

**For the Eleventh Annual Assembly of the Southern California West Synod**

**Draft: Resolution 98- ?? – On Sexual Conduct**

**WHEREAS** the Church has always been a community of welcome and of love as also Jesus -- our Lord -- has always loved all persons. He came not to condemn but to call all to repentance, to turn away from sin. So also the church is calling us today into a relationship with Christ, turning away from sin.

**WHEREAS** the Church has always held that same sex relationships are not within the will of God in Scripture, as well as in History, as well as in the Confessions of the Lutheran Church. Same gender sexual relations are listed in Scripture together with sins that include adultery, fornication, pride, greed, lust, jealousy and malice. Although it is not a greater sin than any other, we believe that Scripture, as guided by the confessions, defines such practice as sin.

**WHEREAS** sin cannot remain unacknowledged lest there be no repentance, repentance will lead to grace which demonstrates the message of the Gospel of Jesus Christ.

**WHEREAS** we all acknowledge our tendencies to sin, we also strive to live in purity before our Lord and Savior and confess our sins and condemn them. In the same way we acknowledge the temptations and sufferings some have to be enticed into sexual activities with persons of the same gender. We suffer with them, and are committed to supporting them in their struggle before God, as also we support one another in our struggles with other sins before the Lord.

**WHEREAS** the early church stood firm in its commitment to follow Christ by witnessing in a society where such acts were not uncommon, we today stand in the same situation in a society partially endorsing such behavior.

**THEREFORE IT BE RESOLVED**, that the Southern California West Synod is acknowledging with the historic Church that same gender sexual activity is sinful and not to be endorsed nor legitimized by any official or clergy of the Southern California West Synod.

Submitted by:

- Christopher Lameter, Bethlehem Lutheran Church
- The Council of Bethlehem Lutheran Church (Endorsed May 4, 1997)