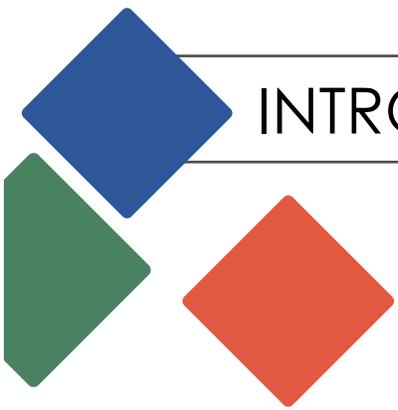


“God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday Toolkit



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

SEPTEMBER
2019 8



INTRODUCTION

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

WHAT IS “GOD’S WORK. OUR HANDS.” SUNDAY?

“God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday is an opportunity to celebrate who we are as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) – one church, freed in Christ to love and serve our neighbor. This is our way of life.

The date for **2019** is **Sunday, Sept. 8**. Mark your congregation’s calendar today! If your congregation cannot participate on Sept. 8, please consider another time that works best.

Whether your congregation lends their hands to stock shelves at the local food pantry, clean community parks and gardens, write thank-you notes to military members and emergency responders or work on advocacy-related projects, your service activities offer an opportunity for us to explore one of our most basic convictions as Lutherans: *All of life in Jesus Christ – every act of service, in every daily calling, in every corner of life – flows freely from a living, daring confidence in God’s grace.*

Since 2013, thousands of ELCA congregations have participated in this dedicated day of service, gathering to serve communities in ways that share the love of God with all of God’s people. The event has quickly become an anticipated way to be “church together” and “church for the sake of the world.”

Whether it’s 30,000 young people doing community volunteer work at the ELCA Youth Gathering, the passionate volunteers of the ELCA homeless ministry network or the devoted members of our congregations who fight for peace and justice in their communities every day, we are a church that boldly does God’s work of restoring and reconciling our communities. **This is work you do every day** – showing love to your neighbors and helping make your community a better place.

Although the designated day of service is targeted for a Sunday in September, many congregations participate in designated service work several times a year – some even monthly.

“GOD’S WORK. OUR HANDS.” SUNDAY — WE ARE CHURCH

As Ephesians 2:8-10 reminds us, we are what God has made us – people whom God has created by grace to live in union with Jesus Christ and has prepared to live faithful, fruitful lives by the power of the Holy Spirit. In Jesus Christ, God has reconciled us to God and to each other. As we gather around word and sacraments, this life in Christ is what defines, shapes and guides us as a community of faith, the church. By God’s grace we can and do live confidently and generously in this community of faith and in service of others.

ELCA vital congregations work to strengthen their relationship with God, nurture relationships with each other and create a strong presence with their community. **“God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday** is one way for congregations to discover ways to build on each of these connections.

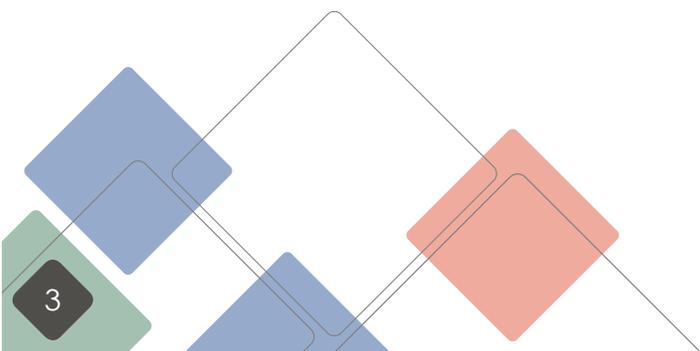
While service opportunities are endless, ELCA members and congregations are invited to research opportunities for service that make sense for their congregation and its service capacity. The idea is to deepen a congregation’s and the members’ experience in their communities and offer a way for congregations to play a critical part in addressing community needs.

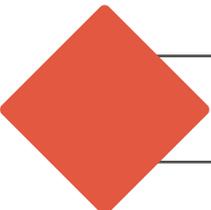
As you begin to explore service opportunities, consider partnering with other congregations in your region or synod. These partnerships may help broaden the scope of your service project and provide ways to nurture synodical connections beyond your congregation.

We are church for the sake of the world, and the ELCA is committed to fostering unity among all God’s children. One way to live out this commitment is to develop ecumenical and inter-religious relationships in your community. **“God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday** offers a unique opportunity to cultivate these relationships. Inviting other churches and religious groups to join in the day of service in your community can provide a first step toward discovering more activities to do together throughout the year.

