

Press Release Goodsoil celebrates the passage of the Social Statement on Human Sexuality  
For Immediate Release

August 19, 2009

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Goodsoil celebrates the passage today of the Social Statement on Human Sexuality, "Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust," at the biennial assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America in Minneapolis, Minnesota.

Speaking for Goodsoil, Emily Eastwood, Executive Director, Lutherans Concerned/North America, said, "This is a day of progress and compromise. By a 2/3 majority the church has supported families of all kinds and has acknowledged without judgment the wide variety of views within the ELCA regarding lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender (LGBT) inclusion. The document recognizes the ministries of congregations which conduct blessings of same gender relationships and same gender marriages where such marriages are legal. The social statement is tolerant of our differences both in scriptural interpretation and practice. The social statement supports our unity without requiring uniformity. There is still much work to do, but the door to full inclusion of LGBT members and their families is now most definitely open.

"The social statement now forms the basis for policy and advocacy on issues related to families and sexuality both for ministry and advocacy in church and society. We are encouraged and hopeful that on Friday this foundation will result in the church's elimination of the current ban on ministers in committed same gender relationships. "

The Social Statement now serves as a teaching document that describes the world and society that the ELCA lives and works in to provide ministry and spread the Gospel. The Social Statement provides the basis and guidance for the formulation of policy and the creation of programs.

The Social Statement was eight years in preparation and represents the work and contributions of thousands of Lutherans. Contentious because of its subject and content, the Social Statement now guides the work and understanding of the church as it relates to the sexual component of the lives of everyone the church reaches.

We celebrate in particular the emphasis of the Social Statement on the centrality of family in the life of the church and society – all families without differentiation. For too long the church has failed to recognize the centrality of family and acceptance in the lives of its LGBT members. Now, the healing of the rift that leads to wholeness can begin.

Goodsoil commits itself to working within and with the church as it ends its reticence to speak boldly on full inclusion as matter of the Gospel, and to celebrate the gifts that come with full participation of all its members, regardless of sexual orientation and gender identity. Our job is to assist the church in its move from tolerance to celebration.

#### About Goodsoil:

Goodsoil is a collaboration of organizations working for the full inclusion of lesbian, gay, bisexual and transgender people and their families in the full ministerial and sacramental life of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Goodsoil works to reconcile our church's policies and practices regarding same-gender marriage, blessings of covenanted unions, and the rostering of partnered LGBT ministers, harmonizing these with our shared values of faith, trust, commitment, monogamy, mutuality, and dignity. Goodsoil is comprised of Lutherans Concerned/North America ([www.lcna.org](http://www.lcna.org)), The Network for Full Inclusion ([www.inclusivenet.com](http://www.inclusivenet.com)), and Wingspan Ministry ([www.stpaulref.org/wingspan](http://www.stpaulref.org/wingspan)).