

Synod to Host a Hearing on the Draft Social Statement on Human Sexuality
A listening post for member feedback

The New England Synod will be hosting a hearing for members to comment on the text of the Draft Social Statement on Human Sexuality on Thursday, June 5, 2008, from 10:30 a.m. to 12:00 noon at Trinity Lutheran Church, 73 Lancaster Street, Worcester, MA.

This hearing is a key part in the development of the social statement. Representatives of both the synod and the Task Force for the ELCA Studies on Sexuality will be present. A synod representative will be present to record all comments made by participants. This record of comments will be submitted to the task force and considered as they revise the text for 2009.

“It is important that we have as many members as possible participating in this step of the process,” stated Bishop Margaret Payne of the New England Synod. “This participation is part of how we develop social statements in this church. The hearing is a chance to both speak and listen.”

The draft social statement was written by members of the task force. Its content was determined by the standard ELCA social statement process of theological reflection that emphasizes moral deliberation and broad participation. Since 2001, the task force has been involved in discussions, panels, and consultations with individuals, ranging from sociologists to theologians and biblical scholars.

The task force has now published three studies as a means to invite deliberation and response from throughout the ELCA. These studies seek to set forth a Lutheran vision of human sexuality and its meaning for our church and society. The responses to the studies have been tabulated and reported to the task force.

The comments made at the synodical hearing are critical to the task force in the development of the proposed social statement to be brought to the 2009 Churchwide Assembly. Final responsibility for changes to and adoption of the text of the proposed social statement is the responsibility of the churchwide assembly.

A copy of the Draft Social Statement on Human Sexuality may be ordered by calling a special resource line at 800-638-3522 ext. 2996. Around mid-March it will also be downloadable at www.elca.org/faithfuljourney. Multiple copies for group study will be available from Augsburg Fortress Resource (800-328-4648); ask for Draft of a Social Statement on Human Sexuality, item number 978-6-0002-2079-2, cost is \$0.25 per copy.

If you have any questions regarding your synodical hearing, please visit www.elca.org/faithfuljourney or call the synod office at 508-791-1530.