The partnerships you develop with other congregations, your synod and your inter-religious neighbors can deepen your relationship with God, with others in your congregation and with your community.

The service day should not be seen as “replacing worship.” You are encouraged to host your service event after worship, or you and your congregation can arrange for a brief worship service at the site you’re serving and welcome others to worship with you. Consider partnering with other ELCA congregations in your area! The possibilities are endless.





I. ORGANIZE

As an ELCA congregation, you no doubt already have valuable connections in your community and experiences with service to your neighbors. Perhaps you already have an annual clothing drive or you host a community meal. Or maybe your congregation has a quilting ministry that makes warm blankets for those experiencing homelessness or partners with a Lutheran social service organization in the community or state. Has your congregation collaborated with another congregation or participated in inter-religious activities within the community?

Whatever the case may be, before you begin to plan your event consider what gifts and tools your congregation already has and what relationships have already been cultivated.

TO START

Bring together those people in the congregation who can help make your dedicated day of service happen. Does your congregation have a:

- youth group?
- worship team?
- health team or parish nurse?
- small-group fellowship and group leaders?
- social ministry, hunger and justice team members?
- a Women of the ELCA or men's group?

Brainstorm about what works best for your congregation. What kinds of outreach, evangelism or mission work do these groups already do? What ecumenical or inter-religious partnerships already exist for your congregation? One idea would be to pass out 3x5 cards to the congregation and invite members to write down organizations, agencies or ministries in which they have a connection. This helps leaders identify those organizations and agencies that welcome volunteers.

HOW TO USE THIS TOOLKIT

Use this toolkit to help you plan "**God's work. Our hands.**" Sunday.

Each section contains checklists, examples and discussion questions to help you use your congregation's gifts, talents and ministries to spend Sept. 8 working together in the way that makes the most sense for you. Sections include:

I. ORGANIZE

II. PLAN

III. SUCCESS STORIES

IV. SERVE

V. CELEBRATE!

This designated day of service is an extension of the important ministry your congregation already does. Use this toolkit to find your own take on "**God's work. Our hands.**" Sunday, get creative about serving your neighbors, and celebrate what we have accomplished and will continue to do together.

What started as a one-day event has expanded throughout the church year with members dressed in their yellow "God's work. Our hands." T-shirts helping their neighbors and serving those in need.

Is your congregation large enough that each group should have a separate project? And, if so, how many projects would be appropriate?

Also, consider the abilities of your members. What kinds of service projects are inclusive? Consider service opportunities that take into consideration people of different ages and abilities. Your congregation can also support ELCA ministries with financial gifts and consider contributing to *Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA* at ELCA.org/campaign. The possibilities are endless.

Order **“God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday** T-shirts and other items from Old Lutheran! You can personalize your T-shirts with the name of your congregation. Shirts are available in Spanish and Arabic (in addition to English). Visit <https://oldlutheran.com/collections/elca> or email customerservice@oldlutheran.com or call toll free (U.S. only) at 877-653-5884.

Invite the children of your congregation to get involved. A Sunday school class can reach out to other children in the community or other congregations in other cities. Encourage a class to start a “pen pal” relationship with another Sunday school class in a different location and share what they love about their respective congregations and communities.

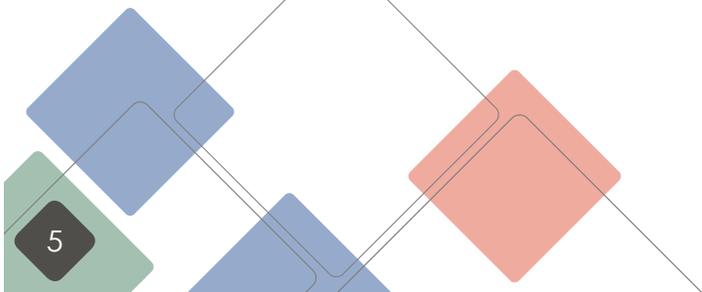
- Designate leaders who will plan and organize your service project.
- Communicate about the day of service with the congregation. Additional resources to help promote your day are available at ELCA.org/dayofservice.
- Document your day with pictures on Instagram, tweets and Facebook posts and video.
- Reach out to other ELCA congregations in your area. Can you partner with them?

IDEAS THAT WORKED

For the second year in a row, Immanuel Lutheran Church in Killeen, Texas, chose Friends in Crisis homeless shelter as their project.

