

Evangelical Lutheran Church of Durham

"The church on the hill, lighting the way to God's love"

821 Durham Road - P.O. Box 100 - Durham, PA 18039-0100

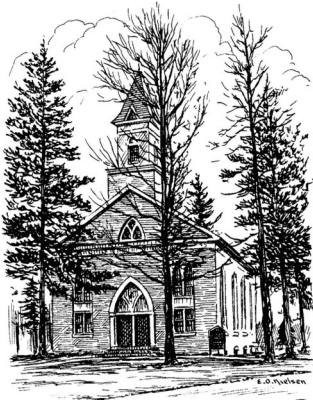
Phone: 610-346-8500 email: evangel@durhamlutheran.org

Web site: www.durhamlutheran.org

EVANGEL



2025



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church of Durham**

*~The church on the hill, lighting
the way to God's love.~*

821 Durham Road
PO Box 100

Durham, PA 18039-0100
610-346-8500

www.durhamlutheran.org

Reverend James Heckman,
Pastor
267-664-3160

pastor@durhamlutheran.org

Pastor and Admin's

Office Hours:

Wednesday:

10:00 AM-2:00 PM

Thursday

10:00 AM -1:00 PM

Kathryn Wagner,

Administrative Assistant

610-346-8500

Additional Admin Office Hours:

Monday: 1:00-3:00PM

Evangel@durhamlutheran.org

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Pastor's Message:

Dear sisters and brothers in Christ,

On February 2nd each year, people wait to hear what Punxsutawney Phil predicts about the coming of spring. If he does not see his shadow, it is said that there will be a short winter and an early spring. This year, he saw his shadow and predicted six more weeks of winter. Statistically, Punxsutawney Phil is accurate less than 40% of the time. Alternatively, Lent serves as another indicator of the approaching spring. The word "Lent" originates from an old English word meaning "spring season." By the time Easter arrives, spring is typically beginning.

Lent is not just about waiting for spring. It is a period of reflection for Christians before Easter, symbolizing spiritual renewal and preparation, much like the new life that spring brings. While Lent is associated with fasting, repentance and acts of contrition, it also serves to remind us of the necessity of God's forgiveness and the wonderful act of love which Christ shares for us on the cross on Good Friday.

We will have a number of special services and devotional opportunities available here at Evangelical Durham during our Lenten journey. Before Lent begins, we will observe Shrove Tuesday (the day before Ash Wednesday). This day, also known as Mardi Gras, Fat Tuesday, Pancake Day, or Donut Day, is traditionally the last day for festivities before the sacrifices of Lent. The making of donuts and pancakes was historically a way to use up household fat.

At Durham, we will hold a Shrove Tuesday Covered Dish Dinner on Tuesday, March 4th. During this event, participants can play games, share a meal, and discuss how the ashes for Ash Wednesday are prepared for the Lenten journey. The dinner will take place from 6:00 to 7:30 PM. Please sign up in the Narthex if you plan to attend and indicate what dish you will bring.

Our Lenten journey will then officially begin on Wednesday, March 5th with two opportunities for worship. We will offer a spoken service at 12:30 PM which will be a communion service including the disposition of ashes (just no music). Then at 7:00 PM we will have a full service with Communion and Ashes. (If neither of these times work for you, our PALM partner at St. Luke's will be offering a service at 3:00 PM in Ferndale.)

(Pastor's Message Cont'd on page 3)

(Pastor's Message Cont'd)

Our journey will continue Wednesday evenings for the next five weeks rotating between 5 of the PALM churches. Each week we will begin with soup supper at 6:00 PM followed by a devotional time at 6:45 to 7:30 PM. The Theme for this series is: "Created for Community".

Week 1 (3/12) will be at St. Peter's, Riegelsville discussing "In Community with Creation."

Week 2 (3/19) will be here at Durham discussing "In Community with all the saints."

Week 3 (3/26) is at Upper Tincum discussing "In Community with our neighbor."

Week 4 (4/2) we are at St. Luke's, Ferndale discussing "In Community with those on the margins."

Week 5 (4/9) we conclude at Trinity, Pleasant Valley discussing "In community with Christ."

