



LUTHERAN LESBIAN & GAY MINISTRIES

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HOLLYWOOD LUTHERAN CHURCH INSTALLS OPENLY GAY PASTOR

Hollywood Lutheran Church in Hollywood, CA, a congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), has called the Reverend Daniel M. Hooper to be their pastor in defiance of denominational policy. With an 82% majority, church members voted to hire Pastor Hooper at a congregational meeting on Sunday, March 21. The service of installation will take place next Sunday, May 2.

Rev. Hooper, 56, is an openly gay man who has been in a same gender partnership for nearly 28 years. He was ordained in 1974 and served as a Lutheran pastor in Arizona and Southern California until 1991 when he was "outed" and removed from the ELCA's clergy roster for being in violation of church policy that requires openly gay and lesbian pastors to remain celibate.

After working for several years as a legal secretary and computer network administrator, Hooper was admitted to the clergy roster of the Extraordinary Candidacy Project (ECP) in 2002 and re-certified for Lutheran ministry. He applied for the position at Hollywood Lutheran Church after learning that the members wanted to start an intentional outreach ministry to the local lesbian and gay community.

The May 2 installation will be the second of three that are being sponsored by Lutheran Lesbian & Gay Ministries during 2004. Two weeks ago, the Rev. Dr. Jennifer Mason was installed as associate pastor at Central Cities Lutheran Mission in San Bernardino, CA. In July, Jay Wiesner, a recent seminary graduate, will be ordained and installed as associate pastor at Bethany Lutheran Church in Minneapolis, MN.

Mason, Hooper and Wiesner have been certified by the ECP. Each is in a committed same gender relationship and has publicly stated non-compliance with the ELCA's celibacy rule. According to ELCA policy, the three congregations who are issuing the calls may face discipline, including expulsion from the denomination, for their actions. The decision to impose discipline normally rests with the local bishop and synod council.

Pastor Hooper's installation service will take place at 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, May 2, at Hollywood Lutheran Church, 1733 North Hampshire Avenue, in Hollywood, CA. The presiding officer will be Rev. Jeff R. Johnson, ECP President and pastor of University Lutheran Chapel (ELCA) in Berkeley, CA. Bishop Emeritus Rev. Dr. Paul W. Egertson will be the preacher. The sitting bishop of the Southwest California Synod (ELCA), Rev. Dean Nelson, has declined an invitation to participate in the service.

Lutheran Lesbian & Gay Ministries (LLGM) was founded in 1989 in response to the ELCA's refusal to allow openly gay and lesbian pastors to serve in the church. The 1990 ordinations of

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seminary graduates Jeff Johnson, Ruth Frost and Phyllis Zillhart in San Francisco, drew national media attention and began a nationwide movement to provide legal, pastoral and financial support to gay and lesbian pastors who were dismissed from their positions or removed from the ELCA clergy roster.

Over the years, LLGM has provided support to dozens of clergy who find themselves caught in a bind between being honest about their sexual orientation and losing their jobs. LLGM also provides financial and consultative support to those congregations who support their pastor and risk loss of members and discipline from ELCA bishops.

For more information on Lutheran Lesbian & Gay Ministries see their web site:
www.llgm.org

The Extraordinary Candidacy Project (ECP) was founded in 1993 as a project of Lutheran Lesbian & Gay Ministries and other advocacy groups to certify the credentials of openly identified sexual minority pastors and seminarians who no longer wish to keep their sexual orientation a secret from their congregations and ELCA church officials.

Nationally, there are nearly 40 pastors and seminarians on the ECP roster and the list is growing. Pastors and seminarians who apply to the ECP for certification must meet the same rigorous standards as do those who apply for certification from the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), except gay and lesbian pastors are not required to remain celibate as the ELCA requires. The committees that certify ECP candidates are made up of ELCA seminary professors, retired bishops, pastors and lay leaders from various professions. The ECP is not formally affiliated with the ELCA.

For more information on the ECP see their web site:
www.extraordinarycandidacyproject.org

LLGM & ECP Statistics

Rostered Clergy and Seminarians: 39
ELCA Congregations and Synods being served by ECP Pastors: 15
Independent Lutheran Churches being served by ECP Pastors: 2

CONTACT INFORMATION

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