Several weeks before the day of service, the congregation started collecting items from the center’s wish list. The center had three major needs – detergent, bleach and deodorant. As the donations began piling up, a member of the congregation made regular deliveries to the shelter. Immanuel’s Women of the ELCA group also assisted with the purchase of additional donations.

On the designated day of service, 47 volunteers wearing yellow “God’s work. Our hands.” T-shirts were commissioned during the morning worship service. At the shelter volunteers assisted with daily house maintenance including sweeping, mopping, cleaning bathrooms and laundering bed linens to make up the shelter’s 80 beds.



Immanuel's confirmation class and youth group were busy too, assisting in assembling hygiene bags that are given out to first-time clients at the shelter. The youth also assembled single-load detergent bags for clients to do their own personal laundry at the center.

The volunteers brought homemade desserts from members of the congregation to share at the center.

Reflecting on the day of service, Immanuel's fellowship director, Phyllis Sawyer, said, "We've been serving the community now for 129 years – and I believe we are doing God's work here in Killeen, Texas."

INTER-RELIGIOUS PARTNERSHIPS

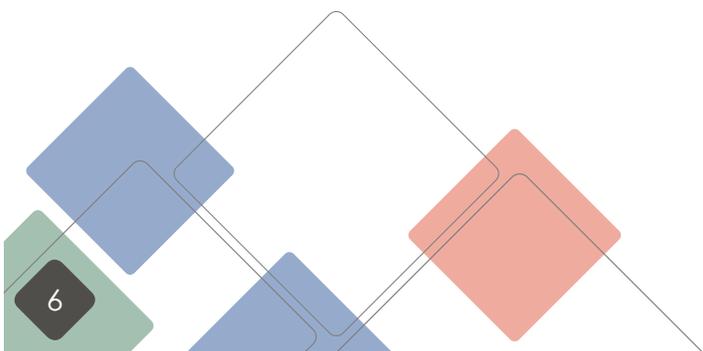
On Sept. 11, 2016, members of Holy Trinity Lutheran Church in Mercer Island, Wash., spent that Sunday afternoon with their Muslim and Jewish neighbors, cooking and serving a meal for more than 50 people experiencing homelessness who were living in a tent city on the grounds of Temple B'nai Torah in Bellevue. The tent cities move every 60 to 90 days and usually find a home on the grounds of a local church.

"We recognize when we are together in an interfaith event that we hold more in common than we do in differences," said Deanna Wildermuth, a pastor of Holy Trinity. "And especially in events like this – the prepping, sharing and eating of food unites us because it's common, even if we are cooking meals that aren't familiar to us."

For Kathy Fisher, the congregation's director of intergenerational ministry programs, "**God's work. Our hands.**" Sunday is not just a day. "It's something we are doing every day," she said. "We are representing who we are no matter where we go, whether we are Jewish, Lutheran or Muslim. The God that we worship expects us to take care of each other and to be around our fellow man and to help out."

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What service projects has your congregation done in the past? What worked? What didn't? Why?
2. What gifts and talents do you have in your congregation that could be used to serve your community?
3. What kind of partnerships do you already have with other congregations and organizations in your community? Could any of these partnerships be built into your dedicated day of service?



INCLUDE ADVOCACY IN YOUR DAY OF SERVICE

In recognition of our Lutheran commitment to both charity and justice, consider adding advocacy action to your day of service. There are many effective ways to be an advocate, and the ELCA is ready to support your efforts.

Advocacy is a way for us to serve our neighbor. Through advocacy ministry, we can stand up for policies that create opportunities to end hunger, overcome poverty, promote peace and dignity, and preserve God's creation in systemic, long-lasting ways.

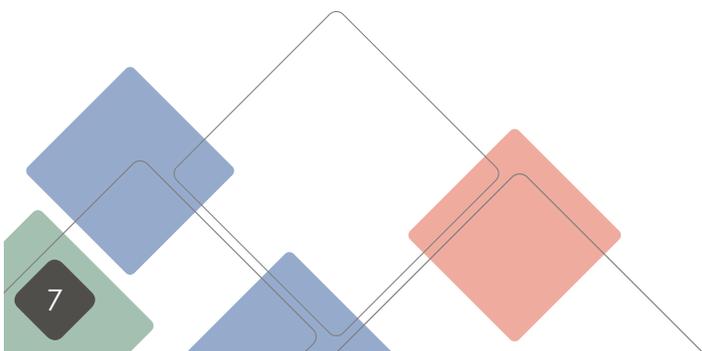
While clearing debris from a stream, reflect on the safety of our water supply. While preparing healthy food for a meal program, reflect on food access. While affixing emergency phone numbers to bars of hotel soap, reflect on the misery of human trafficking. While gathering coats for a transplanted family's first midwestern winter, reflect on migration stories.

"Adding our voices to the ELCA's **'God's work. Our hands.'** Sunday challenged us to take seriously our role as advocates for justice within and beyond our community," said the Rev. Stephen Herr, pastor of Christ Lutheran Church in the Lower Susquehanna Synod. "With our hands, we helped those in need in the Gettysburg area. With our voices of advocacy, we extended that service to a wider world in need of God's good news and justice."

PLANNING ADVOCACY ACTION

1. Determine the advocacy action(s) you will take on your **"God's Work. Our Hands." Sunday** by reflecting on issues that are important or relevant to your community, that are related to a service activity selected by the congregation, and/or that the ELCA Advocacy team is preparing to **focus** on in 2019.
2. Connect with a Lutheran advocacy office for state public policy, if your area has one, to help guide your planned efforts:

California:	Lutheran Office of Public Policy, lutheranpublicpolicyca.org
Colorado:	Lutheran Advocacy Ministry, lam-co.org
Delaware-based:	Delaware-Maryland Synod, demdsynod.org
Florida:	Florida Council of Churches, floridachurches.org
Kansas:	Kansas Interfaith Action, kansasinterfaithaction.org
Minnesota:	Lutheran Advocacy, lutheranadvocacymn.org
Ohio:	Hunger Network Ohio, hungernetohio.com

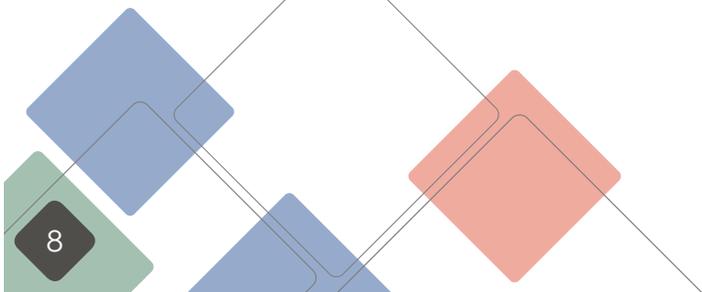


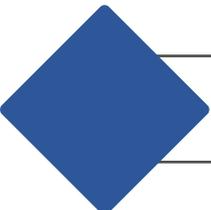
New Jersey:	Lutheran Episcopal Advocacy Ministries of New Jersey leamnj.org
New Mexico:	Lutheran Advocacy Ministry, lutheranadvocacynm.org
North Carolina:	North Carolina Synod State Advocacy Public Policy Network nclutheran.org
Pennsylvania:	Lutheran Advocacy Pennsylvania, lutheranadvocacypa.org
Southeastern Synod:	Southeastern Synod Advocacy, southeasternsynodadvocacy.com
Texas:	Texas Impact, texasimpact.org
Virginia:	Virginia Interfaith Center for Public Policy virginiainterfaithcenter.org
Washington:	Faith Action Network, fanwa.org
Wisconsin:	Lutheran Office for Public Policy in Wisconsin, loppw.org

3. Reach out to the ELCA Advocacy office in D.C. at washingtonoffice@elca.org to help you think about how you might conduct advocacy with a national scope around an issue you identify.

“It’s nice to offer options on **“God’s Work. Our Hands.” Sunday**, including the godly work of advocacy,” shared a participant. “Last year, at First Lutheran in Decorah, Iowa, we planned and set up a table amid all the other **“God’s Work. Our Hands.”** activities during the education hour. A number of people wrote letters on Sunday morning, some by hand and some using a form from ELCA Advocacy on a computer. Others took home information sheets so they could contact their members of Congress later.”

4. Craft your action with the help of ELCA Advocacy resources. Find suggestions for writing a letter to the editor, holding an in-district meeting with your member of Congress, working with the media and other tips at <https://elca.org/resources/advocacy#Toolkit>.
5. Utilize a template at <https://www.elca.org/Resources/GWOH-Sunday> to help you take action on an issue influencing our communities with increasing intensity: **disaster response impacted by climate change**. Bring your faith-based voice into our nation’s conversation and policy decisions on this important issue.
6. Invite local lawmakers to your activity. In this moment, and in the future, the invitation establishes awareness of your presence as faith-centered community partners.
7. Take lots of pictures and tell your congregation’s **“God’s work. Our hands” Sunday** story! Share on social media, using the hashtags **#ELCAadvocacy** and **#GodsWorkOurHands** to help us connect.





