



Moments for Mission

Southwestern Washington Synod, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
Spreading the Good News of Jesus Christ by empowering congregations and church leaders to grow in worship, education, outreach, stewardship and other ministries.
 November 2020

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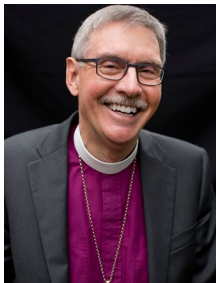
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Blessed are the Peacemakers

by Bishop Richard Jaech, Synod Bishop



Blessed are the peacemakers,
 for they will be called children of God.

Matthew 5:9

I am writing this letter on November 5, two days after the elections. Some election results are known and some are still pending. My purpose in writing is not to mourn or celebrate any of the results. Rather, I would like to think out loud with you

about what God is calling us to do as Lutheran Christians from November 5 onward.

I ask that question because I anticipate that there will continue to be bitter arguments and verbal attacks for weeks and even months after the election, possibly even physical violence. I pray that this will not be so. Yet, I feel that our country is sharply divided and our unity is being tested more than it has ever been since the Civil War.

For that reason, I am certain that Christ is calling us to begin working as peacemakers, in the same way that he called his first followers in the Sermon on the Mount. God envisions us to be a community where all people treat one another with respect and dignity, even in the midst of disagreements and conflicts. Part of our calling, therefore, is to work with Christ to heal broken relationships and restore *shalom*, peace, to our hearts, families and society.

Being a peacemaker does not mean that we become neutral on every issue, giving up or silencing our own viewpoints or political positions. One key part of our calling as Christians is to provide food for the hungry, homes for the homeless, protection for children, and justice for the oppressed, just as Jesus did. Therefore, it is necessary for us to passionately denounce what is wrong in our society and actively work to make things right. At the same time, however, we are also called to be peacemakers. A peacemaker not only cares about achieving a just end, but also cares about the process in which people arrive at that end. Specifically, a peacemaker models, teaches and helps people to work through their conflicts and disagreements in a manner that is respectful of others and to work towards outcomes that are fair, just, and unifying for all.

Continued next page

Luther's re-discovery of the priesthood of all believers! (*See the two books listed *Peacekeepers, continued from page 1*)

As we witness or find ourselves involved in conflicts in the weeks ahead, here are some specific things we can do as peacemakers.

- Model what you want. If you want to be listened to by another person, listen to them first. If you don't want to be verbally attacked or insulted by another person, don't attack or insult others.
- In every conversation, spend 50% of your time (or more) listening to people with whom you disagree, rather than talking at them. When someone says something you disagree with, rather than immediately jumping in with a counter-argument, say, "Please say more about this. I see things differently, so I'd like to understand your thinking and how you came to this conclusion." This will also help them to listen to you.
- If you witness someone being verbally attacked or insulted, go and stand at their side and say to the person being insulted, "This is a really difficult moment. I want you to be respected and safe." Say to the one speaking insults, "My experience is that insults always make things worse. What is it about this matter that makes you feel so strongly?" That gets them out of their reactivity to talk about the issue itself.
- Don't get drawn into bitter or insulting exchanges on social media. Don't try to address or resolve conflicts by email. It is so easy for us to misinterpret the meaning or tone of what someone has typed out to us when we are conflicted about something. Use emails for exchanging information about dates and activities, but the minute that some tension or disagreement appears, say to the other person, "Let's talk about this on the phone (or in person, or on Zoom.)"
- Reach out to a local mosque, synagogue, or Historic Black congregation to get acquainted and offer support. No matter who wins the election, violence and verbal attacks against non-Christians and people of color are going to increase in the months ahead. Peacemakers give special care to those who are at highest risk and make sure that they have a voice at the table.
- Hopefully this will not happen, but think through what you will do if a person comes to your church openly carrying weapons. Acquaint yourself with what the local laws are about openly bearing arms in public places. Introduce yourself to your local police department, both to establish a good relationship and learn from them about relevant ordinances and what to do in such situations.
- Being a peacemaker is both satisfying and stressful, both deepening and exhausting. Therefore, don't try to do all this on your own. Find others in your congregation who will support one another as a peace team. Learn and get support from community

