individuals in community to seek the most life-giving roles within the structures of church, family, work, or civil society. Toward this end, the ELCA urges that society’s laws, policies, and practices foster diversity and flexibility so that all may contribute their gifts to society, regardless of their gender.” (FSJ, p. 65)

“This church does not presume to have quick or easy solutions for the deeply rooted, intertwined, and complex problems that permeate earthly systems and structures. Time, study, effort, and discernment are required. Nevertheless, it is both a clear biblical teaching and a matter of neighbor justice that God’s people hold governing authorities and social structures accountable to their purpose, ensuring greater equity and justice for all. These commitments to advocate for and support social renewal express this church’s firm trust that God works to create improved social relations.” (FSJ, p. 60)

Participants are encouraged to read pp. 59-68 in *Faith, Sexism, and Justice*.

ENCOUNTER THE SCRIPTURES

1 Corinthians 13: 4-13: Though this text is often used at weddings, the description of love and growth applies to our love for all others in Christ and goes beyond romantic love.

Romans 12:2; 15-17: The apostle Paul teaches the Christians in Rome how to live and work together.

RESOURCES

Documents and history for *Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action* can be found at <https://www.elca.org/womenandjustice>.

Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action can be found at https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Faith_Sexism_Justice_Social_Statement_Adopted.pdf.

Fe, sexismo y justicia: Un llamado a la acción can be found at https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Fe_sexismo_y_justicia.pdf.

The study guide for *Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action* can be found at <https://www.elca.org/fsjstudyguide>.

The video for session six, “God Calls Us to Action in Community,” can be found at <https://vimeo.com/Showcase/8989135/video/590016824>.



God Calls Us to Action in Community

IN THE COMING WEEK

- A** Select a date to reconvene everyone from today's discussion who is interested in working on a specific issue. During the meeting, discuss what you still need to learn about this issue and how you can connect with the people most affected.
- B** Look up who your elected officials are, using a tool such as <https://openstates.org>. Reach out to one official about an issue related to gender justice.
- C** Write a letter to your future self that outlines any insights or goals you have coming out of these sessions. Swap letters with a partner, set a calendar reminder to reread it, or use <https://futureme.org> to send an email to yourself in the future.
- D** Go to <https://www.elca.org/advocacy> to see how this church advocates for equitable laws across the country and in Washington, D.C. Sign up to receive email alerts when important bills need public input so that you can become part of the ELCA's advocacy in the public sphere.
- E** Investigate the resources in the Explore section at the end of this session.

If You Want to Know More About How God Calls Us to Action in Community,

EXPLORE ...

...the ELCA's teaching that God calls each of us to seek justice. See Genesis 1:28; Amos 5:4-24; Isaiah 65:17-25; Proverbs 3:27-35; Micah 6:6-8; Galatians 6:2-10; Philippians 2:2-8; Matthew 25:31-46; and 1 John 3:11-24.

...how to register to vote. Go to <https://vote.gov>. To learn about who your local, state, and federal representatives are, go to <https://openstates.org> and your city's website.

...how to advocate effectively and what issues need your support. Connect with the ELCA's Witness in Society ministry at <https://www.elca.org/advocacy>. For a great video introduction go to <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=F5bXlUXVixg>.

...a theological and practical guide to advocacy. Check out the ELCA Civic Engagement Guide: https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/ELCAvotes_civic_engagement_and_voter_education_guide.pdf.

...a Lutheran perspective on advocacy. Read Richard Graham's "A Lutheran Bishop's Reflections on the Church's Public Work of Advocacy," <https://learn.elca.org/jle/a-lutheran-bishops-reflections-on-the-churchs-public-work-of-advocacy/>.

...how to have conversations with people with diverse views and experiences in your community. Find out what your synod office or local council of churches recommends.

...what Lutheran Social Services ministries are in your area. Go to <https://www.lutheranservices.org/>.

...how Lutherans worldwide advocate for local change at the global level and how to become involved. See <https://www.lutheranworld.org/content/resource-women-advocacy-handbook>.

...how to dig deeper into reaching out as a congregation to your neighborhood. Check out Augsburg University's Riverside Innovation Hub. It has a useful framework of accompaniment, interpretation, discernment, and proclamation. Access it at <https://web.augsburg.edu/acfl/RIH/RIH-Learning%20Report.pdf>.

...the journeys of ELCA members working with others for change. Explore the ELCA Ethnic Specific and Multicultural Ministries website: [Ethnic Specific and Multicultural Ministries - Evangelical Lutheran Church in America \(elca.org\)](https://www.elca.org/Ethnic-Specific-and-Multicultural-Ministries).

...how to be intentionally intersectional. Check out the resource from the Council of Europe's European Youth Foundation and the Government of the Netherlands' 2014 resource "Intersectionality Toolkit," [Inter-Toolkit.pdf \(iglyo.com\)](https://www.iglyo.com/Inter-Toolkit.pdf).