II. PLAN

WHERE DO WE START?

Now that you've spent some time organizing the leaders in your congregation, how do you decide what kind of service project you should do?

We are a visible church. Being a visible church expresses what the church has collectively said is important for our future.

"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."

(Goal 4, ELCA Future Directions 2025)

How can your congregation become more visible in your community? What are the needs in your community and neighborhood that your congregation can address? Who would be most helped by your service?

BEGIN BY LISTENING TO YOUR COMMUNITY

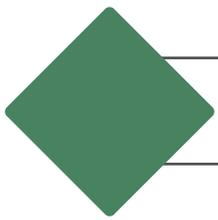
Meet with organizations, congregations and social service providers with whom you already work. Let them know you're dedicating a day to serve and that you want to provide an opportunity for your congregation to give of their time.

For example: In 2018, volunteers from Good Shepherd Lutheran Church in Somerville, New Jersey, joined together in service to help three social service organizations. Volunteers of all ages assembled tie blankets for a women's resource center that meets the needs of abused women and children. They also filled backpacks with food for children in the county who may not have enough to eat on weekends. The volunteers also participated in a statewide program call Stamp Out Despair, by writing cards and filling folders with stationary that were delivered to detained immigrants to help them communicate with family members in their home countries.

Perhaps there are organizations in your community with whom you could partner for **"God's work. Our hands." Sunday**, where your entire congregation could make a more substantial impact than a few volunteers typically would.

Or maybe you can use **"God's work. Our hands." Sunday** to build some new relationships in your community. Are there any projects you've dreamed about doing but haven't found the time? Consider how activities could be broadened or done throughout the year.

Still looking for an idea? Here are some success stories of the work ELCA congregations and members across the country have done that have truly made a difference in the lives of their communities.



III. SUCCESS STORIES

DISCOVERING CONNECTIONS

Reflecting on the dedicated day of service, Elayne Werges, diaconal minister for Cross Roads Lutheran Parish, a four-congregation cooperative in the ELCA Northeastern Iowa Synod, said, “The impact of ‘**God’s work. Our hands.**’ Sunday on Cross Roads Lutheran Parish has been to remind us that we are connected to a community outside of the four walls of the church building.” She emphasized that the day of service “reminds us as the priesthood of believers that our call is to serve God and God’s people, especially those on the fringes, the hungry and the lost.”

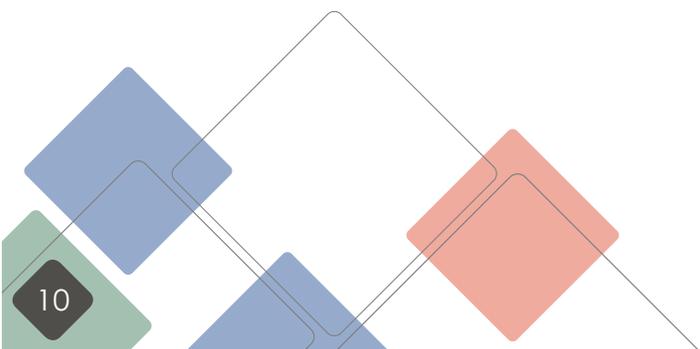
GOD’S WORK, OUR HANDS FROM 4 YEARS TO 94 YEARS.

Alyssa Weaver, a member of Peace Lutheran Church in Tomah, Wisc., describes the 2018 day of service.

“Peace Lutheran has been participating in *God’s Work. Our Hands.* every fall and spring since the fall of 2015 as a way to help our local community and remember that we are called to be God’s hands and feet in this world for our neighbors. We had approximately 60 members participate in projects – from some of our youngest members (4 years old) to our oldest member in her mid-90s.

“There were projects for everyone, including helping the local school district clear a trail through the woods at one of the elementary schools, stocking shelves at the local food pantry, assembling 105 “birthday bags” for the food pantry, completing yard work for those in need and cutting quilt squares for Lutheran World Relief quilts.

“We ended our day with a potluck and fellowship together at the church that included our traditional and ‘famous to us’ Flip-Flop Chicken. We had a wonderful day growing with Christ, serving and loving as we were created in the image of God to do. Strengthened in God’s grace, Peace Lutheran Church looks forward to continuing to serve as God’s hands in this world throughout the year.”



