



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

ELCA presiding bishop calls on church to observe national day of mourning

CHICAGO (May 29, 2020) — The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, presiding bishop of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), has called on the church to join with faith communities across the United States in lament and remembrance, and on our elected leaders to observe Monday, June 1, as a day of mourning to honor the more than 100,000 people who have died from COVID-19.

“I encourage all of us in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to join together across faith lines in this time of collective mourning,” Eaton said. “This weekend our Jewish neighbors will remember God’s covenant, our Muslim neighbors will recall the reception of the Quran, and as Christians we will celebrate the power of the Holy Spirit present among us. In the significance of these days in our traditions, our faith communities will collectively lament and remember the more than 100,000 lives that have been lost to COVID-19. We join together in prayer for the healing of this nation, and for the world that God so loves.”

The day of mourning calls on all religious communities to come together in observing this historic moment in their own traditions and practices. A [toolkit](#) and other resources are available for local religious leaders and mayors.

“We are united – as individuals, as communities and as a nation – in our grief,” said Kathryn M. Lohre, assistant to the presiding bishop and executive for ELCA ecumenical and inter-religious relations. “The interfaith community has recognized this and claimed this moment as a time to come together as the Christian family and with our neighbors of other religions and worldviews, to mourn the tragic loss of over 100,000 lives. The faith communities also call upon our elected leaders to designate June 1 as a national day of prayer and remembrance, as a time set aside for national mourning.”

Federal and local governments are also being called on to observe the day of prayer and remembrance by the lowering of flags, moments of silence and other methods of reflection.

In contemplation of the gravity of the COVID-19 situation during the season of Pentecost, Eaton, along with the Most Rev. Michael B. Curry, presiding bishop of the Episcopal Church, invite members to pray for and with one another through a new prayer, “[A Prayer for the Power of the Spirit Among the People of God.](#)”

This new prayer for Pentecost was crafted by a team of Lutheran and Episcopal prayer leaders in light of the COVID-19 pandemic. It will connect the two church bodies in

common prayer and remind members of the common mission, wherever and however we may be gathered.

The ELCA and the Episcopal Church are approaching the 20th anniversary of their full communion agreement, "[Called to Common Mission](#)."

<https://www.elca.org/News-and-Events/8040>

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About the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

The ELCA is one of the largest Christian denominations in the United States, with nearly 3.5 million members in more than 9,100 worshipping communities across the 50 states and in the Caribbean region. Known as the church of "God's work. Our hands.," the ELCA emphasizes the saving grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ, unity among Christians and service in the world. The ELCA's roots are in the writings of the German church reformer Martin Luther.

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