

# Suicide Prevention



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

One of the most commonly read social documents of the ELCA is its message on suicide prevention. This message can be [downloaded](#) at the ELCA site.

*Suicide testifies to life's tragic brokenness. We believe that life is God's good and precious gift to us, and yet life for us ourselves and others sometimes appears to be hell, a torment without hope. When we would prefer to ignore, reject, or shy away from those who despair of life, we need to recall what we have heard: God's boundless love in Jesus Christ will leave no one alone and abandoned. We who lean on God's love to live are called to "bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ" (Galatians 6:2). Our efforts to prevent suicide grow out of our obligation to protect and promote life, our hope in God amid suffering and adversity, and our love for our troubled neighbor.*

-from Suicide Prevention

**Elsie and Jerry Weyrauch** members of the Lutheran Church of the Resurrection in Marietta, Georgia for over 25 years, have devoted their lives to suicide prevention since their daughter's death. The website for the suicide prevention ministry they founded is available at [lutheransuicidepreventionministry.org](http://lutheransuicidepreventionministry.org)

This is a good place to go for congregations seeking to initiate suicide prevention programs, and for more information.

The goals and objectives of the Lutheran Suicide Prevention Ministry are to:

- a. Increase suicide prevention awareness within Lutheran churches/faith-based communities in order to reduce stigma and shame.
- b. Educate congregations and church leaders on appropriate actions to take to prevent suicide and to recover from a suicide death.
- c. Make suicide prevention and recovery important ongoing efforts of congregations with an emphasis on local faith-based communities,

- church leaders, support groups and educational and advocacy programs.
- d. Give voice to those who have lost family members or loved ones to suicide, as well as those who have acted on suicidal ideation.
  - e. Build suicide prevention collaboration among Lutheran, full communion partners, and other faith-based communities.
  - f. Create an ELCA Suicide Prevention Endowment Fund that will support future Lutheran Suicide Prevention work.

Available at <http://www.luthersuicidepreventionministry.org>