SERVING OUR NEIGHBORS, SHARING OUR LIVES

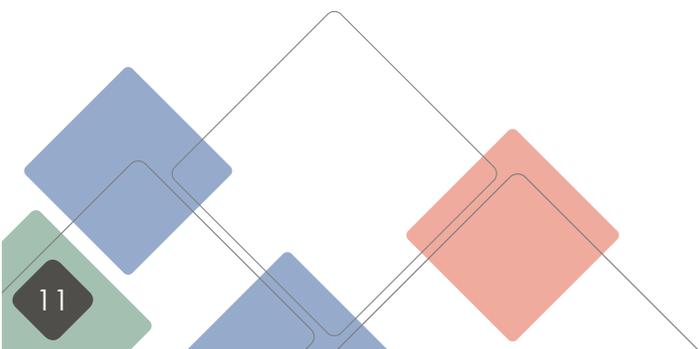
In 2018 more than 61 households from New Life Lutheran Church in Bolingbrook, Ill., participated in **“God’s Work Our Hands.” Sunday**. Volunteers donated items and helped with a variety of projects throughout the weekend. Almost 500 items were donated for birthday kits and goodie baskets for the community. In addition:

- Fifteen families will receive a birthday kit from the food pantry to help celebrate a birthday in a fun and special way.
- Thirty baskets were delivered to the police station and each of the five fire stations. The baskets were filled with items to show appreciation for those who serve and protect the community.
- More than 2,400 cans of vegetables were packed for shipping at the Northern Illinois Food Bank, which helps supply food pantries in Northern Illinois.
- More than \$160 was raised by the car wash to benefit the DuPage Township Food Pantry.
- Three large bags of trash were collected from the Knights of Columbus park, which helped create a cleaner, healthier and more enjoyable space in the community.
- Three neighborhood homes had their overgrown yards mowed, weeds removed, bushes trimmed, and kitchen cabinets installed. These neighbors, who were unable to handle these projects due to health or finances, were grateful and relieved to have them completed.

AS YOU PLAN YOUR DAY OF SERVICE, ASK YOURSELF:

1. Do the service projects we’re planning include everyone? How can children take part? Older adults? People with disabilities?
2. Are the gifts and talents of the congregation represented?

Get creative with the project you plan. How can you use the musicians, artists, quilters, chefs, teachers and other members of your congregation to both make an impact and bring everyone together?



FURTHER THOUGHT

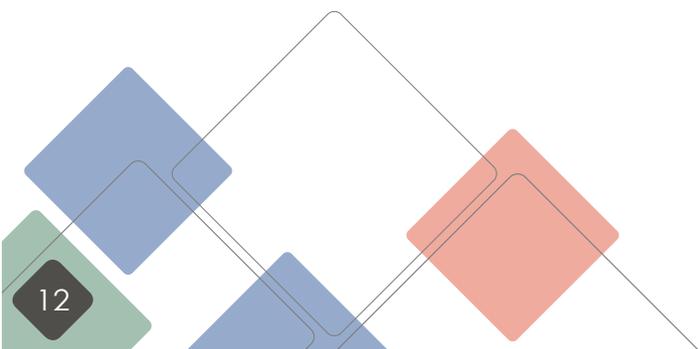
You know what is most needed in your community, so whatever projects you choose are sure to have an impact.

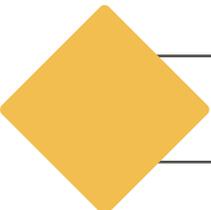
Be sure to remind one another about what this day is all about. Consider beginning your service with a prayer or blessing. A worship resource designed for “**God’s work. Our hands.**” Sunday is available at [ELCA.org/dayofservice](https://www.elca.org/dayofservice).

You’ll also want to think about the safety of your congregation. Many nonprofit organizations have volunteers sign a waiver before allowing them to take part in projects. Consider having your own waiver on hand for volunteers.

QUESTIONS FOR DISCUSSION

1. What kind of impact would you like to be able to make on your community on “**God’s work. Our hands.**” Sunday?
2. What kind of impact would you like “**God’s work. Our hands.**” Sunday to have on your congregation?
3. What needs have you seen in your community that you’d like to see met on “**God’s work. Our hands.**” Sunday?
4. What will you do to be sure that your entire congregation has an opportunity to take part?





IV. SERVE

You've organized your congregation, planned a service project in your community and created a checklist of activities.

Now it's time to get the word out to the media about your congregation's efforts and participation in **"God's work. Our hands." Sunday**. This media outreach includes both traditional outlets, (newspaper, radio, television), social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram), and other media tools your congregation uses.

Other tools are available to help you get the word out to your community, inviting neighbors to participate in your day of service activities. Door hangers, posters, and postcards are available at <https://www.elca.org/Resources/GWOH-Sunday>.

STEP ONE: GEAR UP

Designate someone in your congregation to be the media contact. This person will communicate specifics of the service project with the local media, send updated news releases and make follow-up calls to media. This person will also help prepare two to three members or congregation staff for interviews.

The goal is to generate media interest in **"God's work. Our hands." Sunday** and your congregation's community service as part of a larger service project across the country involving thousands of ELCA members all engaged in doing God's work with our hands.

We hope this media outreach will result in stories either before the project or on the day of service.

"God's work. Our hands." Sunday is an opportunity for your congregation to communicate your message about your congregation's evangelical mission and witness in the community. How are your members making a difference in the world?

STEP TWO: PREP

Use a news release (template offered on page 15) to share your congregation's plan with your local media. Plan to distribute your news release about two weeks before your congregation's day of service.

What makes a good story? Elements to consider:

Interviews – Choose two or three people in your congregation who will take part in “**God’s work. Our hands.**” **Sunday** – it would be great to have members of different age groups, as well as someone from the congregation’s staff.

Prepare these people to speak about your event by answering the following questions:

Who: Who are you? Who from your organization is participating?

What: What is this event about? What is the anticipated impact in your community?

Where: Provide information on where service activities are taking place.

When: Sept. 8, 2019 (or another date that your congregation has identified)

Most importantly WHY?: Why is this event important for your congregation?

It’s important that the people you pick be well-versed in your congregation’s mission and our denomination as a whole: 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 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.

If your service project is happening at a location such as a shelter or food pantry, some recipients may be reluctant to speak to the media, so you may want to offer interviews with a volunteer or person connected to the organization. Make sure to arrange this in advance with the organization’s spokesperson so he or she is prepared to speak to the media.

Visuals – Strong visuals can help the media decide to cover your event. Does your activity entail good visuals? If so, be sure to include good descriptions of what your members are planning for “**God’s work. Our hands.**” **Sunday.**

If your day of service is at a specific service location, what will be happening? Will there be members of your community receiving goods or food? Will your church community be engaged with them? What is the activity?

Details – The more details you provide, the better your chances of garnering media interest in your story. Provide numbers: How many people do you anticipate will join in the day of service? Who will be affected by your congregation’s service?

TEMPLATE NEWS RELEASE

ELCA congregations work to improve communities

[Insert your city, state abbreviation] (ELCA) – [Insert your congregation’s name, city and state] is one of nearly 9,100 congregations of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) participating in **“God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday**, Sept. 8. Across the country, thousands of ELCA members will be engaging in service work to make a positive change in their communities, build and deepen relationships, and share God’s love.

Members of [insert your congregation’s name] are [describe your service projects and share your location of service work if beyond your church building, the names of organizations and agencies that you are partnering with, and other details that share what you’re doing that is making a positive impact in your community].

For more than 30 years, the ELCA has been a church deeply rooted in faith and in sharing its passion for making positive changes in the world. [Insert your congregation’s name] joins with other ELCA congregations across the country to boldly participate in God’s work in the world – restoring and reconciling communities, and pursuing peace and justice.

“[Insert a quote or two from your members describing why the dedicated day of service is so important. Why are members excited about their participation?],” said [insert first and last name], a member of [insert your congregation’s name].

More information about the ELCA is available at ELCA.org.

About the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

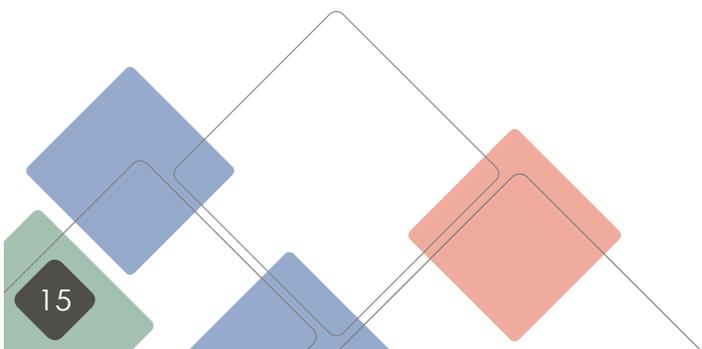
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For information contact:

[Insert name]

[Insert phone number and/or email where media can reach you]

[Insert your congregation’s website]



STEP THREE: CONTACTING MEDIA, PITCHING YOUR STORY

Initial media contact should begin in August. Although you may not have all the specifics of your event, you will have general information about **“God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday**. You can use a shortened version of the news release template for this initial media outreach. Most media will love the idea that your congregation will participate in an event that has such a wide outreach.

