

27 QUESTIONS FOR 2011 ELCIC CONVENTION DELEGATES WITH ANSWERS FROM SOLID GROUND

by Keith R. Odegard

Bishop Susan Johnson and the NCC of the ELCIC have proposed that the ELCIC introduce significant changes to ELCIC doctrine regarding human sexuality. Before delegates vote on these initiatives, Solid Ground believes that each convention delegate should consciously address the issues represented by these questions. Biblical quotations are from the New International Version (“NIV”), Book of Concord (“BOC”) quotations are from the Tappert edition from Fortress Press, 1959. The following answers are the response of the Solid Ground Executive to the questions.

A. ELCIC Doctrine - Holy Scriptures and Lutheran Theology Interpretation Documents in the Book of Concord

1. Do the Social Statement (“SS”) and sexuality motions violate the Triune God’s will regarding human sexuality presented in the Bible and the Book of Concord (“BOC”)?

Answer: The SS and motions present a warped, twisted approach to human sexuality by rejecting all references to the Old and New Testaments relating to deviant sexual behaviour. Some of the relevant texts include:

Transvestitism

Deuteronomy 22:5 - A woman must not wear men’s clothing, nor a man wear women’s clothing, for the Lord your God detests anyone who does this.

Homosexuality

Genesis 19:4 – Before they had gone to bed, all the men from every part of the city of Sodom – both young and old – surrounded the house. They called to Lot, “Where are the men who came to you tonight? Bring them out to us so we can have sex with them.”

Lot went outside to meet them and shut the door behind him and said, “No my friends. Don’t do this wicked thing. Look, I have two daughters who have never slept with a man. Let me bring them out to you, and you can do what you like with them. But don’t do anything to these men, for they have come under the protection of my roof.”

“Get out of our way.” They replied. And they said, “This fellow came here as an alien, and now he wants to play the judge! We’ll treat you worse than them.” They kept bringing pressure on Lot and moved forward to break down the door.

But the men inside reached out and pulled Lot back into the house and shut the door. Then they struck the men who were at the door of the house, young and old, with blindness so that they could not find the door.

The two men said to Lot, “Do you have anyone else here—sons-in-law, sons or daughters, or anyone else in the city who belongs to you? Get them out of here, because we are going to destroy this place. The outcry to the Lord against its people is so great that he has sent us to destroy it.”

Leviticus 18:22 – Do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman; that is detestable. To lie with a man as with a woman is abomination.

Leviticus 20:13 - If a man lies with a man as one lies with a woman, both of them have done what is detestable. They must be put to death; their blood will be on their own heads.

1 Kings 14:24 – There were even male shrine prostitutes in the land; the people engaged in all the detestable practices of the nations the Lord had driven out before the Israelites.

Romans 1:26 – 32 Because of this, God gave them over to shameful lusts. Even their women exchanged natural relations for unnatural ones. In the same way the men also abandoned natural relations with women and were inflamed with lust for one another. Men committed indecent acts with other men, and received in themselves the due penalty for their perversion.

Furthermore, since they did not think it worthwhile to retain the knowledge of God, he gave them over to a depraved mind, to do what ought not to be done. They have become filled with every kind of wickedness, evil, greed and depravity. They are full of envy, murder, strife, deceit and malice. They are gossips, slanderers, God-haters, insolent, arrogant and boastful; they invent ways of doing evil; they disobey their parents; they are senseless, faithless, heartless, ruthless. Although they know God's righteous decree that those who do such things deserve death, they not only continue to do these very things but also approve of those who practice them.

1 Corinthians 6:9-10 – Do you not know that the wicked will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral nor idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were.

1 Timothy 1: 8 - 11 We know that the law is good if one uses it properly. We also know that law is made not for the righteous but for the lawbreakers and rebels, the ungodly and sinful, the unholy and irreligious; for those who kill their fathers or mothers, for murderers, for adulterers and perverts, for slave traders and liars and perjurers-and for whatever else is contrary to the sound doctrine that conforms to the glorious gospel of the blessed God, which he entrusted to me.

