

**How should the Church respond to homosexuality?  
Short Answer:**

I want to say thank you to President Kieschnick. I was not sure if the Courier would accept a third party submission and so I requested permission to edit his letter in regards to the Iowa supreme court decision and to submit it under my name. He graciously gave me permission to do so. Here is his full letter. I believe it does an excellent job of presenting our position on homosexual marriage.

*Last Friday, marriage was redefined by seven judges for the entire state of Iowa and for the majority of Iowans because six couples had sued the state and demanded marriage licenses in 2005. The majority of Iowans wholeheartedly supported the 1998 Iowa Defense of Marriage Act, which sought to protect marriage between one man and one woman, yet the court's decision on Friday overturned the ban on same-sex marriage.*

*This case in Iowa could affect other states and how they handle challenges to same-sex marriage, which has been the subject of court cases nationwide. Laws banning same-sex marriage in Massachusetts, Connecticut, and California already have been struck down by their respective state courts.*

*Marriage, as it was instituted by God between male and female, has existed since the beginning of time. Marriage between any beings other than one man and one woman changes the meaning of marriage designed by the Creator for the order of this world.*

*While members of the LCMS respect all people, we believe it is against the will of God and contrary to the moral fiber of our country to redefine marriage. Furthermore, society needs heterosexual marriages between men and women to thrive and succeed, as such unions remain the cornerstone in God's design for the procreation and raising of children.*

*It is not acceptable to experiment with this generation of children by trying to muster up weak alternatives to biological mothers and fathers. We call upon the citizens of this nation to bolster and strengthen the institution of traditional marriage, lest our society spiral uncontrollably into disorder and moral decay.*

*Though this occasion prompts the LCMS, once again, to declare that homosexual behavior is both intrinsically unnatural and sinful (Leviticus 18:22, 20:13; Romans 1:24–27), we also recognize the need to respond to this behavior with the same love and concern we show for all other sins, calling for repentance and offering forgiveness in the Good News of Jesus Christ where there is repentance.*

**Dr. Gerald B. Kieschnick**  
**President**  
**The Lutheran Church—Missouri Synod**

I like this letter for several reasons

1: It emphasizes the importance of marriage, that marriage is not just a private agreement between two people. It impacts and forms all of society.

2: It is not limited to the topic of homosexual behavior alone. He mentions “weak alternatives (plural) to biological mothers and fathers.” I changed this to “the family as God designed” because I felt some might be confused and think he was including adoption among the weak alternatives. However, by using the plural, Dr Kieschnick is including such things as single parenthood (being a single parent myself, I know that is not a good replacement for having both a mom and a dad in the house), divorce, adultery, multiple remarriages, and living together along with homosexual marriage. Homosexual marriage is only one cause of the spiral into chaos.

3: Though it is one of the firmest statements against homosexual behavior I have seen, Dr Kieschnick also calls for respect and forgiveness and avoids name-calling. We must be firm in condemning sin but must show respect nevertheless. It is also imperative that we understand that we are all sinners and homosexual behavior is to be treated no differently than our own sin, with a call to repentance and an offer of real forgiveness,

4: He was careful to use the phrase “homosexual behavior” instead of homosexuality. Today people use “homosexuality” to mean the tendency to experience homosexual temptation. Temptation is not sin. Even Christ experienced temptation. It is the behavior (including, of course, behavior of the mind such as fantasies) that is sin.

However, no letter can fully explain homosexuality or the Church’s response to it so I invite you to read the long answer.