

The Challenges

For many of us, the encounter with Scripture is limited to the excerpts that are read on Sunday morning. Many of us—and many of our neighbors—are biblically illiterate, unsure of how to engage Scripture. Many of us are unaware of the rich Lutheran insights that have been helpful in understanding the many ways that God engages us through the Bible. The challenge of Book of Faith is to address these realities directly and to experience more fully the power of the Word.

The Goals

Individual members, congregations, synods, agencies, institutions and the churchwide organization will:

- Learn together about Lutheran approaches to Scripture which have been so helpful over the centuries
- Enter fully into a conversation which is deep and broad, reaching across all ages and the many cultures that inform who are as a people of God and...
- Experience more fully the power of the Word.

The Objectives

- 100% of ELCA synods commit to the Initiative by signing on as Book of Faith Synods
- 75% of ELCA congregations commit to the Initiative by signing on as Book of Faith congregations
- 15,000 people trained with enhanced skills for teaching the Bible
- 10,000 lay leaders trained (an average of 3 sessions with 50 participants per synod)
- 5,000 rostered leaders trained (an average of 75 per synod)
- Strong participation by ELCA agencies, institutions and networks
- A healthy and thriving social networking site

The Background

The 2005 North Carolina Synod Assembly endorsed a memorial from the Philadelphia Evangelical Lutheran Church in Dallas, NC asking that the ELCA encourage the development of an “ongoing effort to address issues surrounding the authority of Scripture.” Read the memorial. This memorial inspired the ELCA Church Council to present a resolution to the 2007 Churchwide Assembly that called upon:

“members, congregations, synods, church-wide ministries, and institutions and agencies of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to engage in a five-year collaborative initiative with the goal of raising to a new level this church's individual and collective engagement with the Bible and its teaching, yielding greater biblical fluency and a more profound appreciation of Lutheran principles and approaches for the use of Scripture.”

In response, the ELCA launched the Book of Faith Initiative, a five-year collaborative effort which began in 2008 and leads up to the ELCA's 25th anniversary in 2012. [Used by permission from the [North Carolina Synod website](#)].