

## **Resolution to Authorize Blessing of Committed Same-Sex Relationships**

WHEREAS, on June 13, 2004, the congregation of St. Luke's Evangelical Lutheran Church, Park Ridge, Illinois, voted to "openly welcome and value every person who comes to our church regardless of race, national and ethnic origin, age, physical, mental and emotional condition or capacity, gender, sexual orientation, marital status, economic situation or addiction;"

WHEREAS, the 2005 ELCA Churchwide Assembly reiterated the ELCA's welcome to gay and lesbian people and its trust in pastors and congregations as they "discern ways to provide faithful pastoral care for all to whom they minister."

WHEREAS, there currently are baptized members of our congregation who are gay or lesbian people and who may desire to enter into a committed same-sex relationship with a partner and seek a means to invite God to accompany these partners in their life together and for a declaration of God's love;

WHEREAS, the congregation and our pastors can provide a blessing as a declaration of God's love of these partners and accompaniment with them in their life together, without expressing a judgment of the relationship by all members of the congregation; and

WHEREAS, we wish to authorize and support any of our pastors who believes that providing faithful pastoral care would include performing such a blessing.

**THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED,** that

As part of providing faithful pastoral care and counseling to our members, the congregation hereby authorizes any of its pastors to perform a blessing of a committed same-sex relationship between a member of the congregation and the member's partner and hereby agrees to support the pastor who performs such a blessing;

The blessing is a declaration of God's love of and accompaniment with the couple;

The blessing does not express a judgment of the relationship by members of the congregation; and

The congregation council hereby is authorized to work with the pastors to create the format for such a blessing to be conducted within the parameters of this resolution.