



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Spring 2019

“For if you keep silence at such a time as this,
relief and deliverance will rise for the Jews
from another quarter, but you and your father’s
family will perish. Who knows?
Perhaps you have come to royal dignity
for just such a time as this.”

– Esther 4:14

Dear Friends in Christ,

For such a time. The world has changed and is changing. But what shapes us as Lutherans is being God’s beloved people gathered around word and sacraments. In Christ through the Spirit, God has invited us into a deeply intimate and loving relationship with God and with each other for such a time as this.

This is our time to tell the story of the church we are becoming, a church confident about who we are in Christ and what God is calling us to do. As I have said previously, if God wills that there be a witness to the gospel through the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), no force on earth, not even our own, can stop it.

As we gather in synod assemblies, I invite you to pray for one another and listen for God’s will. Your prayers and discernment will be crucial as the assembly season culminates at the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly in Milwaukee, Aug. 5-10. As part of our legislative business, we will be receiving and considering proposals from your synod assemblies. I hope you will have time and space to talk together, pray together and listen together as you consider resolutions and memorials before you. We need time for discernment.

This church continues to engage in God’s reconciling work through Christ in the world. At the churchwide organization, the ELCA Church Council is overseeing implementation of this church’s strategic plan, Future Directions 2025 ([ELCA.org/future](https://www.elca.org/future)). Through this initiative, we’re cultivating new leaders and revitalizing congregations. Thank you for your faithful commitment.

Thank you also for your generosity to *Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA* ([ELCA.org/campaign](https://www.elca.org/campaign)). Your continued support is an example of all the ways we are church, we are Lutheran, we are church together and we are church for the sake of the world.

God’s blessings to you as you gather as the living body of Christ. May you be guided by the Spirit as you do God’s will for God’s people for such a time.

With gratitude,

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop