



Nov. 2016

For leaders of ELCA congregations and synods

ELCA.org

**ELCA Youth Gathering announces 2018 theme**

The theme for the 2018 ELCA Youth Gathering is "This Changes Everything," and the primary Scripture will be Ephesians 2:8: "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and this is not your own doing; it is the gift of God." The new logo is a visual representation of the theme and the experience of the Gathering, and the cross at the center is the focus – it is God's grace, through Christ's life, death and resurrection, that changes everything for all people.

[Learn more.](#)**Living Lutheran cover story explores global migration**

Lutherans worldwide, through ELCA members and partners such as Lutheran Immigration and Refugee Service and The Lutheran World Federation, have made welcoming and caring for migrants and refugees a priority. Living Lutheran's November cover story, "Seeing Jesus in the face of the other," explores some of the root causes leading to the increase in global migration and how the church is addressing these issues.

[Read more.](#)**Advent devotion resources**

Nov. 27 is the first Sunday in Advent. A variety of resources are available for you and your congregation as we wait in abundant hope for the birth of Jesus. Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton wrote one devotion in a [four-part series with other ecumenical leaders](#). In addition to Eaton, devotions were contributed by Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry, The Episcopal Church; Archbishop Fred Hiltz, the Anglican Church of Canada; and National Bishop Susan C. Johnson, the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada.

ELCA World Hunger offers an Advent study with a focus on responding to hunger and poverty throughout the world. This study is available in both [English](#) and [Spanish](#). Finally, there is a devotional that focuses on living out your [baptismal calling during Advent](#) and Christmas that focuses on the [five gifts of discipleship](#).

We hope and pray that you'll have a blessed Advent, enriched by thoughtful reflection through these devotions.

**WATCH THIS**["God's work. Our hands." Sunday highlight reel](#)**MARK YOUR CALENDAR****DEC 1**YAGM APPLICATION OPENS  
Young Adults in Global Mission  
[LEARN MORE](#)**NOW THRU JAN 15**ART AND THE REFORMATION  
Minnesota Institute of Art  
[LEARN MORE](#)**AUG 7**ROSTERED MINISTERS GATHERING  
Save the date  
[LEARN MORE](#)**SEPT 10**"GOD'S WORK, OUR HANDS." SUNDAY  
Save the date**FEATURED RESOURCES****Advent Calendar**

Celebrate the anticipation and wonder of the birth of Christ with this ELCA Good Gifts Advent calendar.

[ORDER](#)**Stewards of God's Love**

Themed activities and best practices for a year-round guide to stewardship in your congregation.

[DOWNLOAD](#)**1K Churches Initiative**

A study designed for congregations to reflect on and create a more just, local economy.

[DOWNLOAD](#)[MORE RESOURCES](#)**BULLETIN BLURBS**[These snippets are available for you to copy and paste into your bulletins.](#)**Lutheran-Catholic commemoration of the Reformation**

Pope Francis and Bishop Munib Younan, president of The Lutheran World Federation, led a service of common prayer during the Lutheran-Catholic commemoration of the Reformation in Lund, Sweden, on Oct. 31. Watch the [full recording](#) of this vibrant and historic worship service.

**16 days of activism**

From Nov. 25 to Dec. 10, the United Nations is sponsoring 16 Days of Activism to raise awareness and action to end gender-based violence. The ELCA has several resources to aid your participation. You can read the [social message](#) and its [foundational document](#) on gender-based violence at ELCA.org/Faith and click on "Social Messages" under "Faith and Society." You can also view a [video](#) to see how ELCA member and shelter founder Antonia Clemente uses the social message in her work.

**Colleges and university Christmas services**

ELCA colleges and universities across the country will soon be hosting Christmas vespers, festivals and services. There's no better start to the Advent season than returning to your favorite carols, readings, chapels and schools. [Find a listing](#) of participating institutions and service times – including information on how you can tune into a few of your favorite services from afar.

**IRA rollover giving**

If you are age 70½ or older, you can give up to \$100,000 to the ELCA each year from your individual retirement account free from federal income tax. If you have not taken your required minimum distribution for the year, a charitable rollover can help satisfy that requirement. Talk to your tax professional, then call the ELCA at 800-638-3522 to be connected with your ELCA regional gift planner. Learn more at [ELCA.org/foundation](#).

**Finish the ELCA World Hunger annual theme year strong with ELCA Good Gifts!**

Save the date! Tuesday, Nov. 29, is #GivingTuesday, a day dedicated to giving back during the commercial holiday season. This year, as we complete the campaign's annual theme year for ELCA World Hunger, we are encouraging congregations and individuals to get involved with [ELCA Good Gifts](#). Watch for a special e-blast and social media posts on #GivingTuesday and be ready to encourage friends, family and congregation members to give toward a just world where all are fed.

Want to create your own #GivingTuesday campaign for ELCA Good Gifts? Resources are available on the [#GivingTuesday website](#). Congregational resources for ELCA Good Gifts are available [here](#).

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