



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Future Directions



Telling the story
of the church
we are becoming:

confident about who we are
in Christ and what God
is calling us to do.

Our
Shared
Purpose

Together in Jesus Christ we
are freed by grace to live
faithfully, witness boldly and
serve joyfully.

Our
Vision

A world experiencing the
difference God's grace and
love in Christ makes for all
people and creation.



Acts 1:8, 1 Peter 2:9-10, Matthew 28:16-20, Romans 1:16

GOAL

A thriving church spreading the gospel and deepening faith for all people.

AREAS FOR ACTION:

- Church identity
- Church leaders
- Renewal and formation of congregations and worship communities
- Ecumenical dialogues and relationships
- Renew and strengthen evangelism



Philippians 2:4-11, 1 Corinthians 12:4-7,
Romans 6:3-4, Mark 10:13-16

GOAL

**A church equipping people
for their baptismal vocations
in the world and this church.**

AREAS FOR ACTION:

- Baptismal vocation
- Youth and young adults in mission
- Faith formation and practice



*Christians live not in themselves, but in Christ and in their neighbor.
Otherwise they are not Christians. They live in Christ
through faith, in their neighbor through love.*

Martin Luther, "The Freedom of a Christian"
(Luther's Works, vol. 31, p. 371)



1 Corinthians 12, Ephesians 2:14-20,
Acts 10, Galatians 3:26-28

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GOAL

An inviting and welcoming church that reflects and embraces the diversity of our communities and the gifts and opportunities that diversity brings.

AREAS FOR ACTION:

- An outwardly focused church
- Church leadership profile
- Theological and cultural competence of leaders
- Addressing discrimination and oppression

We are CHURCH

We are LUTHERAN

We are CHURCH TOGETHER

We are CHURCH FOR THE SAKE OF THE WORLD

We Are



2 Corinthians 5:14-21, John 13:12-15, Isaiah 58:1-11

GOAL

A visible church deeply committed to working ecumenically and with other people of faith for justice, peace and reconciliation in communities and around the world.

AREAS FOR ACTION:

- Poverty and hunger
- Response to disasters and humanitarian crises
- Lift up the work of ELCA-related social ministries
- Advocacy and action on economic justice, racial justice, gender justice and climate justice



5 GOAL

1 Corinthians 4:1-2, 2 Corinthians 4:1-2,
Micah 6:8, 2 Corinthians 9

A well-governed, connected and sustainable church.

AREAS FOR ACTION:

- Leadership in governance
- Resources for mission
- Communication
- Church structures



Jesus said, "The harvest is plentiful, but the laborers are few; therefore ask the Lord of the harvest to send out laborers into his harvest." Luke 10:2

Leadership

The future of this church relies on the leaders of tomorrow – and it takes all of us to identify, encourage and equip those being called to ministry, in all of its forms, including leadership for our mission in the world.

The harvest is, indeed, plentiful. We need more laborers, lay and rostered, to provide the ministry and leadership that will, by grace and in the power of the Spirit, assist the church in moving forward faithfully and energetically into God's unfolding future.

We share in the responsibility to:

Pray for and empower potential leaders in our midst

Promote the various forms and varieties of services that our church has to offer – from serving as a pastor, to serving overseas

Support our leaders with our actions, words and financial resources

www.elca.org/leaders



Congregational Vitality

As the ELCA looks ahead to the future, we aspire to have congregations whose faith shines in their relationships with God, each other and their community. Vital congregations experience heightened worship, prayer, study of scripture, and sharing of testimony as they discern the presence and will of God in their midst.

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You are the light of the world. A city built on a hill cannot be hid. No one after lighting a lamp puts it under the bushel basket, but on the lampstand, and it gives light to all in the house. In the same way, let your light shine before others, so that they may see your good works and give glory to your Father in heaven.

Matthew 5:14-16.

Vital congregations do these three things:

1 STRENGTHEN THEIR RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD

- a. *Leadership articulates how God shows up in and through the congregation and its people*
- b. *The congregation has a clear understanding of God's larger mission and members know their purpose in this time and place*
- c. *The congregation can articulate that purpose and create a plan for implementation*

2 NURTURES RELATIONSHIPS

- a. *Relationships among leadership, pastor(s) and staff, and members create a loving community with good communication*
- b. *People work together respectfully through successes and challenges*
- c. *There is a sense of ownership and belonging that drives the commitment and engagement in the mission of the church*

3 A STRONG PRESENCE IN THE COMMUNITY

- a. *The congregation opens its doors to welcome the stranger and goes beyond its doors to share the love of Jesus Christ*
- b. *Creates and nurtures partnerships within the community to make a positive impact on the strength of the community*

Our Values

Our values are grounded in faith, in our biblical and Lutheran confessional sources and our love of God and neighbor. They speak to the way this church lives and practices our faith, and they will guide how we journey forward in Christ as church together.

Forgiveness and reconciliation

Dignity, compassion and justice

Inclusion and diversity

Courage and openness to change

Faithful stewardship of God's creation and gifts

Our Ministries

Worship,
word &
sacraments

Faith
formation &
discipleship

Leadership
development

Children,
youth &
young adults

Human
suffering
& injustice



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