



# Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

## LEAD MESSAGE

We are the church that shares a living, daring confidence in God's grace. For us as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, this faith comes through the good news of Jesus Christ and gives us the freedom and the courage to wonder, discover and boldly participate in what God is up to in the world. Liberated by our faith, we embrace you as a whole person — questions, complexities and all.

## ELEVATOR SPEECH

As members of the ELCA, we believe that we are freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor. With our hands, we do God's work of restoring and reconciling communities in Jesus Christ's name throughout the world.

## VALUE STATEMENTS

**We are a church that belongs to Christ. There is a place for you here.** We believe God calls each of us by name. Christ's church is not ours to control, nor is it our job to sort, divide, categorize or exclude. Whenever we feel compelled to "draw the line" in our lives, we must acknowledge as Lutherans that Jesus always stands on both sides of that line.

**We are a church whose unity is in Jesus Christ, who gathers us around word and water, wine and bread.** Because we are grounded in God's love and forgiveness, we are equipped to live and serve here and now, in the world, with all its complexities, tensions and ambiguities. We have the courage to explore the world as saints and sinners, knowing we will never take God somewhere God has not already been.

**We are a church that believes Jesus is God's "Yes" to us.** Our lives can be a "Yes" to others. The "Yes" of Jesus Christ compels and empowers us to be open and accessible within any community, within any context.

**We are a church that believes God is calling us into the world — together.** We don't have to do it alone, and we don't have to do everything. Each of us has a unique story, and we are part of a larger story that makes up the ELCA. We work through our congregations, synods and partners, and the churchwide organization. Together, we achieve things on a scale and scope that we could never do otherwise.

**We are a church that rolls up our sleeves and gets to work.** We do God's work in the world — restoring and reconciling communities. We pursue justice and seek peace no matter how long the journey or wide the chasm.

**We are a church that is a catalyst, convener and bridge builder.** Our faith calls us to see the world as interdependent. The ELCA has become a force for connection, working across denominations, faiths, organizations and sectors, locally and globally. We're a welcome partner because we respect the perspectives and strengths of others and share a common vision to uphold human dignity.

**We are a church that is energized by lively engagement in our faith and life.** "Our faith is a living, busy, active, mighty thing," said Martin Luther. We continually strive for a deeper understanding of what the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ means for the world. Doing so puts us right where God wants us to be: in the thick of life.

**We are a church that is deeply rooted — and always being made new.** Our roots are in Scripture, tradition and the Lutheran Confessions, as well as in the vibrant communities and rich histories of our congregations. These roots are an ongoing source of nourishment; they enable us to be a church guided by the Holy Spirit that is both resilient and always being reformed.