Book of Concord

Since the matter of human sexuality had been settled for 1,500 years before the Reformation, there is no analysis of any doctrinal change that would accept, affirm, encourage and celebrate homosexuality.

References to human sexuality focus on the divine nature of the estate of marriage between one man and one woman. A small sample of the many quotations regarding human sexuality that affirm the restriction of sexual relations between one man and one woman within the confines of marriage, from the BOC follows:

Augsburg Confession Article XXIII : “In the second place, Christ said, “Not all men can receive this precept” (Matt 19:11), by which he declared that all men are not suited for celibacy because God created man for procreation (Gen 1:28)” (Tappert 51:5)

Apology of the Augsburg Confession Article XIII:

We cannot approve the law of celibacy put forth by our opponents because it clashes with divine and natural law and conflicts with the very decrees of the council. It obviously endangers religion and morality, for it produces endless scandals, sins, and the corruption of public morals.....

First, Gen 1:28 teaches that men were created to be fruitful and that one sex should have a proper desire for the other. We are not talking about sinful lust but about so-called “natural love,” the desire which was meant to be in uncorrupted nature. This love of one sex for the other is truly a divine ordinance. Since this ordinance of God cannot be suspended without, an extraordinary work of God, it follows that neither regulations nor vows can abolish the right to contract marriage.

..The Word of God did not form the nature of men to be fruitful only at the beginning of creation, but it still does as long as this physical nature of ours exists....

Second, because this creation or divine ordinance in man is a natural right, the jurists have said wisely and correctly that the union of man and woman is by natural right. Now, since natural right is unchangeable, the right to contract marriage must always remain. Where nature does not change, there must remain that ordinance which God has built into nature, and human regulations cannot abolish it. So it is ridiculous for our opponents to say that originally marriage was commanded but that it is no longer commanded. This is the same as saying that formerly men were born with a sex and now they are not, or that originally they were born with a natural right and now they are not. No one could fabricate anything more crafty than this foolishness, thought up in order to circumvent the natural law. Let us therefore keep this fact in mind, taught by Scripture and wisely put by the jurists: The union of man and woman is by natural right. Natural right is really divine right, because it is an ordinance divinely stamped on nature. Since only an extraordinary act of God can change this right, the right to contract marriage necessarily remains. For the natural desire of one sex for the other is an ordinance of God,

and therefore it is a right; otherwise, why would both sexes have been created? As we said, we are not talking about sinful lust but about the desire which is called “natural love,” which lust did not remove from nature but only inflamed. Now it needs a remedy even more, and marriage is necessary for a remedy as well as for procreation. This is so clear and firm as to be irrefutable.

Third, Paul says (1Cor. 7:2), “Because of the temptation to immorality, each man should have his own wife.” This is an express command, directed to anyone not suited for celibacy. (Tappert p. 240-1)

In the first place, our opponents must admit that for believers marriage is pure because it has been sanctified by the Word of God; that is, it is something which the Word of God permits and approves, as the Scriptures abundantly testify. Christ calls marriage a divine union when he say in Matt 19:6, “What God has joined together.” (Tappert p.243)

Luther’s Large Catechism

Significantly he established it (marriage) as the first of all institutions, and he created man and woman differently (as is evident) not for lewdness but to be true to each other, be fruitful, beget children, and support and bring them up to the glory of God.

God has therefore most richly blessed this estate (marriage) above all others and, in addition, has supplied and endowed it with everything in the world in order that this estate might be provided for richly and adequately. Married life is no matter for jest or idle curiosity, but it is a glorious institution and an object of God’s serious concern.

Therefore I have always taught that we should not despise or disdain marriage, as the blind world and the false clergy do, but view it in the light of God’s Word, by which it is adorned and sanctified. It is not an estate to be placed on a level with the others; it precedes and surpasses them all, whether those of emperor, princes, bishops, or anyone else....It is not an exceptional estate, but the most universal and the noblest, pervading all Christendom and even extending throughout the world.

In the second place, remember that it is not only an honorable estate but also a necessary one, and it is solemnly commanded by God that in general men and women in all conditions, who have been created for it, shall be found in this estate. Yet there are some (although few) exceptions whom God has especially exempted-some who are unsuited for married life and other whom he has released by a high supernatural gift so that they can maintain chastity outside of marriage. (Tappert p. 393)

Comment: Nowhere in the Old or New Testaments or BOC is homosexuality or other forms of sexual deviancy accepted, affirmed, encouraged or celebrated. To attempt to use the Bible or BOC to pursue the agenda presented in the SS and motions is absurd. Rather than recognizing the Bible as the sole source of all ELCIC doctrine (See ELCIC Constitution Article II Section 3, Page 4 below), and the BOC as documents that have properly interpreted the Bible, the ELCIC hierarchy is promoting, through the SS and motions, doctrine and policy that is directly opposed to the content of the Bible and BOC.

2.Are the Social Statement and sexuality motions in violation of the current ELCIC Constitution (“the Constitution”)?

Answer: The Constitution includes detailed requirements relating to the formulation of ELCIC official church doctrine and policy. In answer to the above question, the following analysis presents the text of the Constitution with a commentary addressing whether the SS and motions violate that particular section of the Constitution.

ARTICLE II

Section 1. This church confesses the Triune God – Father, Son and Holy Spirit – as the one true God. It proclaims the Father as Creator and Preserver; His Son, Jesus Christ, as Redeemer and Lord; and the Holy Spirit as Regenerator and Sanctifier.

Comment: The SS and motions violate Section 1 of Article II since they do not recognize the Triune God, but rather a false god.

Section 2. This church confesses that the gospel is the revelation of God's saving will and grace in Jesus Christ, which he imparts through Word and Sacrament. Through these means of grace the Holy Spirit creates believers and unites them with their Lord and with one another in the fellowship of the Holy Christian Church.

Comment: The SS and motions violate Section 2 of Article II because they do not recognize Jesus Christ of the Triune God, but rather a false Christ. The SS and motions also violate the fellowship with other Christians in the Holy Christian Church since the content of the SS and motions has never been accepted by the Holy Christian Church in 2,000 years of church history and are not accepted by the vast majority of today's Christians.

Section 3. This church confesses the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as the inspired Word of God, through which God still speaks, and as the only source of the church's doctrine and the authoritative standard for the faith and life of the church. (emphasis added)

Comment: The SS and motions violate Section 3, since they are not based on the Old and New Testament. The Bible clearly condemns all sexual practices that are not restricted to one man and one woman in a committed relationship. Homosexual behavior was known to the writers of both the Old and New Testament and was rejected. Such behavior was never commended, affirmed or celebrated. Ignoring the specific commands regarding sexual behavior specified in the Bible when formulating ELCIC sexuality doctrine and policy is direct violation of Section 3 of Article II.

The SS and motion are doctrine and policy that are not Biblical, stand in opposition to Article II of the ELCIC Constitution and contain content that is adversative to orthodox Christianity. Those who would lead the ELCIC to policies and faith practices that are in direct opposition to the Bible and orthodox Christianity should at least have the decency and integrity to propose removal of Article II from the ELCIC Constitution by disbanding the ELCIC. Although many in the ELCIC may determine moral issues on the basis of personal experience, science, political correctness, Federal or Provincial Government policy, congruence with dominant cultural norms, homosexual activities of relatives or close friends, etc., current official ELCIC doctrine and policy cannot be based on anything other than the "Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments". Although the ELCIC hierarchy may have come to the personal revelation that the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments should be ignored regarding acceptable sexual activity, they are in error.

The approach of massively changing the theological doctrine of the ELCIC by simply ignoring Article II and proposing policies and doctrine that are antithetical to orthodox Christianity is not acceptable behaviour by individuals who are paid to operate the ELCIC in a manner that is consistent with its Constitution. If the ELCIC hierarchy wishes to eliminate Article II as the basis of determining ELCIC doctrine and policy, they should resign their positions and work toward disbanding the ELCIC. Congregations and individual members of the ELCIC should not give benevolence money to pay the salaries and overhead expenses of an ELCIC hierarchy that are actively working against the provisions of the Constitution of the ELCIC.

