

Press Statement

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Good afternoon. My name is Greg Egertson, and I am Co-Chair of Lutheran Lesbian & Gay Ministries.

On behalf of everyone at Lutheran Lesbian & Gay Ministries, I want to take this opportunity to commend the members of Bethany Lutheran Church for their courage and faithfulness in extending the call to Jay Alan Wiesner. The actions they take... by ordaining Jay today, and by installing him as associate pastor next week, are joyous occasions of grace. We are thrilled to be able to celebrate with you and share in the hope that you offer to so many!

At the same time, it saddens us that Pastor Wiesner's powerful sense of vocation and remarkable gifts for ministry will go unrecognized by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. We call upon the ELCA to rescind the policies of discrimination against lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people, that continue to inflict harm, destroy faith, discount loving relationships and ultimately drive people away from Christ. We appeal to you, our brothers and sisters: reform cannot come too soon.

Since Lutheran Lesbian & Gay Ministries was formed in 1990, this is the EIGHTH extraordinary ordination that we have sponsored and supported. And with our help, Bethany is the THIRD ELCA congregation to defy church policy by calling an openly gay or lesbian pastor so far this year. We have dedicated our lives to this justice work and we will not stop until every sexual minority person is able to hear the message that God has written on our hearts: You are a beloved child of God, deserving of love, honor, respect, and full participation in the life and leadership of your church.

That is the message that our friends at Bethany proclaim so loudly today. We congratulate you, we honor you, we rejoice with all of you, and especially with Jay on this happy day!