



<b>Title: Same-Sex Union</b>
<b>Policy #: 30</b>
<b>EXPIRES: When Replaced</b>
<b>ISSUED BY: Church Council</b>
<b>SIGNED:</b>

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## 1 History

VERSION	DATE APPROVED	UPDATED BY	PURPOSE FOR CREATION/UPDATE
1.0	11/18/14		TO ADDRESS SAME-SEX MARRIAGE AS IT IS NOW LEGAL IN WISCONSIN

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## 2 Scope

This policy is part of St. Paul Lutheran Church's organizational policies. This policy applies to anyone who wants to be married at St. Paul Lutheran Church.

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## 3 Policy

We believe that marriage is a sacred union of one man and one woman (Gen 2:24-25) and that God gave marriage as a picture of the relationship between Christ and His bride the Church (Eph 5:32). The official position of The Lutheran Church- Missouri Synod, as set forth in 1998 Res. 3-21 ("To Affirm the Sanctity of Marriage and to Reject Same-Sex Unions"), is that homosexual unions come under categorical prohibition in the Old and New Testaments (Lev. 18:22, 24; 20:13; 1 Cor. 6:9-10; 1 Tim, 1:9-10) as contrary to the Creator's design (Rom. 1:26-27). These positions and beliefs can be found on the LCMS website, along with other statements, papers and reports on the subject of homosexuality and same-sex civil unions and "marriage." Our pastors will not officiate over any marriages inconsistent with these beliefs, and our church property may not be used for any marriage ceremony, reception or other activity that would be inconsistent with our beliefs and this policy.

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## 4 Procedure

- Any couple requesting a same-sex marriage will not be married.
  - A Pastor will explain that while we reject same-sex marriage, we do not reject individuals who struggle with same-sex attraction, but we seek to love them and call them to repentance and faith in Christ's forgiveness.
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- A Pastor will offer to meet with the individuals to explain to them why they cannot bless same-sex marriage because we cannot bless what God calls sin. To do so would be to place those who engage in such behavior outside the need for repentance and forgiveness, and thus outside the need for redemption in Christ. We will remain focused on the care of souls in Christ. We seek to be faithful to the Word of God because we care about people.

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## **5 Forms**

- Information on Marriage Policies for Member Congregations published by The Lutheran Church Missouri Synod