If the ELCIC hierarchy, have no plans to propose the dissolution of the ELCIC, to achieve the objective of jettisoning Article II, how can they, meeting the minimum ethical standards of honesty, integrity and decency, present a SS and motions that contains doctrine and policy that unashamedly and blatantly violates Article II?

This SS and motions are in stark violation of the Constitution of the ELCIC, therefore it is unethical and illegal to expend ELCIC resources to promote the SS and/or motions. If one recognizes that the SS and motions are in violation of the ELCIC Constitution, then the ELCIC Bishop Susan Johnson is duty-bound to reject the SS and motions and work against their adoption at the 2011 ELCIC Convention. Sadly, rather than rejecting the SS and motions, Bishop Johnson and the NCC have expended tens of thousands of dollars of ELCIC resources to produce and promote them.

If Bishop Johnson and the NCC members wish to ignore Article II, they should find the courage to resign from their positions within the ELCIC and work towards disbanding the ELCIC, so that the religious institution that replaces the ELCIC is not constrained by adherence to the Holy Scriptures. This course of action would

eliminate the conflict of interest inherent in an organization where the individuals responsible for insuring the organization comply with its constitution on a day to day basis, seek to introduce radical new polices and practices that violate this constitution. If the ELCIC hierarchy sincerely believe God is leading them to a radical change of ELCIC doctrine and practices, they should begin by openly working to form a new religious institution to promote their non-Christian beliefs, rather than attempting to maintain a Potemkin village façade of faithfulness to the ELCIC Constitution, while proposing doctrine and policies that are in direct violation of the Constitution.

Both paid and non-paid individuals who participate in any activities of the ELCIC must be required, as a condition of employment/volunteer service, to perform their duties in accordance with the Constitution of the ELCIC, including Article II. If they cannot, in good conscience, adhere to this minimum ethical standard, they should either a.) work openly towards the dissolution of the ELCIC in order to eliminate Article II or, b.) transfer to a religious institution that is not constrained by the content of the Old and New Testaments and/or the Book of Concord.

From a strictly organization survival standpoint, ignoring the ELCIC Constitution while attempting to introduce radical change to the organization will likely result in a significant loss of active members and financial support. If congregations and individual members do not trust the hierarchy to operate the ELCIC in accordance with its Constitution, they will likely abandon the ELCIC and search out a religious organization that acts in a manner consistent with its Constitution and orthodox Christianity.

Whether one agrees or disagrees with the introduction of the SS and motions, the dishonesty of pretending Article II does not exist in forming ELCIC doctrine and policy, does not engender trust and confidence in the ELCIC hierarchy. Why would individuals and congregations support an organization that they do not trust, since it does not operate in an honest, transparent manner? There are likely many ELCIC members who naively believe that church policy must conform to Article II, since it is the only “unalterable” article in the ELCIC Constitution.

Section 4. This church subscribes to the document of the *Book of Concord of 1580* as witnesses to the way in which the Holy Scriptures have been correctly understood, explained and confessed for the sake of the gospel, namely:

- a. The Apostles', Nicene, and the Athanasian Creeds as the chief confessions of the Christian faith;
- b. The unaltered *Augsburg Confession* as its basic formulation of Christian doctrine;
- c. *Luther's Small Catechism* as a clear summary of Christian doctrine;
- d. *The Apology of the Augsburg Confession, Luther's Large Catechism, the Smalcald Articles with the Treatise, and the Formula of Concord* as further witnesses to the *Unaltered Augsburg Confession*.

Comment: Like the intentional rejection of the Old and New Testament in formulating and promoting the SS and motions, the ELCIC hierarchy also ignores the many references to human sexuality in the Book of Concord (“BOC”). As in the Old and New Testament, the only acceptable sexual relationships between humans is a committed relationship between one man and one woman. To quote from the BOC to support the SS and motions, while ignoring the content of the BOC regarding human sexuality is intellectually and morally dishonest. Therefore, the SS and motions violate Section 4 of Article II.

