

**Wyoming District Continuing Education School  
November 14-15-16  
Thermopolis, Wyoming**

Our presenter will be pastor Tom Eckstein who has written a book called: "Bearing Their Burden" Speaking the truth in love to people burdened by homosexuality. Pastor Eckstein will be focused on how we (as pastors) can speak the truth in love and help bear the burden of homosexuals in our congregations and communities.

The class will be held at the Days Inn in the State Park at Thermopolis. Our rooms and our meals will be there as well.

The School will begin on Monday, November 14 with registration noon to 12:45 and the first class at 1:00 pm. The School will end on Wednesday, November 16 at noon.

**The cost for the class is:**

\$ 175 for a single room

\$ 150 with two pastors.

\$ 200 with your wife. (She is welcomed in the sessions and eats the meals with us.)

You can register for the class by e-mailing pastor Wiley [kidwiley@hotmail.com](mailto:kidwiley@hotmail.com) or if you have questions.

There will also be registration forms at the District Pastors Conference in Casper.

Pastor Eckstein's book can be purchased on [Amazon.com](http://Amazon.com)

Here is some additional information:

**BIOGRAPHY, ETC**

Tom Eckstein is a pastor at Concordia Lutheran Church in Jamestown, N.D. He has been involved in ministry to people burdened by homosexuality since college. He is the author of the recently published book, Bearing Their Burden. He completed his master of divinity degree at Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, in 1991.

In his book Pastor Eckstein shows how Scripture clearly condemns even consensual, monogamous homosexual behavior and that the biblical prohibitions against homosexual behavior still apply to us today. However, Pastor Eckstein also stresses that homosexual behavior is no worse than any other sin and that those who agree with God's Word that their homosexual behavior is sinful and trust in the forgiveness provided for all sinners through God's Son, Jesus, are holy in God's sight and will receive strength from the Holy Spirit to say "No" to their homosexual desires and "Yes" to God's loving plan for our sexual lives.

### Session 1 : "Scripture, Sexuality and Homosexuality - Part 1"

We will examine Scripture's teaching on marriage, sexuality and homosexuality - with focus on how to respond to pro-gay revisionist exegesis which asserts that the OT and NT texts dealing with homosexuality do not condemn loving, consensual, monogamous homosexual behavior.

### Session 2 : "Scripture, Sexuality and Homosexuality - Part 2"

We will focus on how to respond to pro-gay arguments which assert that even though the OT and NT texts dealing with homosexuality do prohibit even loving, consensual, monogamous homosexual behavior, they do not apply to us today for various reasons.

### Session 3 : "Pastoral Care of Individuals and Families Burdened by Homosexuality"

We will examine various articles of the Augsburg Confession and how they can be used in ministry to those who struggled with same-sex attraction. We will also consider various witnessing and ministry techniques for various people with homosexual desires and behavior.

### ENDORSEMENTS FOR MY BOOK "BEARING THEIR BURDEN"

“Towards the end of the last century North American Lutheran church bodies went through a realignment over disputes over biblical authority and the ordination of women. Now slightly more than a generation later the largest Lutheran body in America and other Protestant denominations are facing disruption over whether homosexuality is an impediment for entering the church’s ministry and over giving the marriage blessing to those in same gendered relationships. In his thoroughly researched and easy to read book, *Bearing Their Burden*, Lutheran pastor Tom Eckstein points out how biblical authority is again being replaced by cultural norms. He looks at the problem from biblical, historical and pastoral perspectives and provides sympathetic guidance for those who are confronting this issue in themselves and their families and congregations. It would be difficult to locate a more useful book on this subject.”

Dr. David P. Scaer, Holder of the David P. Scaer Chair of Systematic and Biblical Theology and Chairman of Systematic Theology at Concordia Theological Seminary, Fort Wayne, Indiana. Dr. Scaer is the author of *James: The Apostle of Faith*; *Sermon on the Mount*; *Christology*; *Baptism*; *Law and Gospel* and *The Means of Grace*.