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Peacemakers, continued from page 2

organizations such as Braver Angels who are active as peacemakers, helping people in the United States to address conflicts and restore our unity as a nation. (See www.braverangels.org)

Martin Luther called upon government leaders to govern fairly and called upon citizens to work together to build communities where every person receives the respect, support, and care that God wants for them. Today, the Spirit of Christ is stirring and calling us to break out of our constant, heated divisions and learn again to talk, deliberate, and live together in a way that is fair for all.

Jesus once said, “Here is a simple rule of thumb for behavior: Ask yourself what you want people to do for you; then grab the initiative and do it for *them*! If you only love the lovable, do you expect a pat on the back?... I tell you, love your enemies. Help and give without expecting a return. You’ll never—I promise—regret it. Live out this God-created identity the way our Father lives toward us, generously and graciously, even when we’re at our worst. Our Father is kind; you be kind.” *Luke 6: 31, 35-36 from The Message Bible*

Christ not only frees and teaches us how to live, but also empowers us through the Holy Spirit to live in a new way. May Christ give a double measure of that Spirit to our nation in this crucial time. May we open ourselves to the Spirit, so that we work courageously as peacemakers.

In Christ,

Bishop Rick Jaech

A.C.T. NOW!

TO END RACISM

awaken • confront • transform

2021 VIRTUAL BISHOP'S CONVOCATION ON ZOOM

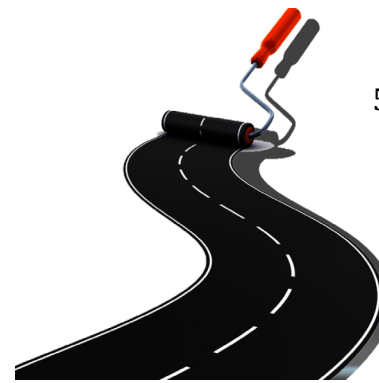
Tuesday, January 19- Wednesday, January 20, 2021

On January 19th and 20th, 2020, The Southwestern Washington Synod rostered ministers will gather virtually for the Bishop's Convocation where we will learn about and commit to do our part to eradicate the entrenched sin of racism that grips the United States and the ELCA and paralyzes our ability to see every human being as equal.

It's past time to get to work.

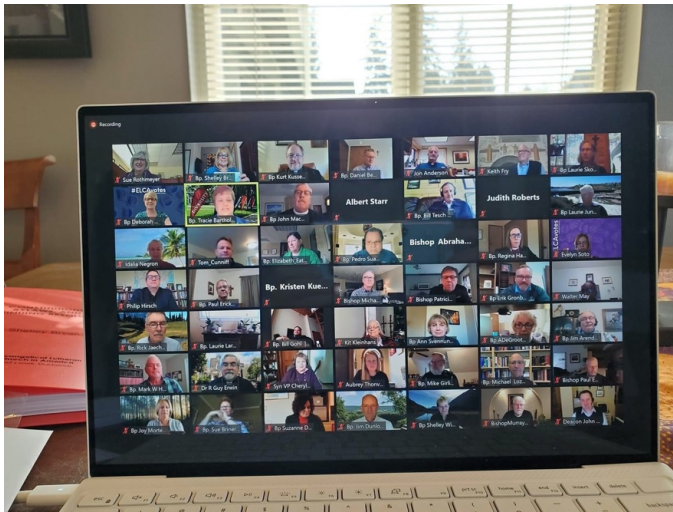
We will challenge ourselves, our congregations and communities to join in truth-telling, leading to actions that right the wrongs, and, with God's grace, bring healing and wholeness to all people, peace to the ELCA and unity to the nation. We will A.C.T.: awaken, confront and transform.

Registration will open this month.



On the Road with the Bishop

With the rest of the Synod Staff, I am working from my home and from the Synod Office, with limited road trips. However, my work schedule and the schedule of all the Synod Staff members has been very full each week, with lots of Zoom visits and meetings. Here is a sampling of my activities around the Synod in October:



October 1-2
Attending a virtual meeting of the ELCA Conference of Bishops from all 65 synods.



October 4 Blessing and installing the ALYVE Board in a Sunday service at Peninsula Lutheran Church in Gig Harbor, where Pastor Chuck Slocum serves. ALYVE stands for Associated Lutheran Youth in Various Endeavors, which promotes and supports youth ministry in our synod.

Congregations in Transition - November 2020

*Lord, we pray for your wisdom, insight, and peace for these congregations the the leaders in our synod who are working through a time of pastoral transition. We give you thanks for each and every one.
Amen.*

Congregations	Position	Status	Pastoral Care
Bethel, Brush Prairie	P	TR	Pastor Vera McEwan
Christ, Federal Way	P	TR	Marietta Nelson-Bittle SAM
Grace, Port Townsend	P	TR	Pr. Alan Berg
Lutheran Church of Christ the King, Tacoma	P	TR	Pulpit supply
The Lutheran Church of The Good Shepherd, Olympia	P	NV	Pastor Linda Smith
Mountain View, Edgewood	P	TR	Pr Mike Greenwalt, Pr Kim Latterell
Ocean Park, Ocean Park	P	TR	Louise Buckles, SAM
Prince of Peace, Forks	P	TR	Pastor Mike Hanson
Zion, Camas	P	TR	Assoc Pr. Susan Dollinger

Mobility position key
P – Pastor
AP – Associate Pastor
D- Deacon

Mobility status key:
NV – New Vacancy
TR – Transition
I – Interviewing
C – Calling
SAM- Synodically Authorized Minister

God's Care for Human Society

By ELCA Presiding Bishop, Elizabeth Eaton

“God’s care for human society calls us to rise again each day ... to appreciate — and do — the work of self-government.” (From the ELCA social message “Government and Civic Engagement in the United States,” p. 18)

Throughout our church, many are experiencing heightened anxiety around the 2020 election. I confess that I feel it, too. Elections often raise tensions, but this season more than half of Americans say they are stressed over the future of our nation. We are beset by negative ads, targeted by misinformation campaigns and worried by reports of foreign interference. We are seeing unprecedented numbers voting early and many concerned for safety on Election Day. There are concerns about voter suppression and voter fraud, the near-certainty of delayed results and fear of election-related unrest or violence. We experience all of this under the weight of a pandemic, in a year that has been filled with many crises, especially the ongoing scourge of racism and white supremacy. *Continued next page*



Human Society, continued from page 6

But as an American, I am hopeful. Commitment to the common good is embedded in the ideals expressed in our nation's founding documents. These have assisted our country to transcend its bleakest moments, and I trust they will help us to do so now. We remain committed to fair and equitable voting as a bedrock for democracy. Respectful vigorous debate is part of the foundation and strength of our nation and an important step in our pilgrimage toward the horizon of "a more perfect union."

As a member of Christ's church, I am hopeful. We are stewards of public life for the common good. "The ELCA holds to the biblical idea that God calls God's people to be active citizens and to ensure that everyone benefits from the good of government" ("Government and Civic Engagement," p. 14). Aware of the urgent need for a "public life worthy of the name," the 2013 ELCA social policy resolution "Voting Rights to All Citizens" acknowledges that many people of color and other minority groups face barriers to their right to vote. Our church has long held that it is our responsibility to act to ensure the right to vote without intimidation or interference. Our public leadership as disciples of Jesus Christ matters at this important time. Our civic engagement is not motivated by politics or partisanship. It is a call to genuine service of the neighbor in need. It recognizes that we can disagree about political means yet become ambassadors of hope, healing, reconciliation and justice.

As I stated in this recent video, it is imperative that we allow the election process to take place and ensure that every voice be heard and every vote counted. Our church is speaking up on the importance of free and fair elections. There are many ways we can all be involved responsibly in stewarding the gift of government, including as poll workers and election monitors, by feeding those waiting in long lines, by disseminating accurate information about voting, by sharing our appreciation with all those who serve to uphold our rights and responsibilities, by promoting patience so that every vote is counted, by planning ahead to address tensions and promote nonviolence, and through our fervent prayers.

Let us pray together for our nation: O God, where hearts are fearful and constricted, grant courage and hope. Where anxiety is infectious and widening, grant peace and reassurance. Where distrust twists our thinking, grant healing and illumination. Help us in these days to elect trustworthy leaders, participate in wise decisions for our common life and serve our neighbors. Bless those we elect, that our nation may grow toward peace among ourselves and be a blessing to other nations of the earth; through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord.

Amen.

In Christ,

Elizabeth A. Eaton

Presiding Bishop Evangelical Lutheran Church in America *A monthly message from the presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Her email address is: bishop@elca.org*

Conversations on Race

Free and open online to the public. Special Guest speakers each month.

With LeaderWise, a counseling and consulting ministry in MN that we use for candidacy psychological evaluations.

2-hour Conversations

(4:00 to 6:00 pm Central; 2-4pm PT)

December 7

To register and more info: <https://leaderwise.org/conversations-on-race#53c99022-6594-4840-bcf3-dffc91b9baae>

When Trust Is Broken: A Response to Allegations against Musician David Haas

Posted on November 2, 2020 by ELCA Worship

Musician David Haas has been accused of sexual misconduct by several women spanning many years. Although Haas is not a member of an ELCA congregation, *Evangelical Lutheran Worship* includes four hymns by him: “Blest Are They” (ELW 728), “Now We Remain” (ELW 500), “We Are Called” (ELW 720), and “You Are Mine” (ELW 581). Several institutions have requested congregations to no longer sing works by Haas pending an investigation. Those who plan worship in the ELCA are strongly encouraged to discontinue use of these hymns and other compositions in worship. Both the ELCA and 1517 Media / Augsburg Fortress have taken steps to discontinue suggesting hymns by Haas in worship planning resources for this church and to amend existing resources currently available online. The ELCA and 1517 Media have no plans to include his works in future resources and publications. The ELCA and 1517 Media do not tolerate sexual misconduct or abuse.

This church believes that God’s intention, revealed through the Scriptures, is for all of creation to flourish (*Faith, Sexism, and Justice*, 14). As the ELCA Social Message on “[Gender-based Violence](#)” declares, “God calls us to love. Gender-based violence is not love.... Simply stated, gender-based violence in all its forms is a sinful rebellion against the triune God and a rejection of God’s good work in this world” (6). All forms of violence interfere with God’s beloved creatures flourishing. And when people abuse power and authority to break trust, they must be held accountable (“[Gender-based Violence](#),” 1-3, 6-7). This is particularly important when the people with power and authority serve in the church (*Human Sexuality*, 35).

Although this particular circumstance does not directly involve the ELCA, we as a church know we participate in the sin of gender-based violence. Through our own teaching documents, we have declared, (*continued next page*)

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As a church of Jesus Christ, we deplore this suffering and we confess our collective and individual complicities in this violence in both church and society. The complex factors that contribute to the prevalence of this sin are deeply woven into society and into individual lives. As a member of Christ's body, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) shares in the brokenness and judgment brought on by gender-based violence. This church's members are survivors, perpetrators and bystanders. (["Gender-based Violence,"](#) 2-3).

As you plan music for worship in your context, we encourage decisions that uphold God's call to love the neighbor, especially those who have been harmed by gender-based violence. The ELCA resource, [Principles for Worship](#), states that "assembly song forms memory and nurtures faith" and that "planning for worship calls for careful attention to the people's memory" (Principle M-5; Application M-5C). When we become aware of songs that have positive associations for some are associated with painful memories and deep trauma for others, our concern for any who have been traumatized must be the church's first priority. As noted in a recent document by the Mennonite church,

For survivors, singing a song of a known abuser can cause the traumatic harm of sexual violence to viscerally rush in. This is especially true when the abuser is alive or recently deceased. When people directly injured by the abuser's violence experience a song as inseparable from its source, communities of faith cannot claim to make such a separation without doing harm to survivors.

[Show Strength: How to Respond When Worship Materials Are Implicated in Abuse.](#)

The same document outlines specific steps in a survivor-centered response and provides suggestions for how to address this issue in your community. While certainly challenging, we cannot shy away from these difficult conversations and turn from our responsibility to show solidarity with those who are abused.

As a church, the ELCA continues to learn, to act, and to trust God's promise of presence, forgiveness, and guidance. As church together, we are always being made new to serve the neighbor in love, to end gender-based violence. To spread the word about this love for neighbor, join the World Council of Churches in Christ [#ThursdaysinBlack](#), a global ecumenical campaign to prevent and end gender-based violence.

Anyone with knowledge of sexual misconduct or abuse in the ELCA should report it to their synod or to [ELCA Safe Place](#). If the misconduct or abuse relates to children, it should be reported immediately to law enforcement.

Additional Resources

- Report from [Into Account](#)
- [Gender-based Violence](#), ELCA Social Message adopted by Church Council in 2015
- [Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action](#), ELCA Social Statement adopted by the 2019 Churchwide Assembly
- [Human Sexuality: Gift and Trust](#), ELCA Social Statement adopted by the 2009 Churchwide Assembly

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- Justice for Women [resources on gender-based violence](#)
- [#ThursdaysinBlack](#), a global ecumenical campaign to prevent and end gender-based violence.
- [Research conducted at the 45th Anniversary of the Ordination of Women](#) includes rates of sexual and gender-based harassment and violence. A report on rates in this 50th anniversary year is forthcoming.
- [ELCA Principles for Worship](#)
- [ELCA Safe Place](#) to report misconduct
- Lutheran World Federation [2017 Assembly resolution](#) for every member church to work within their church to address gender-based violence
- [Show Strength: How to Respond When Worship Materials Are Implicated in Abuse](#), This resource from the Mennonite church offers a survivor-centered perspective on how individuals and communities of faith can respond when it is discovered that beloved songs and prayers were written by a person who has perpetrated sexual violence.

ELCA Blogs <https://blogs.elca.org/>

The ELCA has blogs on many topics that can be accessed [here](#)

- Administration Matters
- AMMPARO
- Blog Latino
- Congregational Vitality
- Ecumenical and Inter-Religious Perspectives
- ELCA Advocacy
- ELCA Innovation Lab
- ELCA Racial Justice
- ELCA World Hunger
- ELCA Young Adults
- ELCA Youth Gathering
- Faith Lens
- Lutheran Disaster Response
- Peace Not Walls
- Worship

Digital Discipleship & Evangelism- a Four-Part Workshop

The pandemic has disrupted ministry and the way we do things. Due to the changing face of ministry at this time, the Synod Outreach Board is providing a free four-part series on *"Digital Discipleship & Evangelism"* led by Jamie Domm, a digital strategist, in lieu of the Imagine Project. The Outreach Board is inviting all Imagine congregations and is also extending the invitation to the wider synod. Congregations are invited to send teams of 2-3 people to each workshop. Each person must register separately. The information will be different at each session and the video recordings and handouts will be available only to those that registered.

The workshop series will be offered from 7:00-8:30pm on 4 Wednesdays, November 11th & 18th; December 2nd & 9th. Each workshop will be held on a synod hosted Zoom platform and include presentation and question/discussion time.

