

RESOLUTION 24.02

REGARDING REVISIONS TO *HUMAN SEXUALITY: GIFT AND TRUST*

The Resolutions Committee reports resolution 24.02 for action, without recommendation

WHEREAS, the controversial Social Statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (hereafter HS:GT) was adopted by the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly by the slimmest possible margin,¹ and

WHEREAS, several congregations of the Southwestern Minnesota Synod, ELCA terminated their affiliation with the ELCA following the adoption of HS:GT based on their belief that this Church had committed itself to false doctrine through this social statement, and

WHEREAS, in the Shetek Conference many congregations were reassured that “[this church recognizes that, with conviction and integrity, on the basis of conscience-bound belief,”² those who hold the traditional Christian positions on same-gender sexual behavior would be treated “with profound respect for the conscience-bound belief of the neighbor,”³ and

WHEREAS, the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly authorized “a possible revision of the social statement on HSGT which reconsiders the church’s current concept of the four positions of bound conscience. This revision would focus on pages 19-21 (“lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships”) and any other references to the four positions of bound conscience,”⁴ and

WHEREAS, any revision that reduces or restricts the options of respect of the conscience-bound beliefs would create scandal, undermine trust, and potentially rupture the relationship of congregations in the Shetek Conference to the Southwestern Minnesota Synod, ELCA and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Shetek Conference memorialize the 2024 Synod Assembly of the Southwestern Minnesota Synod, ELCA to officially oppose and urge the rejection of any changes to *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* which diminish its “profound respect for the conscience-bound belief,”⁵ of those who hold traditional Christian positions on same-gender sexual behavior, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Shetek Conference urges the 2024 Synod Assembly of the Southwestern Minnesota Synod, ELCA to recommit itself to mutual respect for the conscience-bound beliefs of all congregations, clergy, and laypersons in all of its public expressions, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the 2024 Synod Assembly of the Southwestern Minnesota Synod, direct this resolution be forwarded to the Southwestern Minnesota Synod Council, to forward this resolution to the Church Council with a request that it be transmitted to the Office of the Presiding Bishop and the task force working on revisions to HS:GT.

*Submitted by 2024 Shetek Conference Assembly.
Originally submitted by Pastor Ted Carnahan,
Our Savior’s Lutheran Church, Jackson, MN*

¹ The vote was 676-338, which is exactly the two-thirds majority which was required for passage.

² *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (HSGT). p. 20.

³ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁴ 2022 Churchwide Assembly Action CA22.03.23.

⁵ *HSGT*, p. 21.

Revisions to Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust

Submitted by Pastor Ted Carnahan, Our Savior's Lutheran Church, Jackson, MN to the Shetek Conference of the Southwest Minnesota Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.

WHEREAS, the controversial Social Statement *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (hereafter HSGT) was adopted by the 2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly by the slimmest possible margin,⁶ and

WHEREAS, several congregations of the Southwest Minnesota Synod, ELCA terminated their affiliation with the ELCA following the adoption of HSGT based on their belief that this Church had committed itself to false doctrine through this social statement, and

WHEREAS, in the Shetek Conference many congregations were reassured that “[t]his church recognizes that, with conviction and integrity, on the basis of conscience-bound belief,”⁷ those who hold the traditional Christian positions on same-gender sexual behavior would be treated “with profound respect for the conscience-bound belief of the neighbor,”⁸ and

WHEREAS, the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly authorized “a possible revision of the social statement on Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust which reconsiders the church’s current concept of the four positions of bound conscience. This revision would focus on pages 19-21 (“lifelong, monogamous, same-gender relationships”) and any other references to the four positions of bound conscience,”⁹ and

WHEREAS, any revision to the ‘four positions’ would create scandal, undermine trust, and potentially rupture the relationship of congregations in the Shetek Conference to the Southwest Minnesota Synod, ELCA and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, therefore, be it

RESOLVED, that the Shetek Conference memorialize the 2024 Synod Assembly of the Southwest Minnesota Synod, ELCA to officially oppose and urge the rejection of any changes to *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* which diminish its “profound respect for the conscience-bound belief,”¹⁰ of those who hold traditional Christian positions on same-gender sexual behavior, and be it further

RESOLVED, that the Shetek Conference memorialize the 2024 Synod Assembly of the Southwest Minnesota Synod, ELCA to recommit itself to mutual respect for the conscience-bound beliefs of all congregations, clergy, and laypersons in all of its public expressions.

As received from the Shetek Conference, Pastor Ted Carnahan, Our Savior's, Jackson, MN.

⁶ The vote was 676-338, which is exactly the two-thirds majority which was required for passage.

⁷ *Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust* (HSGT). p. 20.

⁸ *Ibid.*, p. 21.

⁹ 2022 Churchwide Assembly Action CA22.03.23.

¹⁰ *HSGT*, p. 21.