ARTICLE III

Section 1. Jesus Christ is Lord of the Church. All power belongs to Him as its head. All actions of this church are to be carried out under His rule and authority.

Comment: The SS and motions violate Section 1 because they not recognize Jesus Christ of the Triune God. To propose that the SS and motions are based on the rule and authority of Jesus Christ is absurd. No evidence or support has been provided that indicates that Jesus Christ ever supported homosexual relationships or that He

directed His church to affirm and celebrate such unnatural relationships. Since the Athanasian Creed is a chief confession of the ELCIC (See the Section 4, a. Article II of the Constitution), Jesus Christ is uncreated and existed at the beginning with God the Father, therefore the law and behavioral expectations of the Old Testament are the commands of both the Father and the Son. Therefore the SS and motions violate Section 1 of Article III.

Section 2. The Holy Spirit calls, gathers, enlightens and sanctifies the Church, which exists both as congregations gathered for worship, witness, education and service, and as an inclusive fellowship which has its own identity and integrity. Congregations find their fulfillment in the universal community of the Church, and the universal Church exists in and through congregations.

Comment: The SS and motions violate the Holy Spirit since they deny its ability to speak through the Triune God's Word, the Old and New Testament. The universal church is not present in congregations that do not recognize the Triune God but rather a false god. Therefore, the SS and motions violate Section 2 of Article III.

Section 3 This church derives its character and its powers both from its congregations and from its inherent nature as part of the Church universal. It regards itself as standing in the historic continuity of the communion of saints and as being an expression of that Christian fellowship in today's world.

Comment: The SS and motions violate Section 3 of Article III because acceptance of them as doctrine and policy of the ELCIC cuts off any connection with the Church universal and historic continuity of the communion of saints, since the SS and motions bless and celebrate sin and worship a false god, not the Triune God of the Old and new Testaments.

Article XX

Section 1. ARTICLE II on "Confession of Faith" shall be unalterable.

Comment: Therefore, Article II cannot be altered without the dissolution of the ELCIC. If Bishop Johnson and the ELCIC hierarchy wish to eliminate Article II from the Constitution, they should resign from their ELCIC offices and propose disbanding the ELCIC at the next ELCIC Convention. If the ELCIC was disbanded, all the assets of the ELCIC could be returned to ELCIC congregations. Those congregations that wished to join the new organization of Bishop Johnson and the existing ELCIC hierarchy could join and support the new organization. Unlike the ELCIC Constitution, this new organization constitution could be written to exclude any reference to the Old and New Testaments, Book of Concord, God the Father, Jesus Christ or the Holy Spirit, etc. In terms of determining acceptable doctrine, the new religious institution could include whatever criteria the organizers and their supporting congregations decide.

3. Why does the SS quote Luther and BOC documents but refuses to cite quotations from these sources that relate directly to human sexuality?

Answer: Because there are no quotations that relate to human sexuality that support the SS or the motions. Homosexuality is condemned throughout the Bible. Sexual relations confined to one man and one woman within a committed relationship are repeatedly affirmed, encouraged and celebrated throughout the Bible and BOC.

4. Is "context" a Christian theological concept?

Answer: The SS repeatedly presents the idea of the "context" that exists for the ELCIC. For example, "Our interest in our current context is based on Christ's interest in the well-being of all." The previous draft of the SS and Sexuality Study also raise this new idea that the doctrine of the Christian church must adapt to the norms of the dominant culture. This idea is not found in the Bible or BOC. It is an idea that is toxic to preserving the truth of Law and Gospel, since it presumes that Christian foundational beliefs can be cast aside based on the expectations of a heathen culture

5. What is heresy?

Answer: A belief at variance with the accepted doctrine of a church; a belief opposed to authoritative opinion in any area of thought. (The Living Webster's Dictionary).