The final week of Lent is Holy Week. It begins on Sunday April 13th which we call Palm/Passion Sunday. We will not only be having the distribution and blessing of the Palms, but we will be reading the Passion of Christ as recorded in Luke. If you wish to be one of the readers, please let me know. Holy Week continues with a service of Holy Communion which will be held at Trinity Lutheran in Pleasant Valley this year at 7:00 PM. Then on Good Friday we will host a Good Friday Service at 7:00 PM. Also that day, at 3:00 PM St. Luke's, Ferndale will be hosting a Stations of the Cross Service at 3:00 PM.

We will conclude our journey with several opportunities for Easter celebrations. The first will be Saturday, April 19. From 11 to 1 PM we will have a Messy Church Easter Celebration. Then on Easter Day, Sunday, April 20th you will have two opportunities for worship. The first will be the Sunrise Service again hosted by Upper Tincum Lutheran on the river at Sky Island Farm. The service will begin at 6:30 AM and is outdoors. Please dress accordingly. I will once again be the presider/preacher. Then at 10:00 AM we will be having a festival service of Holy Communion here at Durham to which all are welcome - family, friends, neighbors, or strangers off the street.

Beside the special services, there are Lenten Devotional Guides available in the narthex of the church which will provide you with a daily journey of prayer and devotional time. Please feel free to pick them up at church.

I look forward to once again joining you on this Lenten pilgrimage and the celebration of Christ's resurrection in April. See you in church.

Your servant in Christ.

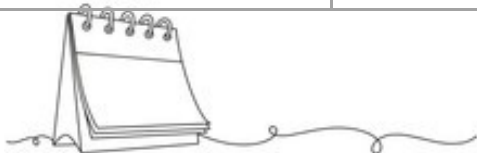
Pastor Jim Heckman





Check out our **UPDATED**
"Events" page on
DurhamLutheran.org !!
Follow us on Facebook too!

Sunday, March 2 Transfiguration of Our Lord	9:15 AM 10:00 AM 5:00 - 7:00 PM	Adult Sunday school in the library. Communion Worship Confirmation Class @ St. Lukes Ferndale
Monday, March 3	1:00 PM- 3:00 PM	Admin Office Hours
Tuesday, March 4	5:00 -7:00 PM 6:00-7:30 PM	Mardi Gras At St Luke Ferndale Shrove Tuesday Covered Dish @ Durham
Wednesday, March 5	10:00 AM - 2:00 PM 10:00 AM 12:30 PM 3:00 PM 7:00 PM	Office Hours Mid-Week Choir Rehearsal Ash Wednesday Spoken Service St Lukes Ferndale Ash Wednesday Service Ash Wednesday Communion Service
Thursday, March 6	10:00 AM - 1:00 PM 12:00 PM 1:00 - 3:00 PM 7:00 PM	Office Hours Chat & Chew with Pr. Jim Adult Bible Study @ Hlavaty's General PALM meeting at St. Peter's Riegelsville
Sunday, March 9 First Sunday in Lent DAYLIGHT SAVINGS TIME	9:15 AM 10:00 AM 2:00-4:00PM	Adult Sunday school in the library Communion Worship Upper Bucks Conference Annual Assembly at St Peters Hilltown
Monday, March 10	1:00 PM- 3:00 PM	Admin Office Hours
Tuesday, March 11	7:00 PM	Council Meeting
Wednesday, March 12	10:00 AM - 2:00 PM 10:00 AM 1:30 PM 6:00-7:30PM	Office Hours Mid-Week Choir Rehearsal Christian Education Meeting Lenten Soup Supper St. Peters Riegelsville
Thursday, March 13	10:00 AM - 1:00 PM 12:00 PM 1:00 - 3:00 PM	Office hours Chat & Chew with Pr. Jim Adult Bible Study @ Hlavaty's
Friday, March 14	10:00 AM	WELCA Meeting



