

An Open Letter to Members and Clergy of the ELCA

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At its biennial Churchwide Assembly at Minneapolis this past month, delegates of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) voted to accept gay and lesbian clergy. Some ELCA members, clergy, and churches are now wondering what their options are. Their church has taken a turn further away from God's Word and they desire to remain faithful to the Word of God, as Lutherans have known it beginning with Martin Luther almost 500 years ago. Many generations of Lutherans around the world have faithfully held to the truth as recorded in God's Word. Now is not the time to shrink and give up. God has provided many means for getting the Gospel to people so that they may repent, be baptized, and live a godly life, and tell others the Good News of the forgiveness of sins that come through faith in Jesus Christ.

The member churches and missions of the United Lutheran Mission Association (ULMA) likewise have seen changes in the Lutheran church bodies in America. Four years ago, the ULMA churches (Pilgrim Lutheran Church of Decatur, Illinois www.pilgrimlutherandecatur.org and Redeemer Lutheran Church of St. Clair Shores, Michigan www.redeemerlutheranchurch.org) voluntarily chose to boldly step out in faith--leaving a doctrinally disunified church body to form an independent association of independent Lutheran churches that are very unified and centered on the solid Lutheran tradition of Scripture alone. They are now free to focus on ministry to souls with doctrinal peace and unity, which has replaced doctrinal fights, political meetings, and biblically conflicting resolutions.

As one looks out over the many Lutheran churches and church bodies one may be pleasantly surprised to learn that there are over 30 American Lutheran church groups in the U.S. in addition to many unaffiliated independent Lutheran churches. The ULMA is one of those groups and their desire is to aid and help pastors, churches, and members find their way back to the solid ground of salvation by grace through faith and not of works that the Evangelical Lutheran Church was founded upon and has always stood fast to defend.

Take this letter as an invitation to those disenfranchised, lost, and weary Lutherans (and other Christians for that matter) who desire to leave behind church bodies that are moving away from Scripture, so that they might investigate and perhaps join independent Lutheran churches like those that faithfully preach, teach, and confess God's Word in its truth and purity. Your fellow Christians at the ULMA now pray for God's guidance as one charts a future course. Please take the time and visit one of the ULMA churches or missions so you can personally find out more. If however you are too far away to visit, feel free to write or call. We will be happy to tell you of our successful experience in finding a church that is truly unified in what we belief, teach, and confess as Lutherans.

Here is an opportunity to reacquaint yourself with the Lutheran church that you may have only heard or dreamt about where the Word of God alone reigns supreme.