6. What is apostasy?

Answer: An abandonment of what one has professed; a total desertion or departure from one's faith, principles, or party. (The Living Webster's Dictionary)

7. Does adopting a policy of non-compliance of purity laws mean that all Old Testament laws should be violated?

Answer: No. The proponents of the SS and motions have made the illogical leap that since some of the purity laws need not be enforced, therefore all the laws of the Old Testament are inapplicable to the "current context" of the ELCIC. If the SS and motion proponents' logic is followed it would make sense to ignore the verses 21, 22 and 23 from the eighteenth chapter of Leviticus:

Do not give any of your children to be sacrificed to Molech, for you must not profane the name of your God. I am the Lord,

Do not lie with a man as one lies with a woman; that is detestable.

Do not have sexual relations with an animal and defile yourself with it. A woman must not present herself to an animal to have sexual relations with it; that is a perversion.

If the laws of Leviticus are to be ignored because they are no longer applicable, then it would be perfectly acceptable for parents to sacrifice their children to Molech and women to present themselves to animals for sexual relations.

The bulk of the laws of Leviticus are relevant to Christians. The obscure purity laws that are not relevant are not affirmed by Christ or the writers of the New Testament. Also, these purity laws do not relate to God's order of creation or any writings of the Reformers found in the BOC. To equate the prohibition of homosexuality from the Old Testament with irrelevant purity laws is both illogical and intellectually dishonest.

8. Does the existence of homosexual practices in modern Canadian society require the ELCIC to change its theology to satisfy the current culture?

Answer: Homosexual practices have existed throughout human history, including the time period of both the Old and New Testaments. If the Triune God wished to conform to the culture He would have permitted and affirmed homosexual behaviour. Rather than affirm homosexual behavior, he condemned it in both the Old and New Testaments. The idea that the ELCIC should change its core doctrine to match the cultural norms of 21st century Canada, is not supported by Scripture or the BOC.

9. Does the Bible have any direct references to homosexual behavior?

Answer: Yes, homosexual behaviour is condemned in the Bible. See the answer to Question 1 above for specific examples.

10. Does the BOC have any direct references to heterosexual behavior?

Answer: Yes, the BOC affirms that human sexuality should be restricted to one man and one woman in a committed marriage relationship. (See 95 Questions posted at www.solid-ground.ca for more commentary)

B. Government Determination of ELCIC Theology, Ethics and Morality

11. Does the recent change in Federal or Provincial Government policy in respect to active homosexuals, change the Triune God's expectations?

Answer: There is no evidence from Scripture, the BOC or plain reason that indicates that the Triune God will change His commands or expectations regarding human sexuality based on the actions of a Federal or Provincial Government. If the Triune God did take direction in matters of doctrine from the Federal Government or Provincial Government there would be no need for the ELCIC or any other church body, since all of God's doctrine and expectation would match exactly the rights and responsibilities of all citizens of Canada. Such a view is frankly, ridiculous and stands against the Word of the Triune God.

12. If and when the Federal Government or a Provincial Government changes marriage policy (e.g. permitting polygamy, etc.) will ELCIC congregations be forced to affirm these sexual combinations if their pastor is in favor of the newly permitted sexual combination(s)?

Answer: There are no restrictions on the sexual practices that could be imposed on congregations of the ELCIC, since the only two criteria for determining "marriage" is that the Government and the local pastor agree on the participants. This means any combination of males, females, minors, (e.g. two males and 1 female) etc. could be married in an ELCIC congregation if the Federal or Provincial Government and local pastor accepted the combination(s).

C. Pastoral Leadership

13. Is it possible for ordinary lay members of the ELCIC to expect to discern the Will of God if it is in conflict with the views and opinions of the ELCIC religious leaders?

Answer: Yes. The views and opinions of the ELCIC hierarchy are irrelevant if they conflict with the Will of the Triune God revealed in the Bible and BOC.

14. In the context of this debate regarding official ELCIC policy, should the personal opinions of the "experts", the ELCIC bureaucrats and clergy be given greater credence than the Bible and the BOC?

Answer: There is no provision for ELCIC doctrine and policy to be determined by the personal opinions of so-called "experts" and ELCIC bureaucrats. Doctrine and policy must be in accordance with the Bible and the BOC as per the Constitution (See the answers to Questions 1 and 2 above).

