

April 1, 2011

Dear Friend,

Lenten greetings to you! We are writing to you about a scholarship for publicly-identified lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender, and queer Lutheran seminarians.

Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries works to expand ministry opportunities for publicly-identified LGBTQ rostered leaders who are changing the church and society through their ministry. We are the custodian of an endowment fund established in 1995 to honor the memory of Joel Raydon Workin. Joel was one of the three gay seminarians who were refused ordination in 1989 after “coming out” to their candidacy committees. This act of faithfulness was the spark that ignited our movement of resistance within the ELCA and part of what led to the August 2009 change in ELCA ministry policies.

Each year, Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries names one or more **Joel R. Workin Memorial Scholar(s)**. This award comes with a scholarship to LGBTQ seminarians who embody Joel’s passion for justice and faith in their lives and ministry. In addition, the Scholar(s) may be invited throughout the year to be involved with various ELM activities.

2011 will mark the 16th anniversary of Joel’s passing from AIDS. To commemorate the occasion, ELM will award two \$1,000 grants from the memorial fund to seminary students who meet the eligibility criteria and submit qualifying applications. This will be the fourth time that Joel R. Workin Memorial scholarships have been awarded.

Eligibility – The eligible student must be a lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender or queer seminary student who has demonstrated gifts for ordained or rostered lay ministry and seeks to fulfill their vocation as a publicly identified LGBTQ person. The student must be a member of **Proclaim**, the professional community of publicly-identified LGBTQ Lutheran pastors, seminary students and rostered lay leaders founded by Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries. Please see attached membership form for Proclaim if you are not currently a member.

Application Materials – To be considered for the award, your completed application must be submitted to the scholarship committee no later than **Wednesday, June 1:**

- Please provide a copy of your current resume that contains an overview of your academic and employment history.

- Enclosed is a prayer that Joel wrote while he was a student in seminary, entitled “*All Things*”. Please write a 1-2 page reflection on this prayer or a short essay on a theme in the prayer that has meaning for you.
- The Joel R. Workin Memorial Scholar should be someone whose character and abilities are consistent with Joel’s legacy. Among these are: academic excellence, personal and professional integrity, courage in response to the church’s discriminatory policies, a passion for social justice, faithfulness to Jesus Christ and potential to become an effective leader in church and society. Please provide one letter of recommendation from someone (professor, colleague, or friend, etc.) who can testify to your qualifications for receiving this honor and award.

Deadline – The deadline for submitting your resume, reflection paper and one letter of recommendation is **Wednesday, June 1**. Mailed applications must be post-marked on or before June 1. Emailed applications must be received by 11:59 pm ET on June 1.

If you are submitting application materials electronically, send them to operations@elm.org. Please put “Joel R. Workin Application” in the subject headline.

Mailed applications:
 Rachael Johnson
 Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries
 Attn: Joel R. Workin Scholarship Committee
 2649 N. Francisco Ave.
 Chicago, IL 60647

Notification and Presentation – The scholarship committee will notify applicants of its decision on or before August 1, as soon as all of the materials have been reviewed and the award recipients have been selected. The 2011 Joel Workin Scholars will be publicly announced and the \$1,000 grants presented at an ELM event during 2011.

On behalf of the Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries, Joel’s family and friends, and the members of **Proclaim**, we commend this opportunity to you and invite your application. We hope that you will consider honoring Joel’s memory in this way. Please contact Rachael Johnson at operations@elm.org if you have any questions.

May your Lenten season be filled with prayer and reflection.

Greg A. Egertson, Co-Chair
 Rev. Jeff R. Johnson, Co-Chair

Joel R. Workin Memorial Scholarship Committee

All Things

"The prayer that follows is one of the first "gay" things I ever wrote. As a 'keep-the-faith-all-things-are-possible' prayer, it is appropriate for all seasons, especially when the day seems long, when the journey seems unbearably difficult, when doubt and despair gain the upper hand. When the last thing that seems true is that even 'with God all things are possible.' If you can, pray with me." – Joel

Dear God,

I am gay. I have said that to lots of other people, but never before to you. I am gay; thank you, God.