MARCH CALENDAR CONTINUED ON NEXT PAGE



MARCH CALENDAR CONT'D



Sunday, March 16 Second Sunday in Lent	9:15 AM 10:00 AM 5:00PM-7:00PM	Adult Sunday School in Library Communion Worship Confirmation Class @ St Peters Riegelsville
Monday, March 17	1:00 PM- 3:00 PM	Admin Office Hours
Wednesday, March 19	10:00 AM - 2:00 PM 10:00 AM 6:00-7:30PM	Office Hours Mid-Week Choir Rehearsal Lenten Soup Supper at ELC Durham
Thursday, March 20	10:00 AM - 1:00 PM 12:00 PM 1:00 - 3:00 PM	Office hours Chat & Chew with Pr. Jim Adult Bible Study @ Hlavaty's
Sunday, March 23 Third Sunday in Lent	9:15 AM 10:00 AM	Adult Sunday school in the library Communion Worship
Monday, March 24	1:00 PM- 3:00 PM	Admin Office Hours
Wednesday, March 26	10:00 AM - 2:00 PM 10:00 AM 6:00-7:30PM	Office Hours Mid-week Choir Rehearsal Lenten Soup Supper at Upper Tinicum
Thursday, March 27	10:00 AM - 1:00 PM 12:00 PM 1:00 - 3:00 PM	Office hours Chat & Chew with Pr. Jim Adult Bible Study @ Hlavaty's
Sunday, March 30 Fourth Sunday in Lent	9:15 AM 10:00 AM 5:00- 7:00 PM	Adult Sunday school in the library Communion Worship Confirmation Class @ Trinity Pleasant Valley
Monday, March 31	1:00 -3:00 PM	Admin Office Hours

March 2025 Worship Assistants

Altar Guild	Miriam Anderson and Nancy Moskella
Communion Team	Dealer's Choice
Counting Team	Becky Praster, Dave Sauter and Cathy Meuller

Date	Greeter	Acolyte	Lector	Head Usher
3/2	O'Brien Family	Oaklee Wagner	Joe H'lavaty	
3/9		Josephine Williams		Ben Williams(help)
3/16		Josephine Williams		Ben Williams(help)
3/23	O'Brien Family			
3/30		Tucker Wagner	Kathryn Wagner	



WELCA's February meeting was a brief Bible study on the book of Ruth; we studied Ruth's faithfulness and love of Naomi and how they supported one another in a time of grief and trial. We also saw how God was with them throughout their struggle. We did not have a business meeting, but did agree that we wanted to do a project during Lent. We will be collecting **Personal Care Kits**, which will be delivered to the Synod Convention on Friday May 30, 2025. See attached instructions. Our March meeting will be Friday March 14, 2025 at 10 a.m. We will continue our Bible study on faith as we look at Psalm 22, David's struggle

as he cries "My God Why Have You Forsaken Me."

We will distribute the soup funds during this meeting. All are invited to attend.

Helen Dungan



PERSONAL CARE KITS

SOME IMPORTANT GUIDELINES TO REMEMBER

- Be sure to shop for light- or medium-weight towels, which are easier for Kit recipients to hand wash and air dry, take up less storage space and are considerably less expensive than the fluffier towels we may prefer to use.
- Bath towels vary in size. The 52" X 27" size listed in the guidelines is the maximum size. 20" x 40" is a good guideline for a minimum size.
- Please give new items only.
- Please do not donate items with any religious symbols, messages or your group's name.
- Please do not donate any items decorated with a U.S. flag, patriotic or military symbols, or references to the armed forces, including camouflage.
- Do not add other items or leave out any of the items listed.
- All items should be new and in good condition.
- Do not enclose the Kit or any of its contents in plastic bags.

INCLUDE THE FOLLOWING IN EACH PERSONAL CARE KIT

- ONE** light-weight bath-size towel (between 20" x 40" and 52" x 27"), dark color recommended
- TWO** or three bath-size bars of soap equaling 8 to 9 oz., any brand, in original wrapping
- ONE** adult-size toothbrush in its original packaging*
- ONE** sturdy comb, remove packaging
- ONE** metal nail clippers (attached file optional), remove packaging

* Toothbrush multi-packs may be used by sealing an individual toothbrush in a business-size envelope; no plastic bags or wrap

