



**Northern Illinois Synod**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**

God's work. Our hands.

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**What Will You Do, if You Disagree with  
the Churchwide Assembly's Decisions**

**A Message from Bishop Gary Wollersheim**

I have been asked this question: "What will you do, as bishop of the synod, if you disagree with the Churchwide Assembly's decisions concerning sexuality?" In other words, Will I protest? Will I ignore the decisions? Will I try to undermine what has been decided?

To all of these questions I answer a clear and strong, "No!"

I will do what I have always endeavored to do - to compassionately and fairly administer the decisions and policies of the ELCA, even when it is difficult.

I will support the decisions of this church, because I believe that the Holy Spirit will work in and through the prayers and discernment process of the voting members at the Churchwide Assembly.

I will support the decisions of this church, because I believe that the wisdom of the whole assembly is greater than the wisdom of any individual person.

I will support the decisions of this church, because I took a vow to uphold the Church's Constitutions. In the ELCA we confess that the constitutions of this church are based on the Holy Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions.

I will support the decisions of this church, because I believe that we can be more faithful in God's mission working together than we can separately or in splinter groups. We need to plant the Church. We need to feed the hungry. We need to renew congregations. We need to make disciples of all. We need to support our leaders. We need to raise up new leaders - especially among our youth. We need to stand for justice. And much, much more.

So, I go to the Churchwide Assembly in Minneapolis with 19 prayerful voting members from the Northern Illinois Synod and about one thousand others from across our ELCA. We all ask for your prayers that we might prove to be faithful in the decisions that we make. Upon returning home, we pray that we might be granted the courage and endurance to follow the direction which God, in God's grace, has given us.



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