



EXTRAORDINARY
LUTHERAN
MINISTRIES

the mission

THE NEWSLETTER OF EXTRAORDINARY LUTHERAN MINISTRIES

New Resource for First Call Candidates

Thanks to ELM friends like you, we've just released a new resource for first call candidates: **The Mysteries of the Ages: ELM's Unofficial Guide for LGBTQ First Call Candidates.**

We found inspiration for the name of the guide in this scripture verse from Colossians:

"...the mystery that has been hidden throughout the ages and generations but has now been revealed to God's saints."

—Colossians 1:26

The name is a little tongue-in-cheek, as is the resource. But often the process toward becoming a rostered leader is filled with mystery. Some has to do with the Holy Spirit and her mysterious ways. But some of it has to do with RLP's, Form B's and Plan B's. (Not to mention LGBTQ's!)

If these letters are unfamiliar to you – they are all part of the experience of being a "first call" candidate. In the Lutheran church, you can't just head out and look for a congregation once you graduate from seminary. It is a process which involves being "approved for ordination" and then assigned to a specific synod. This can be a very complicated and confusing time.

After receiving phone calls, emails, and pleas for help making sense of a complicated process, we realized that we have a lot of collective wisdom within the ELM community. Many of us have experienced candidacy, assignment, figuring out where and when to come out, meetings with bishops, making plan B's, interviewing with congregations, discerning a call, and joining a new ministry. We could help!



This resource will help leaders like Cary Bass-Deschenes, a First Call candidate in the Sierra Pacific Synod.

Several months ago a group of pastors in their first call and some folks from ELM's Accompaniment Team worked together to begin crafting this resource for LGBTQ candidates. The result feels like sitting down with a friend who will share their experience, pray with you, laugh when things get awkward, wait with you, get technical when you need it, but mostly just faithfully be there to encourage and support you.

The resource is available on our website, www.elm.org. You can also help by offering prayers for those who are in the process of finishing seminary, being assigned to a synod, and awaiting their first call. These leaders are among those who need the most support from ELM. You helped us create this resource by making it possible for us to gather the wisdom and stories – and your continued support will help us make sure it gets to those who need it.



Rostered Leaders and Seminarians at the 2014 Proclaim Retreat. Proclaim provides peer-to-peer support and laughter during both good and hard times. Our new resource, "The Mysteries of the Ages" makes use of both—your support helped us create this. Thank you!

INSIDE.....

Proclaim Profile:
Amy C. Hanson

**ELM forms
Proclaim
Seminar Team**

**ORDAINED.
CALLED.
WELCOMED.**
updates about
Proclaim leaders

THANK YOU FOR YOUR SUPPORT



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MISSION

ELM affirms and supports LGBTQ Lutheran rostered leaders and those pursuing rostered leadership, while engaging allied congregations and ministries to proclaim God's love and seek justice for all.

Amy C. Hanson Named 2014 Joel R. Workin Scholar

Amy recently graduated from Iliff School of Theology in Denver, Colorado and completed her Lutheran formation classes at Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN last year. She served as an intern pastor at First Lutheran Church of St. Peter in St. Peter, MN last year and this fall has begun a Clinical Pastoral Education residency at St. Anthony Hospital in Lakewood, CO. Amy has been certified as an ELCA Mission Developer/Redeveloper. She is a member of House for All Sinners and Saints, ELCA, in Denver, CO.

In the letter notifying her of the decision, the committee wrote the following,

The committee was moved by the way you expanded the notion of closet to include your experience of coming out of other closets and into the light. We appreciated the way you thoughtfully 'queered a certain theological conviction' in your own right."

Amy shared her thoughts about Joel Workin with these words:

"Joel was (and continues to be, through his writing), the sort of prophetic truth teller that is so needed by the church and our broken world. He tells the truth about God and the truth about what it means to be human, and that even in the midst of all this brokenness, the promise of God's grace and overwhelming love endures. I have known this to be true in my own life, and this is my own call to ministry, to tell the truth about God's grace in a world that needs to hear it."



You support leaders like Amy Hanson, who is the 2014 Joel R. Workin Scholar, an award created to honor the legacy of Joel Workin, one of the first openly gay seminarians in the Lutheran Church.

"I have known this to be true in my own life, and this is my own call to ministry, to tell the truth about God's grace in a world that needs to hear it."

— Amy Hanson

Joel R. Workin Scholar Award

Each year ELM names a Joel R. Workin Scholar to honor the life and ministry of Joel Workin, one of the three gay seminarians who were refused ordination in 1989 after "coming out" to their candidacy committees. This award comes with a \$2,500 scholarship for academic or spiritual study and is available for publicly-identified lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer Lutheran seminarians who are members of Proclaim. The fund is managed by InFaith Community Foundation. Anyone interested in making a planned gift to the fund may contact Amalia Vagts (director@elm.org).

What you'll find on elm.org....

PROCLAIM PROFILES

TWO-MINUTE
TESTIMONIALS

LATEST NEWS

Gordon Straw Joins ELM Board



Gordon Straw has joined the ELM Board for a three year term. Gordon brings years of experience in organizational development, development of lay ministry leaders, and experience and commitment to intercultural competency. Gordon is an enrolled member of the Brothertown Indian Nation. He currently serves as the program director for Lay Schools for

Ministry in the ELCA and interim director for American Indian/Alaska Native ministries in the ELCA. Gordon is married to Evelyn Soto and they have a daughter, Amanda, who will begin her second year at DePauw University, Greencastle, IN in the fall.