I do not thank you for everything. I am not happy that I grew up and still live in a world that for the most part hates, abuses and refuses me. I am not happy that I belong to a church that for the most part ignores, condemns and rejects me, that will ordain me into a life of lying and hiding, but not a life of truth and freedom. I am not happy that my parents cry over their so-called "lost" son; that other children must grow up living secret and painful lives; that the evil principalities and powers of fear, homophobia and small-mindedness dominate and infect most of society; that I myself am captive to those powers and am often quick to hate and kill.

I do not like everything about this world, God. I am not happy with all of it or myself, but still I thank you. I thank you for calling me out of the darkness, out of the fear, out of the closet into your light and truth, into the goodness and the ambiguity of your creation. I thank you for allowing me, through my own suffering and pain, to understand and relate to the pain and suffering of others. Thank you for connecting me with my brothers and sisters who are also broken and being made whole. I thank you for the love of another human being, the joy of community, of brotherhood and sisterhood. I thank you that, by your grace, I am what I am.

God, this is my promise to you, this is what I will do with your help: I promise to live always in your light and never to return to the darkness. As much as the world may preach hatred, I will respond in love. As much as the world preaches fear and fright, I will stand fast in your peace and assurance. As much as the world may beat and oppress, I will forgive and await reconciliation. As much as I and my brothers and sisters may grow weary and despairing, yet I will trust and believe that with you all things are possible. As much as I fail and stumble, I will repent and cling to your mercy. But I will not retreat to the darkness, Lord. Having seen your love enfleshed, your caring, grace and compassion at work in my new family, I will not hide or cower or become embittered or unbelieving. I will hope and trust, and I will endure the blows and insults and the rejections when they come, but I will not hide and I will not fear. As your child, I will be and I will love, no matter what.

Dear God, I am gay.

--Joel Raydon Workin
Spring 1986

Joel Raydon Workin Memorial Scholarship for LGBTQ Seminarians



Joel Raydon Workin (1961-1995) was born in Fargo, ND, and grew up on a farm in nearby Walcott. He took his diploma at Kindred High School in Walcott, received his Bachelor of Theology from Carlton College, Northfield, MN, and his Master of Divinity from Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary, Berkeley, CA. In 1986 Joel interned at Holy Trinity Lutheran Church, Inglewood, CA. In the fall of 1987, Joel came out publicly as a gay candidate for the ordained ministry and was certified for call by the American Lutheran Church (a predecessor body to the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America). Following this courageous and faithful act, Joel's certification was revoked by the ELCA and his name was never placed on the roster of approved candidates waiting for call. Joel's ministry continued in Los Angeles, however, at the AIDS Healthcare Foundation and as Director of Chris

Brownlie Hospice. On December 30, 1988, Joel married Paul Jenkins, whom he loved. Joel was a member of St. Matthew's Lutheran Church, North Hollywood. He and Paul were active in Lutherans Concerned/Los Angeles and Dignity/Los Angeles. Paul died of AIDS on June 6, 1993.

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Joel loved to read, to dance, to play the piano and to sing. An avid gardener, he took pleasure in renovating the duplex he and Paul purchased in the Silverlake district in 1990. He enjoyed traveling, especially to any city where "Angels in America" was playing. He loved his family and his friends; he also loved debating, discussing and exploring a wide range of ideas. His wit and humor, keen mind and gentle spirit, and his love of life are sorely missed and fondly remembered.

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In the last weeks of his illness, Joel gave his friends and family permission to sponsor an endowed memorial fund in his name. **The Joel R. Workin Memorial Scholarship Fund** was thus established upon Joel's death from AIDS on November 29, 1995. In keeping with Joel's wishes, awards from the fund are used to provide scholarships to publicly-identified lesbian, gay, bisexual, transgender and queer seminary students who seek to change the church and society through their ministry. The fund is managed by **Extraordinary Lutheran Ministries**, through the Lutheran Community Foundation.