

Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action

ELCA Social Statement, 2019



Church and Society in the ELCA

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- Social Statement: Sets teaching and policy for the ELCA
 - Social Message
 - Social Policy Resolution

ELCA Social Statements

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- Abortion (1991)
- Church in Society (1991)
- The Death Penalty (1991)
- Caring for Creation (1993)
- Race, Ethnicity, and Culture (1995)
- Peace (1995)
- Economic Life (1999)
- Health and health care (2003)
- Education (2007)
- Human Sexuality (2009)
- Genetics (2011)
- The Church and Criminal Justice (2013)
- Sexism (2019)

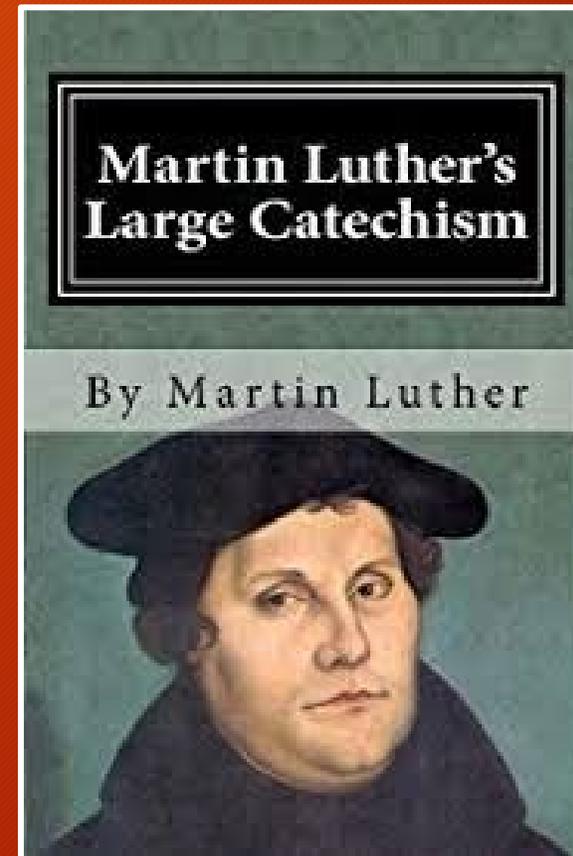
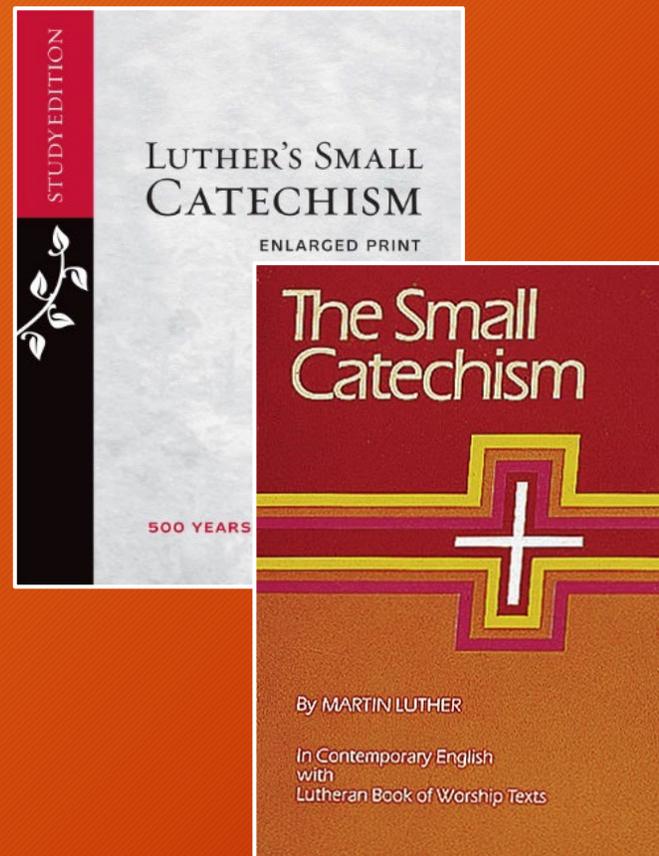
Timeline and Process

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- 2009
 - ELCA Churchwide Assembly authorizes statement development
- 2010-2016
 - Task force meets and study documents used throughout ELCA
- 2017-2018
 - Draft Statement published; comment and response period
 - Task force considers responses and finalizes draft
- 2019
 - ELCA Churchwide Assembly adopts social statement

Statement Structure

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Statement Structure: Full Version

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- Preface Shared Vision: We trust God's promises and hope for justice
- Section I Fundamental Teaching: God desires abundant life for all
- Section II Analysis of the Problem: Sin subverts human flourishing
- Section III The Christian Tradition: It is both challenge and resource
- Section IV Response: commitments & action as a church
- Section V Response: call for action and commitments in society



Definitions

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- Sex: biological term that describes reproductive organs and chromosomal make-up
- Gender: identities, roles, behaviors, and attributes that cultures, societies, and individuals shape
- Sexuality: complex individual and social concept that includes romantic and/or sexual feelings and desires

Study Guide

Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action

Lutheran Insights Promote Gender Justice

Caryn Riswold
Wartburg College

Definitions

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“When power, privilege, and prejudice are associated with sex, gender, and sexuality, sociologists use the terms patriarchy and sexism.”

Faith, Sexism, Justice pg. 31

Definitions

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Gender justice: Gender justice is expressed through equality and balanced power relations for people of all genders to live into their individual callings. Gender justice is sought by eliminating power imbalances among people at individual and societal levels, as well as eliminating discrimination against women and people who do not adhere to stereotypes associated with men and women.

Statement Structure: Full Version

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Commitments & Action: Church

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1. Celebrate & affirm gifts and insights that women and girls bring to the Church.
2. Bible translation and interpretation that acknowledge historical context and reject misuse of Scripture to uphold patriarchy.
3. Promote theological reflection that responds to gender-based needs of neighbor.
4. Use inclusive language for humans and expansive language for God.
5. Policies to promote equitable authority and leadership in the church. Pay attention to the work that women and men are asked to do.

stronghold
 teacher judge
 friend rockwhogavemebirth
 potter IAM
 cup way lamb temple
 lion housewife
 midwife refuge baker cornerstone
 dove
 Lord shepherd glory
 fountain master strength hen eagle
 priest lawgiver warrior truth tower
 advocate creator mother
 father husband silence hope
 bridegroom planter rock
 king avenger redeemer

Advocate for and support...

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- Laws, policies and practices that respect diverse bodies, including human and civil rights for non-binary individuals
- Eradication of gender-based violence
- Medical research, delivery, and access to health care that honors bodily difference
- Economic policies, regulations, and practices that support equity and equality for women and girls, with concern for those experiencing intersecting forms of oppression.

Advocate for and support...

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- Understanding of social & economic roles not dictated by sex and gender
- Portrayals in entertainment, media, and advertising that not objectify or stereotype
- Increase in women's participation in politics, with concern for those experiencing intersecting forms of oppression.

Additional Resources

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- <https://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Sexism> (or do websearch for ELCA social statement sexism)
 - Social Statement
 - Study Guide with Videos
 - Additional Video: “What Do Lutherans Say about...Gender Justice?”