



Written by [Dave Bohon](#) on March 23, 2018

Seminary President Fired for Past Involvement in Helping People Leave Homosexuality

The newly elected president of Pennsylvania's United Lutheran Seminary, a clergy-training school for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), was fired from her position when it was discovered that she had once worked with a group that helps people who want to leave homosexuality or who suffer from unwanted same-sex attraction.

While the Reverend Theresa Latini insisted that she no longer believes people can "stop being gay," the fact that she had once served an organization that holds that homosexual behavior is wrong and people can leave such a lifestyle was unacceptable to the board of the seminary, which describes itself as an "LGBT-affirming" institution.

The seminary, which has branches in both Philadelphia and Gettysburg, is part of the ELCA, which voted in 2009 both to allow the ordination of actively homosexual clergy and to bless homosexual unions as "marriage."

Carla Christopher, one of the seminary's openly lesbian students, seemed to voice the prevailing attitude at the school when she told Philly.com that the fact Latini renounced the ideas of the group she once worked for is not enough to allow her to remain in her position. "If I'm gay, it's because God made me this way," Christopher was quoted as saying, "and there are things I'm supposed to do, and people I'm supposed to help."

The group for which Latini once worked, [One by One](#), explains on its website that it exists "to educate and equip churches to minister to those who desire freedom from unwanted same-sex attraction, sexual addiction, and the effects of sexual abuse."

As reported by [Inside Higher Education](#), Latini worked for the organization from 1996 to 2002, including serving as its director.

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However, according to a statement from the seminary before it fired her, Latini apologized for her belief that sexual orientation could be changed. "I do not believe that one's orientation can change," she said. "I do not believe that anyone should try to change their sexual orientation."

Nonetheless, Latini could not escape her past stand for biblical morality, and found herself condemned by liberal, biblically compromising student groups. A joint letter from the Lutheran Students of Harvard Divinity School and the Union Theological Seminary insisted that Latini's past belief that people could





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leave homosexuality made her supposed change of heart dubious. “So-called ‘conversion therapy’ is theologically and morally bankrupt,” the sexually (and scripturally) confused students declared in their letter, “incredibly dangerous, and antithetical to the message of Jesus Christ.”

Not surprisingly, the ELCA has been hemorrhaging members for some time, as it has systematically jettisoned biblical Christianity. As reported by Religion News Service, in 2016 the denomination had approximately 3.5 million members, down from 5.2 million members in 1988.

Significantly, in 1991 the denomination gave its blessing to full participation by openly homosexual individuals in ELCA church life, declaring, “Gay and lesbian people, as individuals created by God, are welcome to participate fully in the life of the congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.”



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