

Proposed Bylaw amendment  
C13.05.

1 Bethel Lutheran Church accepts the canonical Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments as  
2 the inspired word of God and the authoritative source and norm of its proclamation, faith,  
3 and life. (Bethel Constitution : C2.03.)

4 These scriptures teach that the marriage of male and female is an institution created and  
5 blessed by God. From marriage, God forms families to serve as the building blocks of all  
6 human civilization and community. We teach and practice that sexual activity belongs  
7 exclusively within the Biblical boundaries of a faithful marriage between one man and one  
8 woman.

9 Ordained ministers, called by this congregation, whether married or single, are expected to  
10 uphold the above stated understanding of marriage in their public ministry as well as in  
11 private life that is biblically informed and consistent with the teachings of this  
congregation.

12 The expectations of this congregation regarding the sexual conduct of its called, ordained  
13 ministers are grounded in the understanding that human sexuality is a gift from God and  
14 that ordained ministers are to live in such a way as to honor this gift. Ordained ministers are  
15 expected to reject sexual promiscuity, the manipulation of others for purposes of sexual  
16 gratification, and all attempts of sexual seduction and sexual harassment, including taking  
17 physical or emotional advantage of others. Single called ordained ministers are expected to  
18 live a chaste life. Married called ordained ministers are expected to live in fidelity to their  
19 spouses, giving expression to sexual intimacy within a marriage relationship that is mutual,  
20 chaste, and faithful. Ordained called ministers who are homosexual in their  
21 self-understanding are expected to abstain from homosexual sexual relationships.

22 Since there is neither basis in Scripture nor tradition for the establishment of an official  
23 ceremony by this church for the blessing, marriage, civil union, or a publicly accountable  
24 same gender relationship, Bethel Lutheran Church declares that this congregation shall not  
25 call a pastor or lay rostered leader who is or intends to be in such a same-gender  
relationship.

27 Bethel Lutheran Church declares that marriages, civil unions, publicly accountable same  
28 gender relationships, or blessings of persons in same gender relationships shall not be  
29 performed in this church building, on the church property, be authorized by this  
30 congregation, performed by any pastor or credentialed person on behalf of Bethel Lutheran  
Church.

Bethel Church Council recommendation passed by written ballot April 13, 2010: Do pass.