HOW TO PACK YOUR PERSONAL CARE KITS

- Fold the towel in half. Place the rest of the items in the towel, fold and roll so nothing falls out, and secure with yarn, ribbon, string or rubber bands.
- Pack completed Kits, like items together, in boxes. Label contents in LARGE, BLOCK LETTERS on the outside of the boxes.
- Use strong cartons secured with packing tape, not to exceed 40 pounds.
- Do not use plastic or paper bags to pack donations.
- Include the name and address of your group or congregation on each box and label the contents



LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF

Outreach

Food banks: Thanks to all who contributed to our collection for the food banks in February. Special thanks to Miriam and Ken Anderson who took our January food to the two food banks. Because of our reverse Advent donations, we needed a truck!



The Lord's Pantry has requested: coffee, chunky soups, laundry detergent and condiments

Project Easton is requesting spaghetti and pancake mix. They also minister to the homeless in Easton, and request travel size personal care items. (Because these people live out of their backpacks, they cannot handle large size containers.) Project Easton makes up kits of needed items to give to them.

All donations are appreciated!

Food baskets: If you have someone you want to remember or honor, this is a wonderful way to do it. You can do the shopping yourself or delegate the task to Helen Dungan. We ask for a \$20 minimum.

Outreach envelope: Our Outreach envelopes for March have been designated to go to Lutheran Disaster Relief. We are again being devastated by storms and floods with many people's homes damaged or destroyed. This is one way we can help them.

Helen Dungan



Prayer list: If you want to add someone to the prayer list or correct or update it, please contact Joan Mammaña either by phone (610-258-5717 or 610-417-6553) or by email at: joanmammaña@icloud.com.

For Healing of those in our Congregation:

David Antoni; Esther Crouse; Joe Hlavaty; George Kreitz; Paul McGinn; Cheryl Mesko; Joanne Ziegenfuss

For Healing of Friends and Family:

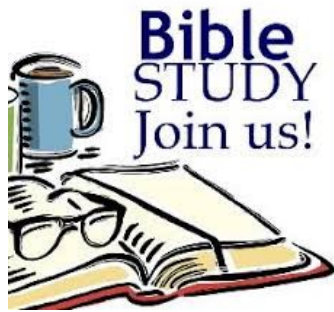
Frank Allebach; Phyllis Allebach; Bob Benoure; Jason Bigley; Stephen Bizon; Clay Butler; Doris Calverley; Deb Carmichael; Jane Carr; Peggy Coleman; Stephanie Courtney; David Davis; Nancy Edelen; Carol and Leon Errico; Gabriella Froehlich; Barbara Foster; Debbie Gardner; Candie Gimbar; Barea Lee Goodman; Jason Gourley; Rev. Bradley Gow; Penni Griffith; Andrew Hales; Krista Heyer; Penny Houck; Bill Hunt; Lois James & family; Martine King; Tim Koplín; Mary Lily; Jim McAnally; Charleigh McCade; Letitia McCrea; Connor McDevitt; Patrick McNaulty; Stacy Mechum; Nancy Morris; Sue Odor; Lucia Otero; Leslie Patience; Jennifer Phelps; Lisa Ridge; Connie Rugen; Tammy Sassman; Paul Sauter; Laurel Sheetz; Holly Snyder; Donna Storm; Russ Trauger; Joe V.; Kelly Walsh; Jacqueline Ward; Dean Erika Wesch; Henry Wong; Wayne Yeisley; Barbara Yob.

For those who are Homebound:

James Altemose; Cleo Eck; Jayne Miller.

For families and friends grieving the loss of:

Fred Foerster; Norma Fox ;Kenneth Hager; Frank Mammaña; Silas Rodenbach; Bart Shaw; Ed Xander and Bobby Ziegenfuss



Adult Bible Study

The Adult Bible study meets on **Thursdays** from **1:00-3:00** at the **home of Kathy and Joe Hlavaty**. We are finishing our study and discussion of the Gospel of Luke. Where we go next is under discussion. We invite you to join us.

Helen Dungan

Soup

Thanks to all who helped with the food preparation, the selling and the cleanup of our February soup sale. We had a great crew. Special thanks to our chefs Nancy Moskella, Miriam Anderson, and Mark Harwick; and to Kathy and Joe Hlavaty who assisted them in the kitchen throughout the whole day.