D. Decision Making Process of the ELCIC Hierarchy Regarding the Social Statement on Human Sexuality and Motions

15. Does the sexual behavior of relatives of the NCC, pastors and/or convention delegates require them to recognize their inherent conflict of interest when formulating ELCIC policy that violates the ELCIC Constitution?

Answer: Many members of the ELCIC hierarchy may have close family members or friends that are active homosexuals. This situation should in no way influence the official doctrine and policy of the ELCIC. ELCIC doctrine and policy do not exist to be an expression of the personal opinions of the ELCIC hierarchy. Although the ELCIC hierarchy may have a strong desire to change ELCIC official doctrine to encourage and celebrate homosexuality, the requirements of Scripture, the BOC, the Constitution and orthodox Christian doctrine should override their personal desires or opinions.

16. Should the ELCIC discard existing ELCIC policy, the 1970 Statement on Sex, Marriage and Family without comparing and contrasting both the existing policy and the new Social Statement?

Answer: No, it is illogical to completely ignore existing policy. The existing policy should be included with the draft SS, so that convention delegates can see the mammoth differences between the two documents.

17. How does ELCIC hierarchy believe that their unorthodox interpretation of sexuality can surpass two ELCIC convention votes and 2,000 years of recorded church history?

Answer: The votes of two ELCIC conventions, the Constitution and 2,000 years of recorded church history appear to be irrelevant to the agenda of ELCIC hierarchy. This is the only logical explanation to the continuous

attempt to pass the celebration and acceptance of homosexuality. Like the Quebec separatists, who believe that one vote where 50.1% of the voters can force Quebec to leave Canada, the ELCIC hierarchy believe that one vote with 50.1% support at a convention can radically alter ELCIC human sexuality policy. No matter how many Convention votes reject homosexuality as a God-pleasing activity, the ELCIC hierarchy proceeds on the basis that they only need one vote in favor of homosexuality to massively change ELCIC doctrine and policy.

E. ELCIC Hierarchy Call for Social Cohesion and Unity of ELCIC Members

18. Is the concept of “unity” presented on page 10 of the Social Statement a call to preserve the ELCIC’s present and future financial resources, or an honest attempt to follow the requirements of Scripture?

Answer: The ELCIC synod offices and head office needs financial resources to survive. Historically, it has obtained these resources by congregations willingly making gifts to their respective synod and the synod forwarding a portion of these offerings to the head office of the ELCIC. It would be impossible to promote the absorption of the ELCIC by the Anglican Church of Canada (“ACOC”) or to advocate for the ELCIC accepting, affirming, encouraging and celebrating homosexual behavior without financial resources. It appears that “unity” in the context of the SS actually means unity so that financial resources will continue to be transferred to the ELCIC synod and head offices from local congregations.

Given the opposition of the NCC to the motion to protect congregational property at the 2009 convention, and the ACOC head office control of all congregational property, “unity” may, in the future, mean the control by synods or the ELCIC head office of congregational property. Both the Eastern Canada Synod and B.C. Synod have attempted to gain control of congregational property in the past (see www.solid-ground.ca for further details). If individual members or congregations leave the ELCIC the congregations are currently permitted to take their property with them to another church body. The call for unity in this “context” may simply mean that it may take some time for the ELCIC to implement the required changes to constitutions and organizational structure to gain control of congregational property.

F. Illogicality of ELCIC Social Statement on Human Sexuality and Proposed Motions

19. Are there any boundaries on the behavior of humans, if all violations of God’s Law can be excused on the basis of acceptance, context and culture?

Answer: The acceptance of the SS and motions sets the precedent that no behaviours of humans can logically be prohibited, since the criteria for the acceptance, affirmation, encouragement and celebration of behaviours prohibited by the Triune God are based on the personal desires of ELCIC bureaucrats and Federal and Provincial politicians. If the ELCIC can willfully violate the Scriptures, BOC and historic church practice to pander to the desires of the homosexual community, it is symptomatic of an organization that has little or no connection to the Triune God revealed in Scripture and BOC.

