


## Feedback encouraged on doctrinal statement

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**B**iblical doctrines and principles do not change. But there are times when those doctrines and principles need to be understood clearly as new situations arise and are addressed by the church. That is certainly true when it comes to what the Bible tells us about the God-given roles of men and women and the nature of their relationship with one another.

Our synod's current doctrinal statement on the roles of men and women is called "Scriptural Principles of Man and Woman Roles." After more than a decade of work and discussion, it was adopted by the 1993 synod convention as a correct explanation of biblical truth and as our synod's formal doctrinal statement on the issue.

Since the adoption of "Scriptural Principles of Man and Woman Roles," our synod's doctrinal position has not changed; the statement still expresses biblical truth. But new questions and issues have arisen regarding the biblical roles of men and women that did not really exist in 1993. Understandably, those questions were not addressed at the time.

For those reasons, the Conference of Presidents determined that it would be beneficial for our synod to consider an updated restatement of the scriptural principles outlined in the 1993 document. After three years of work and study, a proposed draft of that statement is now ready. The new statement is entitled "God's beautiful and balanced design for male and female." The Conference of Presidents encourages you to study and discuss the statement and invites you to provide feedback at [gf.wels.net/response-to-wels-statement](https://gf.wels.net/response-to-wels-statement). 

Serving with you in Christ,  
**WELS President Mark Schroeder**

\* Find "Scriptural Principles of Man and Woman Roles" and "God's beautiful and balanced design for male and female" by finding "Doctrinal Statements" under "About WELS" on [wels.net](https://wels.net)

## Ukrainian music ensemble performs in Germany

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In October, Baroque Plus, a Ukrainian musical group that includes members of the Ukrainian Lutheran Church (ULC), traveled to Germany to present concerts at several Evangelical Lutheran Free Church (ELFK) congregations. These concerts were a thank you for the German church's support to Ukrainian refugees who fled the country to escape the war with Russia. These concerts not only showed the ULC's gratitude for that aid but also offered an opportunity to assimilate the refugees more fully into the German Lutheran churches.

Three sister church bodies—the Ukrainian Lutheran Church, the Evangelical Lutheran Free Church in Germany, and WELS—worked together to plan the trip. Three ELFK congregations hosted the special worship services that included music from Baroque Plus, other German and Ukrainian hymns, gospel readings, devotions, and prayer.


“The services were edifying and beautiful,” says Rev. Roger Neumann, WELS' liaison to the Ukrainian Lutheran Church. “Translators made it possible that three languages were used during the service: Ukrainian, German, and English. Although, for the Lord's Prayer, all three languages were spoken at the same time, which was quite impressive.”

Fellowship times before, during, and after the services provided opportunities for members from the Ukrainian Church and German church to interact. “There was truly a unique bond of fellowship at each church, which flowed from a sense of empathy, Christian love and concern, and the powerful bond of unity that believers have in Christ. Strangers quickly became friends,” says Neumann. “We pray that those who attended the service, Ukrainian and German visitors who have no church home, will come again to learn more about Jesus and what he has done for them and for all people.”

Hanna Bulu, the leader of Baroque Plus and a member at Resurrection, Kiev, Ukraine, appreciated the opportunity to come to Germany. “After traveling thousands of kilometers from our native home, we met good friends in Germany—and also a long-forgotten feeling of peace and quiet. Such concerts are like bridges between churches, between hearts, between children of God, who are one in Christ.”

WELS, the ULC, and the ELFK are all part of the Confessional Evangelical Lutheran Conference (CELC), a group of 34 Lutheran church bodies from around the world committed to the teachings of the Lutheran Church found in the Book of Concord. This fellowship of believers offers support in faith and doctrine.

“This was a blessing, given to us by our Lord, that flows from the unity of believers from around the world who form the CELC,” says Neumann. “The people from Ukraine who were there that week, as well as people from the various church bodies that form the CELC, can better understand that they are never alone.”

Read more thoughts about this trip from ELFK President Rev. Michael Herbst at [wels.net/familyofbelievers](https://wels.net/familyofbelievers). 

## Two bits of good news about the upcoming WELS National Conference on Lutheran Leadership

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First, interest has again been very high. Numbers have well exceeded where we needed to shut down registrations at the 2020 leadership conference due to capacity limits. However, one of the reasons for changing venues for the upcoming leadership conference was the Hilton Chicago allowed us to expand capacity if needed. We have done so.

So, the second bit of good news is that we are pleased to extend the early registration rate through Wed., Nov. 23, or until we reach the Hilton's capacity limit. The WELS National Conference on Lutheran Leadership will be held Jan. 16-18, 2023, at the Hilton Chicago.

To learn more or to register, go to [lutheranleadership.com](https://lutheranleadership.com).