We made 16 quarts of vegetable, 108 quarts of vegetable beef, and 90 quarts of potato. More details on soup sold, and profits for both soup sales and our donations will be in the April newsletter.



My family and I extend our sincere gratitude for the sympathy and kindness expressed to us regarding the illness and loss of Frank Mammana. We were surrounded and greatly comforted by your love.

Joan Mammana

MEMBERS OF THE MONTH



Maggie Fischer & Robert Starling

It is so important to know that our church family doesn't just include the people we see in the pews on Sunday mornings. Maggie and Bob have been kind and caring members who found our church after searching for a church family and experiencing the warmth and welcome that we all know and love at Durham. Maggie and Bob alternate their time between Pennsylvania and Florida and to Bob God feels like peace and calm like the bucolic countryside that surrounds our church. They find joy in being active in the church choir, reading, taking walks. They pray for the health and wellbeing of friends and family and everyone on our prayer list. They want us to know how much they enjoy being with us at ELC of Durham and I hope they know how much we enjoy their voices in the choir.



March	Birthdays	Anniversaries	Baptisms
1			Mike Rhine
2	Michael Altemus		
4	Amanda Harrison		
6	Gladys Nicholas (91)		
7	Kenneth Crouse		
8			Karen Bolesta
9		Clayton & Darby Leichliter (3)	
10	Pat Zion		
11	Brittany Froehlich, Ella Rose Michl		Suzane Maurer
15	Samantha Mueller		
17			Don Crouse
23			Rachael Roney
25	Oluchi Ngoka		Althea Crouse
28			Clayton Leichliter
29			Steven Streletz
30	Tom Praster		

Where God leads you is where His grace will meet you.

Lenten Devotional Options:

Several booklets are available in the Narthex for various age groups



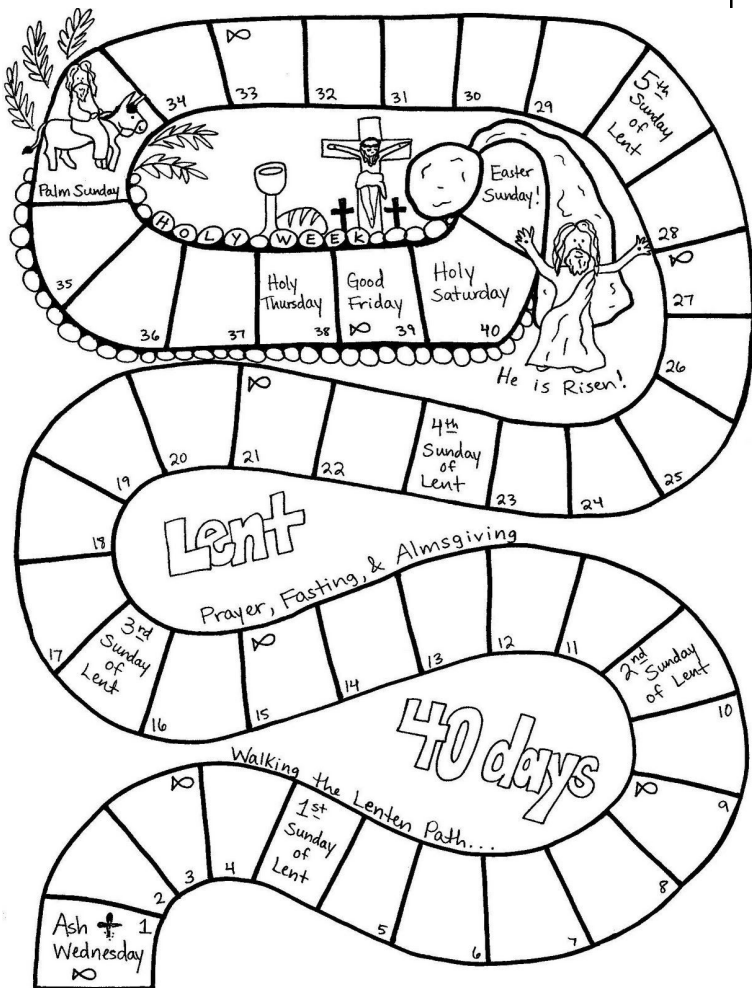
Also recommended by a member of our Church Family:

Henri J.M. Nouwen's "Show me the way".