ELM Launches Proclaim Seminary Team

In 2009, ELM worked with three LGBTQ seminarians. In 2013, that number reached 20. Since then, the number of seminarians in the Proclaim community has doubled, now totaling 48! In response to this growth, ELM launched the Proclaim Seminary Team, made up of student representatives from each of the 8 ELCA Seminaries and 1 student rep for students at non-ELCA schools. This team is working to increase the visibility of Proclaim on campus, supporting and responding to the needs of LGBTQ seminarians, and offering insight and direction for ELM resources and programs from the seminary perspective. Through this new project, you support seminarians as they walk the long, important journey through seminary and candidacy. You can learn more about this project at www.elm.org.



Two-Minute Proclaim Stories!



Earlier this year, Proclaim member Brenda Bos recorded 18 interviews with Proclaim members. She edited them to "two-minute" stories to share on our website. You can see the videos on the homepage of www.elm.org. Here's a chance for you to hear firsthand how you are making a difference for LGBTQ ministry leaders.



PROCLAIM



Rev. Javen Swanson
(left) with his husband,
Rev. Oby Ballinger.
Photo by Paul Nixdorf

ORDAINED - Javen Swanson-
August 10, 2014, Gloria Dei Lutheran
Church in St Paul, MN
Brenda Bos - August 16, 2014, Christ
Lutheran Church in San Clemente, CA
Paul Gibson - August 16, 2014, Trinity
Lutheran in St. Petersburg, FL
Emily Ewing - August 23, 2014, Christ
the King Lutheran Church in South
Jordan, UT
Julie Recher - September 27, 2014,
Atonement Lutheran Church in
Wyomissing, PA

CALLED - Rev. Shawn Brandon,
Interim Pastor, Gloria Dei! Lutheran
Church in Arnold, MD
Rev. Michael Lohmann, Interim Pastor,
St. Stephen Lutheran in Silver Spring, MD
Rev. Jim Bischoff, Pastor, Lutheran
Church of the Cross in Muncie, IN



Rev. Shawn Brandon

WELCOMED - Miriam
Samuelson is a new member of
Proclaim! Miriam is at Yale Divinity
School.



Miriam Samuelson

Other recent new members:
Matthew DeLoera - Luther Seminary
Joseph Hertzog - Lutheran Theological
Seminary at Philadelphia
Rev. Kevin Kline - St. John Lutheran
Church, Kailua, HI
Justin Ferko - Trinity Lutheran
Seminary
Kristian Kohler - Yale Divinity School
Jessica Olson - Luther Seminary

Shoulders of Giants

Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries is a ministry that stands on the shoulders of giants who have long paved the way for many calls we celebrate today. Recently, we lost three special leaders who have left their indelible mark on this movement.

Bishop Stanley E. Olson

September 4, 1926 – July 2, 2014

Bishop Olson was a champion for justice and played a formative role in the early days of Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries. In the early 1990s, he was part of the founding board of the Extraordinary Candidacy Project (ECP), which launched a pathway to certification for LGBTQ people called to ordained ministry in the Lutheran Church.

In his retirement, he continued to make a public witness in support of LGBTQ clergy. He and his spouse Mary Lou were active members of Lutheran Church of Our Redeemer in Sacramento, traveling a distance each week for worship. He was an avid supporter of Rev. Robyn Hartwig (ELM Historic Roster) and was instrumental in securing an internship for then-ECP candidate Jay Wilson (ELM Historic Roster). Bishop Olson participated in the extraordinary ordinations of the Rev. Anita Hill, the Rev. Megan Rohrer, and the Rev. Jay Wilson. In these and other numerous ways, he was a visible witness for justice. He is loved and remembered by many.



Founding members of Extraordinary Candidacy Project. Stan Olson is third from the right.

We also celebrate the lives and legacies of:



Rev. Paul Tidemann

Rev. Paul Tidemann

July 1, 1938 – July 26, 2014

“Paul was truly the deep conscience within a whole community of folks trying to right the church’s moral compass. I was always awed by the wisdom he had wrought from long melding the roles of pastor, prophet, and organizer.”

– Dr. Jeremy Posadas, ELM Board



Jim Mapstone (left) and Jerry Vagts.

James Mapstone

April 5, 1942 – August 19, 2014

“I have the fondest memories of seeing Jim Mapstone and my father together, two very vibrant and colorful personalities that played well off each other. Jim was a tireless advocate for the full inclusion of LGBTQ people in the Lutheran church.”

–Amalia Vagts, ELM Executive Director

Proclaim leaders are Faithful & Fabulous...and you are too!

At the Proclaim retreat this year, ELM Executive Director Amalia Vagts told Proclaim leaders that they are faithful and fabulous: faithful in the ways they have pursued their call to ministry and service to the church and fabulous in the way they bring diversity as LGBTQ leaders serving the church.

We think ELM supporters are faithful and fabulous as well. We are very excited to be rolling out our new giving circles this fall as a way for ELM friends to be “out and proud” about their support for our ministry. You’ll be hearing more, but here’s a glimpse...

Extraordinary Friends...those giving \$10 or more each month

Friends...those giving \$1-299 total each calendar year

Faithful Friends...those giving \$300 - 599 total each calendar year

Fabulous Friends...those giving \$600 – 999 total each calendar year

Faithful & Fabulous Friends...those giving \$1,000+ each year

Extraordinarily Faithful & Fabulous Friends...those giving \$2,500+ each year



Jill Rode is a faithful and fabulous leader who is grateful for your support.

When you give to ELM, you support these acts of affirmation, accompaniment, and advocacy for LGBTQ leaders and their ministries.

Please give today using the enclosed envelope or online at www.elm.org