By the end of August, you should have more concrete details about your event, so begin more intense media pitching.

Email the news release and make follow-up phone calls to each news desk to make sure it received your release and has included the event on its planning calendar.

Weekends tend to be slower in terms of news, so weekend news producers and editors look for interesting features for their papers and programs. Pitch the event to desk editors, reporters, producers – the more people in the newsroom who are aware of the story, the better.

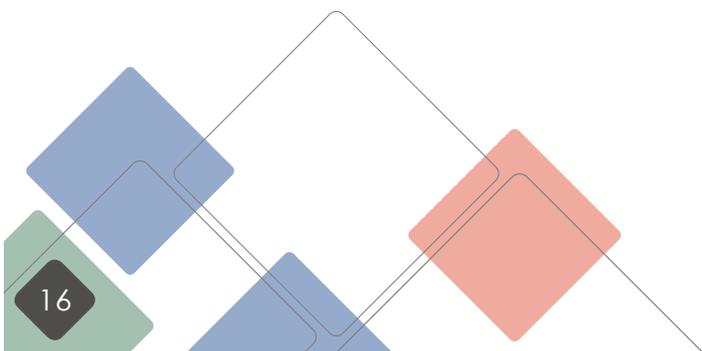
For broadcast media, email your press release to the assignment-desk planning editor and the assignment desk. The planning editor will make sure the event is included in the main calendar of possible stories. Follow-up phone calls should be directed to the planning editor until a couple of days before the event; then, begin to contact the assignment desk to determine whether your activity is being considered.

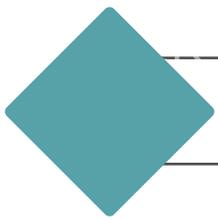
Show producers decide which stories to air during their particular newscast, so be sure to also contact the morning and evening news producers, to give your event a better chance of being covered.

Update the release as often as your plans develop and share this new information with the media.

Social media – Post **“God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday** event information as soon as you have a plan. Engage the community in your plans by asking for thoughts and suggestions as you develop the event. If you plan to partner with a service organization or community group, make sure you discuss social media plans so you can share information about the upcoming service project and also share follow-up stories.

Update your pages as often as possible – you may want to ask some of the youth in your congregation to take on the social media updates.





V. CELEBRATE

Plan a post-event activity!

Bring together your congregation and other groups that participated in **“God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday** to share in a gathering or meal.

Ask participants to share:

- photos,
- videos, and
- personal stories from the day (What touched you about your service? Did you walk in someone else’s shoes today?).

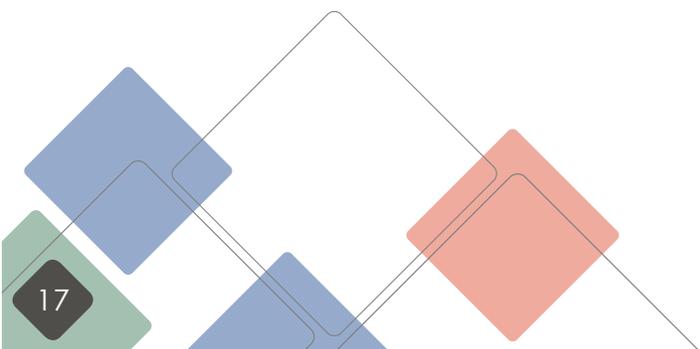
Post these photos, videos and stories on your Facebook page and Twitter and Instagram accounts throughout the following weeks.

The ELCA churchwide organization would like to hear about your experiences. Please share with us your stories, your photos and the impact of your work. Send these to livinglutheran@elca.org. When you send your stories and images, they may be shared on ELCA.org, in resource materials for the dedicated day of service and on ELCA’s social media platforms (Facebook, Twitter, Instagram). Share and tag ELCA by using the hashtag #GodsWorkOurHands.

Please indicate if you do not want your stories and images to be used.

Thank you for using this toolkit! **“God’s work. Our hands.” Sunday** is an opportunity to celebrate who we are as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America – one church, freed in Christ to serve and love our neighbor.

GO IN PEACE. SERVE THE LORD!



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