The book "Wild Hope" by Gayle Boss might appeal to ecologists and families with children

"The Final Week of Jesus" by Max Lucado for the last week of Lent

LOVE LIFE
LIVE  LENT
TRANSFORM YOUR WORLD



Campbell

"These are vegetables, mother. You wouldn't want me to eat something I've given up for Lent, would you?"



"Fasting" doesn't mean eating fast food!

Bales

PALM
Palisades Area Lutheran Ministries

Bring the Family!

PALISADES AREA LUTHERAN MINISTRIES



MARCH 5, 2025



On Ash Wednesday we begin our forty-day journey toward Easter. While we journey through Lent to return to God, we have already been reconciled to God through Christ. We humbly pray for God to make our hearts clean while we rejoice that "now is the day of salvation." Returning to our baptismal call, we more intentionally bear the fruits of mercy and justice in the world.

Please join us at one of the listed times and locations.

ALL ARE WELCOME

12:30PM

Spoken Service
Evangelical Lutheran Church of Durham
821 Durham Rd,
Durham PA 18039

3:00 PM

Ash Wednesday Service
St. Luke Lutheran Church
470 Church Hill Rd.
Ferndale, PA 18921

6:00 PM

Soup Supper Followed by
7:30 PM SERVICE
St. Peter's Evangelical Lutheran Church
305 Delaware Rd.
Riegelsville, PA 18077

7:00 PM

Ash Wednesday Service
Evangelical Lutheran Church of Durham
821 Durham Rd,
Durham PA 18039

Lenten
SOUP SUPPERS

<p>MARCH 12 St. Peter's Riegelsville 305 Delaware Rd Riegelsville, PA</p>	<p>MARCH 19 Evangelical Lutheran Church of Durham 821 Durham Rd Durham, PA</p>	<p>MARCH 26 Upper Tincum Lutheran Church 188 Upper Tincum Church Rd Upper Black Eddy, PA</p>
<p>APRIL 2 St. Luke Lutheran Church 470 Church Hill Rd Ferndale, PA</p>	<p>APRIL 9 Trinity Lutheran Church 2170 Route 212 Coopersburg, PA</p>	

All suppers will be from 6 - 7:30 pm



Celebrate Mardi Gras with Us!
Pot Luck Dinner & Talent Show
March 4th, 2025 @ 530 PM
SIGN UP AT CHURCH OR ON OUR WEBSITE!

www.stlukeferndalepa.com/mardi-gras



FOLLOW US ON FACEBOOK!

QUESTIONS? WANT TO HELP? EMAIL Ferndalestlukes@gmail.com

The PALM mission is to promote collaborative ministry and to share the Good News of God's love.

Starting a discussion in his congregation, one ELCA pastor wrote: “sometimes people use words to claim to stand for something people think of as good but actually stand for something different. ‘Christian’ nationalism may sound like a good thing because it uses the word Christian. And the people who advocate for ‘Christian’ nationalism do think of themselves as Christian. However, they stand for things we in our tradition identify as contrary to the Gospel and opposed to what it means to be Christian.” Whether in your church or with friends and family, it is helpful to be versed in Christian nationalism from a Lutheran perspective.

WHAT IS CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM?

Christian nationalism is “a cultural framework that idealizes and advocates fusion of certain Christian views with American civic life. This political ideology, whether explicit or not, includes the beliefs that the U.S. Constitution was divinely inspired and enjoys godly status, that Christianity should be a privileged religion in the U.S., that the nation holds a special status in God’s eyes, and that good Americans must hold Christian beliefs. Proponents range from those who believe the United States should be declared a Christian nation ([approximately 21%](#) of the U.S. population) to those involved in more virulent strains that are openly racist, anti-democratic or gang-like. The symbols and ideology of Christian nationalism were widely evident during the Jan. 6, 2021, attempt to throw out certified U.S. election results.”¹

DOES THE ELCA OPPOSE CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM?

Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton has endorsed the [Christians Against Christian Nationalism statement](#) that reads, in part:

“Christian nationalism seeks to merge Christian and American identities, distorting both the Christian faith and America’s constitutional democracy. Christian nationalism demands Christianity be privileged by the State and implies that to be a good American, one must be Christian. It often overlaps with and provides cover for white supremacy and racial subjugation. We reject this damaging political ideology and invite our Christian brothers and sisters to join us in opposing this threat to our faith and to our nation.”

In a November 2022 video [Bishop Eaton stated](#): “Christian Nationalism identifies a human-made government with God’s will and seeks privilege specifically for Christians, and many times only white Christians. Lutherans teach that government should be held accountable to God, but never dictated as God’s will. We must remain committed to strengthening the public space as a just place for all who seek peaceful governance, regardless of religion or worldview, and we will defend the full participation of all in our religiously diverse society.”



Social media post.

WHY IS THIS IMPORTANT TO LUTHERANS?

The ELCA is committed to the common good — not for the good of Christians first — and to working with and learning from others.

In his *Small Catechism*, Martin Luther expounds upon the Eighth Commandment, writing that

“we are to fear and love God, so that we do not tell lies about our neighbors, betray or slander them, or destroy their reputations. Instead, we are to come to their defense, speak well of them, and interpret everything they do in the best possible light.”

The ELCA social statement *The Church in Society: A Lutheran Perspective* (1991) includes this:

“The example of Jesus invites Christians to see people near and far away, people of all races, classes and cultures, friends and strangers, allies and enemies as their ‘neighbor.’”

It continues,

“As a reconciling and healing presence, this church is called to minister to human need with compassion and imagination. It strives to pioneer new ways of addressing emerging social problems and environmental degradation. This church has a responsibility to mediate conflict and to advocate just and peaceful resolutions to the world’s divisions. It should support institutions and policies that serve the common good and work with and learn from others in caring for and changing global society” (boldface added).

“A Declaration of Inter-Religious Commitment,” an ELCA policy statement describing our entrance into interreligious relations, extends a commitment to common good with those who are nonreligious and assumes a posture of mutual understanding in interfaith dialogue:

“As we strive to show forth God’s vision, we are called to work toward justice and peace for all people and creation, that is, the common good. Religious diversity, when accompanied by mutual understanding and cooperation, enriches the whole. Through inter-religious relationships, we receive the gifts of our neighbors and experience more fully the exquisite realization that all are made in the image of God. A deep appreciation of the similarities and differences among religions and worldviews enhances working together for the common good. At the same time, cooperation can enhance both mutual understanding and the self-understanding of each participant. Seeking mutual understanding and the common good are active steps we can take toward God’s vision of life abundant for all.”



Photo courtesy of the ELCA Washington Office.
What is your reaction? This photo was taken by a staff member and printed in the early 2000s as a postcard to thank visitors to the ELCA’s office in Washington, D.C.

Further, ELCA social teaching calls us to wage peace, not war, as stated in the ELCA social statement *For Peace in God’s World* (1995):

“When the Church fulfills the mandates of its divine calling, it helps in word and deed to create an environment conducive to peace. When the Church forsakes these mandates, it also fails to serve earthly peace. Through

faithfulness in its life and activities as a community for peace, the Church in the power of the Holy Spirit becomes a presence for peace that disturbs, reconciles, serves, and deliberates.

“The Church is a disturbing presence when it refuses to be silent and instead speaks the truth in times when people shout out, ‘Peace, peace,’ when there is no peace” (Jeremiah 6:14). The Church is this presence when it names and resists idols that lead to false security, injustice, and war, and calls for repentance. We therefore denounce beliefs and actions that:

- elevate our nation or any nation or people to the role of God;
- find ultimate security in weapons and warfare;
- ordain the inherent right of one people, race, or civilization to rule over others;
- promise a perfect, peaceful society through the efforts of a self-sufficient humanity; and
- despair of any possibility for peace.”