To register for the series, please go to:

<http://events.constantcontact.com/register/event?llr=magpslfab&oeidk=a07e97q4pb73323b5>

Digital Discipleship & Evangelism Model

This four-part series on *Digital Discipleship & Evangelism* starts by developing a model for using technology effectively in the digital world. This series outlines the basics of content creation, curation, and strategy, then digs deep into how to build community in the digital space and practical tips for community care and engagement. You'll learn how digital tools and the Church body can be leveraged as an outreach vehicle for souls through organic growth techniques and social media advertising. Finally, you'll discover how to grow digital disciples, and engage in digital door knocking.

This comprehensive presentation is packed with practical "how-to" nuts and bolts that will help you establish or grow your digital ministry. The book, *Digital Discipleship & Evangelism*, on which this presentation series is based, seeks to act as a catalyst for a cultural shift toward prioritizing technology in the Church at all levels, by which ministry can be revolutionized using innovative technology to reach the world.

To learn more about Jamie, find her bio here: <https://www.jdim.digital/about>

A PLU CHRISTMAS 2020

The annual Christmas Concerts have been an integral part of our holiday season at PLU. Over the past many months, we have been following national and international research and guidelines regarding the COVID-19 virus and its impact on our programs. Concern for the safety and care of our entire community has resulted in some very difficult decisions regarding our programs and public events.

To that end, I regretfully announce that we will not be able to hold our traditional Christmas Concerts this December. Public events of this magnitude are not yet being allowed in Washington, and we do not anticipate that changing in the next few weeks.

In this year of change, our annual Christmas celebration will become *PLU's 12 Gifts of Christmas* and will feature short artistic vignettes distributed on consecutive days in December. These gifts will be shared [via email](#) and social media, and posted on our [Christmas Concert website](#). These will include new musical works recorded this fall, performances from recent Christmas Concerts, and personal reflections from our students and faculty.

These are our gifts to the PLU community—an opportunity to continue the PLU Christmas tradition within the constraints of a worldwide pandemic.

To receive **PLU's 12 Gifts of Christmas** via email, please [sign up here](#).

In these unprecedented times, our artistic disciplines have the power to heal the soul, illuminate the human condition, and provide a crucial vehicle for healing. We remain together in community and spirit this year—perhaps as in no other year before.

Thank you sincerely for your understanding and support.



Cameron Bennett, Dean
School of Arts and Communication

P.S. Please remember to [sign up](#) to receive a daily email with *PLU's 12 Gifts of Christmas!*

Congregation News

A music video, *Wayfaring Stranger* Acapella by Richelle Heacock was recorded at our **Elbe Historic Church in Elbe, WA**. The acoustics are lovely! https://youtu.be/VGScNr0_qEk The church is located at 54206 Mountain Hwy E on the way up to Mount Rainier.

In a wonderful Zoom meeting that Bishop Jaech had about **Advent and Christmas resources and programming with 9 of our Youth and Family Ministry ministers** this week, we heard of some wonderful and creative Advent, Christmas and Epiphany resources and programming in our congregations. If you have something your congregation is doing, please email the Synod Office at swwsynod@plu.edu about it and we'll put it on our website to share (lutheranssw.org). Things we heard so far: drive-in Advent/Christmas bag distribution and blessings (bags include devotional for youth and the family, sensory materials, hot cocoa mix and a candy cane), special treat, Christmas Eve candle and wreath kit), Nativity Station, Illustrated Ministry and Sanctified Art has many good resources, including an online Christmas pageant, Christmas Caroling online, online dramatic reading of a Christmas book (with copyright permission of course), Congregational Advent devotions and art submissions, Pajama Vespers online, Recipe exchange, Cookie Baking Session with high schoolers, warm socks and hat drive Advent Music playlists for youth.

We have 4 new candidacy applicants in the last two days- a women applying for Word and Sacrament Ministry. They come from 3 different congregations or ministry sites. One is from **Jubilee Collective in Vancouver, our latest Mission Development out of Messiah Lutheran Church in Vancouver**; Two are from **Christ Lutheran Church in Federal Way**, and the last is from **Mountain View Lutheran Church in Edgewood**. Thank you to these congregations for helping your members discern their call to rostered ministry! //