

The Theological Why

Why are racial justice and gender justice called for and being worked on by this church?

Racial Justice

From ELCA Social Policy Resolution CA19.04.18 [*Condemnation of White Supremacy and Racist Rhetoric*](#)

“RESOLVED, we the Churchwide Assembly of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America do hereby resolves and proclaim that:

#1 White supremacy is racism and we condemn it; . . .

#7 We are called by Jesus to ‘love our neighbors as ourselves.’ As persons called to love one another as God has loved us, we therefore proclaim our commitment to speak with one voice against racism and white supremacy. We stand with those who are targets of racist ideologies and actions. With them, we demand and will advocate for a more just, loving, and peaceful world where the gifts of all people are appreciated, and the lives of all people are treasured;” (ELCA [*Social Policy Resolution CA19.04.18*](#)).

From ELCA Social Statement on [*Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture*](#)

“This church has often addressed words on racism to white members. We have done so because our mission and ministry are in a society where white people have been favored and hold unequal power to implement their prejudices—socially, politically, and economically. What has been the case is *still* the case: skin color makes a difference and white people benefit from a privileged position” (5).

Gender Justice

From ELCA Social Statement [*Faith, Sexism, and Justice*](#)

“11) The far-reaching harm experienced by women and girls is rooted in a pattern of power, privilege, and prejudice, the key elements in any social system of oppression. This is the basis of the ELCA's understanding of racism. When power, privilege, and prejudice are associated with sex, gender, and sexuality, sociologists use the terms patriarchy and sexism. . . . This church believes we need to address the roots of the problems that threaten abundant life. . . . An honest assessment of patriarchy can be hard to face, yet it is necessary in order to address such a complex social reality. Harm and injustice result not simply from the acts of an individual or group but from policies, laws, attitudes, customs, habits, words, images, and religious beliefs and practices that inform and sanction those acts” ([*Faith, Sexism, and Justice, 31-32*](#)).

“14) . . . This church's commitment to neighbor justice compels us to expose how patriarchy and sexism are woven into individual, social, and religious life, causing harm to all people and even to all of creation” (36).

“19) The central Lutheran belief that we are justified by grace through faith empowers this church to challenge patriarchy and sexism, which devalue people according to sinful human standards” (46).

“20) The Lutheran understanding of the sacraments of Baptism and Holy Communion, in which the Word of God is connected with tangible, physical elements, grounds efforts to prevent the harm that sexism and patriarchy cause to the bodies, minds, and spirits of human beings” (47).