“With grace and clarity, Tom Eckstein has cleared away the confusion of the pro-gay revisionist arguments to show that the biblical ethic of sex between one man and one woman in the covenant of marriage is in force for every Christian - regardless of whether they are heterosexually or homosexually oriented. This book is not only a great resource to people in The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod, but to anyone who wants to answer the pro-gay arguments in order to speak the truth in love to people with same-sex attractions.”

Rev. Sean Maney, ordained pastor in the Presbyterian Church of America and Director of FirstLight Ministries, St. Louis, Missouri.

“Pastor Eckstein's book is passionate, personal and pastoral. In our day it is certainly provocative as well. The author persuasively engages those who object to the traditional Christian understanding of what Scripture teaches regarding homosexual conduct. At the same time, a ‘care for souls’ permeates the book in a manner which makes the title most appropriate.”

Dr. Mike Middendorf, Professor of Theology at Concordia University, Irvine, California. Dr. Middendorf is the author of *The ‘I’ in the Storm: A Study of Romans 7* and also the upcoming Romans commentary in the Concordia Commentary series.

“Pastor Eckstein is a catechist par excellence. In this Christ-centered gift to the Church, Eckstein demonstrates how he can take the deepest, most complicated topics and teach them in a remarkably simple way. Eckstein has done a masterful job in dismantling secular homosexual arguments, and has done it with Gospel clarity and the use of God-given reason. While Eckstein displays his command of Biblical Hebrew and Greek, at the same time, this book is written with a pastoral heart of compassion, experience, and wisdom. *Bearing Their Burden* is a fine example of intersecting Biblical truths with the faith and life of the reader; which is apologetics at its finest!”

Rev. Dr. James A. Baneck, President of the North Dakota District of The Lutheran Church – Missouri Synod.

“This well-researched book is written in the spirit and tone of the Gospel of Jesus Christ and God’s compassion for sinners. It is sensitive and understanding yet without compromising Scriptural teaching but speaking God’s truth in love. The author places the questions on homosexuality in the context of the central message of the Bible. Every significant passage is carefully considered and the various interpretations are evaluated in the light of the Scriptures. This very informed, helpful, and Scripturally based book is also very practical as it engages real persons who bear this burden. I highly recommend it to pastors and lay persons.”

Dr. Eugene Boe, Professor of Systematic and Historical Theology as well as Academic Dean, Lutheran Brethren Seminary, Fergus Falls, Minnesota. Dr. Boe is also an ordained pastor in The Church of the Lutheran Brethren.

“Pastor Eckstein's book is thoroughly pastoral, evangelical, and biblical. He writes out of genuine care for people who have same-sex attractions. Eckstein's ministry with gays goes back to his college days and, since then, he has carefully listened to the discussion. He does not shy away from tackling difficult biblical texts that are too often misinterpreted. Genesis 19 (Sodom and Gomorrah), Leviticus 18 and 20 (prohibitions against same-sex behavior), and Paul's admonitions (e.g., Romans 1 and 1 Corinthians 6) are thoroughly explained over against those who would twist these texts to make them 'politically correct.' Eckstein is conversant with current theological, psychoanalytical, medical, and ethical issues as they relate to homosexuality. At long last, Lutherans have a resource to turn to when confronted with the gay agenda. I commend this

book to all who lovingly seek to bring hope and healing to people imprisoned in same-sex lifestyles.”

Dr. Reed Lessing, Director of the Graduate School and Associate Professor of Exegetical Theology, Concordia Seminary, St. Louis, Missouri. Dr. Lessing is the author of Amos and Jonah (and the upcoming Isaiah commentary) in the Concordia Commentary series.

“While there are many scholarly books from all points of view on homosexuality, there are few satisfactory treatments of this topic from a pastoral perspective by conservative Lutherans. Bearing Their Burden by Thomas Eckstein fills this gap. It combines personal reminiscences and pastoral concerns with exegetical and theological rigor. Its stance is Biblical and apologetic in its passionate commendation of classical Christian moral teaching on human sexuality and in its careful refutation of the arguments that attempt to deconstruct that teaching. There is much that is wise and helpful in Eckstein’s extensive examination of this burning issue.”

Dr John Kleinig, Emeritus Lecturer at Australian Lutheran College, Adelaide, Australia. Dr. Kleinig is the author of Leviticus in the Concordia Commentary series.