



**For Immediate Release
April 26, 2009**

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PLTS Reaffirms Welcoming Statement

After prayerful contemplation and deliberate consultation with the seminary community, including graduates, friends, students, faculty and staff, the Board of Directors of Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary voted to affirm the following welcoming statement:

Welcome to PLTS, a seminary of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, a faith and learning community dedicated to excellence in theological education for developing leaders for the church in the world. Our beautiful location, dynamic faculty, cutting-edge curriculum, closely-knit community and membership in the Graduate Theological Union, provide a unique setting for engaging issues of Christian faith, discipleship, and the communication of the gospel to a world in need of truly good news.

PLTS is an inclusive community and offers hospitality to all who participate in our programs of study. As disciples of Christ committed to public leadership among God's people in diverse and challenging cultural contexts, we eagerly learn from and welcome one another's diversity, including, but not limited to, theological perspective, race, ethnicity, nationality, gender identity, relationship status, age, physical ability, social and economic status and sexual orientation.

Along with the adoption of this statement, the PLTS Board has voted to seek designation as a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) seminary. In so doing, PLTS would join 23 synods, 360 congregations and 17 other organizations of the ELCA in affiliating with RIC. Reconciling in Christ, a program of Lutherans Concerned / North America (LC/NA), was started in 1984 to recognize Lutheran congregations that welcome gay and lesbian believers. The RIC program does not specifically address questions regarding the ordination or marriage of openly gay, lesbian, bisexual or trans-gendered persons.

PLTS President Phyllis Anderson said, "Joining this program is consistent with our vision statement: 'Led by the light of Christ, PLTS is called to embody the Church's bold and effective engagement with vital issues in an inter-faith and multi-cultural context with a strong Lutheran voice.'"

Gary Andeen, PLTS Board Chair, said, "The PLTS community has been quietly living and learning together faithfully in the midst of the church's disagreements about sexual orientation for a long time. With this decision, PLTS will now be living openly with that faithful disagreement. Please join the seminary in praying that this community's tolerance for one another's opinions will be as sincere and loving in the future as it has been in the past."