CHRISTIANS AGAINST CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM STATEMENT

As Christians, our faith teaches us everyone is created in God’s image and commands us to love one another. As Americans, we value our system of government and the good that can be accomplished in our constitutional democracy. Today, we are concerned about a persistent threat to both our religious communities and our democracy — Christian nationalism.

DOES THIS MEAN CHRISTIANS CAN’T BE PATRIOTIC?

DOES THIS MEAN CHRISTIANS CAN'T BE PATRIOTIC?

Patriotism, a type of civic pride, is distinct from Christian nationalism. The ELCA's "[Study Curriculum on Civic Life and Faith](#)" states that

"Christian nationalism is a political ideology and is **neither faithful to Christ nor patriotic**. It idealizes and advocates the fusion of certain Christian views with loyalty to one's country and encourages enforcing upon the nation a particular and harsh understanding of certain Christian principles" (boldface added).

WHERE DOES CHRISTIAN NATIONALISM SHOW UP?

Christian nationalist ideology asserts itself combatively through "culture war" topics regarding gender, sexuality, race and the role of government. These topics can be both symbolic and pragmatic. Examples include whether to place the U.S. flag in a sanctuary or post the Ten Commandments in a government space.

ELCA Worship is frequently asked, "[Are flags appropriate in church?](#)" People of faith grapple with these cultural conflicts. The FAQ response reminds us that, as Christians, "we live as both baptized people of God and citizens of a nation. Living as both members of the Church and citizens of a country has its challenges."

Christian nationalist imagery was prevalent during the Jan. 6, 2021, insurrection at the U.S. Capitol and has become a persistent talking point in contemporary politics. For an illustrative but not exhaustive examination of Christian nationalism's role in the Capitol insurrection, visit "[What Is Uncivil Religion?](#)," a collaboration between the Department of Religious Studies at the University of Alabama and the Smithsonian's National Museum of American History.

nationalism.

Christian nationalism seeks to merge Christian and American identities, distorting both the Christian faith and America's constitutional democracy. Christian nationalism demands Christianity be privileged by the State and implies that to be a good American, one must be Christian. It often overlaps with and provides cover for white supremacy and racial subjugation. We reject this damaging political ideology and invite our Christian brothers and sisters to join us in opposing this threat to our faith and to our nation.

continued at
christiansagainstchristiannationalism.org

HOW CAN LUTHERANS RESPOND?

[In your church and local community](#)

The ELCA's "[Study Curriculum on Civic Life and Faith](#)" provides a framework for exploring how civic life and our faith intersect.

[Nationally](#)

Many in the ELCA have signed the Christians Against Christian Nationalism statement, including Presiding Bishop Eaton who was an initial endorser. Add your name to the [Christians Against Christian Nationalism](#) statement.

[What the ELCA is doing and saying](#)

The ELCA is developing a social statement on civic life and faith, the relationship of church and state and related matters, consideration of which is anticipated by the 2025 Churchwide Assembly. A [draft copy](#) for [feedback](#) is available, including Article 37 which addresses Christian nationalism. Presently in social teaching Christian nationalism is named in the ELCA social policy resolution "[Condemnation of White Supremacy and Racist Rhetoric](#)," which states:

Violent rhetoric against persons of color in the name of so-called "Christian Nationalism" is not a true Christian faith. It is idolatry and we condemn it.

[Depolarizing Dialogue](#)

If you are in a politically diverse or divided church or community, you may want to employ tools and practices for depolarization to approach constructive conversations about Christian nationalism. In addition to many ELCA synod, congregational and [ELCA-affiliated state public policy office](#) dialogue opportunities, the organization Braver Angels provides resources that can ease group and one-on-one conversations:

- "[How to Navigate Awkward Political Conversations at Thanksgiving Dinner After a Tense Election](#)"
- "[1:1 Conversations](#)"

MORE

In addition to Presiding Bishop Eaton, representatives and individuals from all 50 states and more than three dozen denominations signed the Christians Against Christian Nationalism statement [within hours](#) of the campaign launch in July 2019. The "Learn" tab continues to add resources at christiansagainstchristiannationalism.org, including ELCA and other denominational voices in podcasts and video.