20. Why would the Triune God repeatedly condemn homosexuality if it was not harmful to humans?

Answer: If one accepts the Christian concept that the Triune God loves humans, it is irrational to assume that His commands regarding human sexuality are not intended for the benefit of humans. Proponents of the affirmation of homosexuality believe that they are more intellectually advanced than the Triune God revealed in Scripture.

21. Why does the Social Statement contain several Biblical references but no reference to the many verses relating directly to human sexuality?

Answer: All the Biblical references related to human sexuality condemn non-heterosexual behaviours. In order to affirm many other types of human sexual expression, the SS has to ignore all Scripture that relates directly or indirectly to human sexuality.

22. Why has the Social Statement ignored all other sexuality issues that face members of the ELCIC such as divorce, abortion, teenage pregnancy, etc.?

Answer: These other issues would likely obscure the single minded focus on the acceptance and affirmation of non-heterosexual behaviors. The previous 1970 Social Statement addresses more issues than the proposed SS.

23.How can ELCIC congregational members support an organization that acts in conflict with the Bible and BOC?

Answer: If the SS and motions pass, each individual member and congregation will have to make a choice regarding which god they worship and serve. The Triune God of the Bible and BOC or some other false god.

G. Christ's Love

24. Which activity proclaims Christ's love for one's neighbor, proclaiming the truth revealed in the Bible and BOC or encouraging one's neighbor to break God's law by engaging in prohibited sexual behavior?

Answer: Proclaiming the truth of the Triune God as revealed by the Bible and the BOC is the only action that shares Christ's love with one's neighbor. Encouraging and celebrating deviant sexual behavior that is specifically condemned by the Triune God leads people away from Christ's love.

H. Future Impact on ELCIC Members and Congregations

25. Since the sexuality motions condone and lift up active homosexual couples as living morally equivalent lives equivalent to active heterosexual couples, will all church documents, Sunday School materials, worship resources reflect this new policy?

Answer: Based on the strong push by the ELCIC hierarchy to promote homosexuality, including ordaining active homosexuals, it appears reasonable that all future worship resources, Sunday School materials, etc., will at a minimum, present homosexual behavior in at least as favourable light as heterosexual behavior. If the ELCIC changes its doctrine to marry and ordain homosexuals, it would make sense that the ELCIC would affirm homosexuality as perfectly acceptable God-pleasing expression of human sexuality. Future decisions by Federal and Provincial governments may also result in changes to ELCIC Sunday School materials, since sexual behavior acceptable to the ELCIC would be determined by Federal and Provincial government action rather than the Bible or BOC.

26. Will the ELCIC change the scripture readings for congregational worship services by either mistranslating the many prohibitions of homosexuality and affirmations of heterosexuality or simply prohibit any passage that contains any reference to human sexuality (e.g. Genesis 1:28 "Go forth and multiply.")?

Answer: The ELCIC and predecessor organizations such as the Lutheran Church in America, American Lutheran Church and ELCC have shown no reluctance to change historic documents to meet their requirements. So it would be logical for the ELCIC hierarchy to simply mistranslate or change any Scripture references that contradict the official doctrine and policy of the ELCIC regarding human sexuality.

27. Are there other Lutheran church bodies that have not made the acceptance, affirmation, promotion, encouragement and celebration of homosexual behaviour official church policy?

Answer: Thankfully the ELCIC is not the only Lutheran church body in Canada. Congregations and individual members have a wide variety of Lutheran church bodies that are not proposing to bless, encourage or celebrate sin. The following list includes some of the choices available to Canadian Lutherans:

Association of Free Lutheran Congregations-Canada (AFLC) www.aflccanada.org
Canadian Association of Lutheran Congregations (CALC) www.calc.ca
Church of the Lutheran Brethren-Canada (CLB) www.lbcanada.org
Life Together Churches (LTC) www.lifetogetherchurches.com
Lutheran Church - Canada (LCC) www.lutheranchurch-canada.ca
Lutheran Congregations in Mission for Christ (LCMC) www.lcmc.net
North American Lutheran Church (NALC) www.thenalc.org

