

In 2024, King of Kings Lutheran Church, Omaha, held a Baptism Sunday which included both initial baptisms and renewals of baptism.

One of those “Renewals” has generated a good deal of concern, confusion, and offense. Out of respect for pastoral confidentiality, I cannot address personal details or speculation, but the individual involved does not suffer from gender dysphoria, although the confusion is easy given factual history. What this redeemed child of God suffers is a complex condition recognized by the LCMS Commission on Theology and Church Relations as a medical condition in official advice to pastors. My investigation shows it was handled with careful pastoral discernment and consultation. Conversations had taken place, repentance of past sins was present, and there was a clear desire to live under the lordship of Jesus Christ. Nothing in Scripture or our Confessions precluded this person from receiving God’s forgiveness. This is a time for rejoicing in the lost being found! (Matt 18:13)

The pastors and congregation of King of Kings fully affirm, and were faithful to, the LCMS teachings on human sexuality and acted in accordance with those teachings. They have apologized for the confusion and offense this has caused. They will no longer stream situations of unique pastoral care that cause confusion or offense to the larger church.

They have also apologized and received my forgiveness for the confusion and offense caused by their practice of renewal of baptism using water and a form of the baptismal formula. They affirm and teach our LCMS doctrines on Holy Baptism and condemn rebaptism. As they encourage their people to remember their baptism, they will incorporate parts of the Easter Vigil and Remembrance of Baptism from our LSB Agenda. They will not reapply water. Only pastors will administer Holy Baptism in regular settings.

**Rev. Richard Snow, President, Nebraska District LCMS**

I would like to thank President Snow for working alongside of us. We agree with his statement and are grateful to have fraternal and charitable conversations that push our public witness of Jesus to be stronger.

I am sorry for the public confusion our service from January 28, 2024, and subsequent quarterly services caused. We have changed our remembrance of baptism to be more in accord with our Lutheran beliefs and practices.

I ask the Lord’s forgiveness and yours, for the confusion and offense it caused. I would appreciate your prayers.

God bless you and our Synod as we move forward.

**Pastor Zach Zehnder**

I am grateful for the abundant grace from God that applies to all our lives. As a pastor in our synod, I am committed to walking together with all of you in our shared resolve to live by grace alone, faith alone, and scripture alone.

I appreciate the leadership of President Snow along with his wisdom and counsel, especially during a time of confusion that I caused.

As a pastor and on behalf of our church, we affirm the teachings of the LCMS regarding human sexuality and the truth of only two genders, which God has intricately crafted and woven together in the womb—physically, emotionally, and eternally. I sincerely apologize to anyone I offended and led to question our commitment to biblical truths and our confessional standards. I ask for your forgiveness and grace. We have revised many of our procedures and have taken immediate action to correct the errors that contributed to this confusion.

Serving Jesus Together,

**Pastor Greg Griffith**