



Our Savior's Lutheran Church

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Response to Draft Social Statement on Women and Justice
from a class that read the Statement and met to talk about it at Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Topeka, KS.

Hello.

My name is Jim Peters and I'm the pastor at Our Savior's Lutheran Church in Topeka, Kansas. I offered a class this summer to discuss the Draft Social Statement on Women and Justice. Everyone who attended was informed about how to obtain a copy of the Draft and encouraged to read it in advance of our meetings.

We met twice this summer, once on July 22 and once on August 5. We had 14 in attendance on the 22nd and 11 on the 5th. The class mostly consisted of older adults. There was about an even balance of men and women.

Our group wants to express our appreciation to all who worked on the Draft. We felt it was easy to read and understand, and made some good points.

There were some comments made, though, that I would like to share with you.

Everyone in our group appreciated the Basic Statement (pp. 1-10) and felt that it did a good job of representing what the ELCA should say about these topics.

But some felt that the fuller explanation, while helpful in most cases, might go too far. One participant felt that the statement could still lead to putting men down. Another said that she felt words like "patriarchal" and "sexism" were too heavily used. Some felt that it could be a little controversial.

Another said that he appreciated that our church is doing something like this. He went on to say that our country is so divided right now, and we need to find ways to work together to make a better world for all.

Some were surprised to learn about Augustine's comments (ln. 344 ff.), but others said a similar attitude is still around today.

Our class members were interested to discuss the lack of hardwiring in sex determinism (ln. 394 ff.). While most agreed with the statement, there were plenty of comments that experience had shown them that at least some determinism is at work there.

Our group also struggled with the concept of the “culture of rape (ln. 680 ff.). While we agreed that there are many ways that women are treated differently and quite often as inferior to men in society, the strong language was a turn-off to some.

Approval was expressed over the Drafts statements that seem to suggest that ELCA isn’t going to rush into anything when it comes to changing the language of scripture and worship. While I think we all agreed that the changes that have already been made have been necessary, not everyone was uncomfortable with changing the language used to refer to the Trinity away from the traditional form (p. 34, for example).

The members of our group do approve of this Draft and again thank all those who worked on it.

Sincerely yours in Christ,

Jim Peters