



## Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

Living Out God's Grace & Unconditional Love

February 11, 2025

Dear friends in Christ:

The people of the ELCIC and the 2SLGBTQIA+ community, inside and outside the church, know too well how acts of homophobia, transphobia, and biphobia—including religious-induced discrimination—embolden public expressions of hate crimes and violence. Unfortunately, deliberate disinformation takes aim at care and safer spaces for transgender and gender non-conforming youth; hateful rhetoric, discriminatory legislation, and restrictions directly place their health, safety, and well-being at risk.

Recently, the 47th President of the United States of America (USA) issued “executive orders” declaring there are only two genders, male and female; banning Transgender people from military service; and ending gender affirming care for anyone under the age of 19.

The ELCIC considers these actions to be hostile to the 2SLGBTQIA+ community. The ELCIC recognizes that there are more than two genders. These executive orders endanger the lives of Transgender, Non-binary, Genderqueer, Intersex, and Gender Nonconforming persons. While these actions have happened in the USA, we know that the lobby to remove and deny human rights does try to exert influence in Canada, and that some elected leaders in this country have enacted discriminatory laws and policies.

The ELCIC is committed to the acceptance, full participation, and liberation of all sexual orientations, gender identities, and gender expressions within the Church. The ELCIC upholds and celebrates our uniqueness and diversity in God’s family. In 2019, the ELCIC established a task force to guide and encourage the church in addressing ongoing issues of homophobia, biphobia, and transphobia. The task force has a mandate to build awareness of transphobia in church and in society. This work is intended to deepen commitments made by the ELCIC made in the [2011 Social Statement on Human Sexuality](#), including the call to uphold dignity of all people regardless of gender identity and to meet diverse people with a core sense of respect for the value of each person as a unique child of God.

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*The ELCIC acknowledges that its buildings and ministries, from coast to coast to coast, are on traditional territories of Indigenous Peoples.*

Please join us in:

- Praying for the dignity and acceptance for all persons, for the safety of those made more vulnerable by recent government actions, for a world where everyone finds loving community, and for God's guidance in our thoughts, words, and deeds.
- Providing spaces and opportunities for safe, respectful conversations, where people feel support and love, and experience ongoing formation.
- Learning more about human rights, terminology, and pathways to liberation for 2SLGBTQIA+ persons.
- Speaking out against rhetoric that dehumanizes and demonizes anyone made in the image of God, and by promoting accurate information about neighbors and issues of public concern.
- Advocating for 2SLGBTQIA+ rights at the local, provincial, and federal level.
- Preparing for the possibility of providing welcome to those fleeing persecution based on sexual orientation, gender identity, or gender expression.

May the God of love and liberation hear our lament. May each of us be bold in our witness. May we all work to bring an end to this attack against people God has named beloved.

Yours in Christ,

Rev. Susan Johnson  
*National Bishop, ELCIC*

Rev. Kathy Martin  
*Bishop of the British Columbia Synod*

Rev. Patricia Schmermund  
*Bishop of the Synod of Alberta and the Territories*

Rev. Dr. Ali Tote  
*Bishop of the Saskatchewan Synod*

Rev. Jason Zinko  
*Bishop of the Manitoba/Northwestern Ontario Synod*

Rev. Carla Blakley  
*Bishop of the Eastern Synod*