



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



ELCA Worship News

OCTOBER 2015

Dear friends,

Mary Harris Jones, once said, "Reformation, like education, is a journey, not a destination." During the month of October, we Christians who live out our faith lives as Lutherans remember the Reformation, but do so knowing that it is still occurring in our lives of faith. If we view the Reformation and what it means to be a reforming people of faith – as a journey not destinations – then we have to be honest with ourselves that along that journey, discomfort and challenges will accompany joy.

The journey that we travel, as reforming people, is one that begins in the waters of our baptism, when we are immersed into a lifelong walk with God and God's people – the church.

What does it mean to be a member of this church? I think it means what it has always meant as a church of reformation-minded people: We are a church that is centered around the means of grace and a church that cares deeply for the needs of our neighbors and serving as the visible gospel to the world. As Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton has said, *"We are not called to be the church of the past nor the church of some distant future, but to be the church right now. For whatever reason, we are the ones God is using at this time, in this messiness. We are not going to get it right all of the time. We are broken and sinful creatures, but we are also redeemed creatures. In baptism we have already died the only death that really matters. Can we start to live like we believe that?"*

Living like we believe that to be true means we live as baptized children of God who lead lives filled with great joy and great hope. Even in the moments of life when all seems lost, we are found by God's prodigal, lavish love for each of us. The lavish love pours over us, in us and through us so that we can be visible, tangible signs of God's great reformation journey to the entire world.

To live this love completely and to truly believe that reformation did not just happen and we are not a reformed people, we must live knowing that we are a reforming people and reformation is still happening. This can be done by how we live and how we work. This can be done by how we pray and how we act. This can be done by how we treat our neighbors and love our enemies. This can be done in how we have dialogue and conversations with people who have differing views from our own. This can be done every time we gather around the word proclaimed, the Bath and the meal – in the gathered assembly in worship.

Let us pray.

“Almighty God, gracious Lord, we thank you that your Holy Spirit renews the church in every age. Pour out your Holy Spirit on your faithful people. Keep them steadfast in your word, protect and comfort them in times of trial, defend them against all enemies of the gospel, and bestow on the church your saving peace, through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord, who lives and reigns with you and the Holy Spirit, one God, now and forever. Amen.” (Prayer of the Day for Reformation Day)

Blessings on the journey,

The Rev. Kevin L. Strickland
Assistant to the Presiding Bishop
Executive for Worship



Share your event

Are you planning a worship event in your congregation or synod? [Share it](#) with us for this newsletter!
Due to publication schedule, items should be submitted a minimum of 10-12 weeks before the event.

Share your story

We love highlighting worship events from across this church in this newsletter.
To submit your story, send a brief article and pictures to worship@elca.org

AUGSBURG FORTRESS

Bread for the Day: Daily Bible Readings and Prayers

“Bread for the Day” is a small book filled with rich treasures. Use “Bread for the Day” for personal, household or group devotions. This is the perfect resource for individuals, congregations, households, Bible study groups, prayer groups, pastors, congregation councils, outreach teams, confirmation students and teachers. Also available as an e-book.

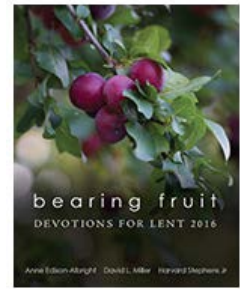


Bearing Fruit: Devotions for Lent 2016

This beautiful, full-color devotional takes you through Lent with daily readings from Colossians. Each reading is accompanied by a photo, quote, reflection and prayer. Available in a pocket-sized edition, as well as in large-print and as an e-book.

To learn more about these resources and others, go to www.augsburgfortress.org or call

our Sales & Service team at 800-328-4648/800-328-4648 FREE.



EVENTS AND RESOURCES

Grace Gathering

August 10-13
New Orleans

As part of the 500th anniversary observance of the Reformation, gather with other members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) to rejoice in the freedom we have in Christ. The Grace Gathering, in partnership with the 2016 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, will be an opportunity to gather with voting members, prepare for the 500th anniversary, and reflect on how the Reformation can continue to guide us today. It will be a time for workshops, worship and fellowship.

The Grace Gathering will provide an opportunity for all ELCA members to experience the same inspiring worship, Bible study, experiential learning activities and fellowship that voting members have when they attend the Churchwide Assembly in New Orleans. At the same time, the Grace Gathering will offer workshops and presentations that equip congregational leaders and synod planning teams to prepare for observing the 500th anniversary in local communities.

Early bird registration opens Oct. 31, 2015. Learn more at www.ELCA500.org

[Music that Makes Community](#)

Cathedral of the Incarnation, Baltimore – Nov. 20
The Bishop's Ranch, Sonoma County – Jan. 17, 2016

Music that Makes Community Inc. is a not-for-profit organization that connects a worldwide network of practitioners and leaders who share a practice of paperless song leading. They partner with hosts to produce conferences and workshops to teach, to practice and to create resources for making connections and building a repertoire of songs for paperless song leading.



These conferences are perfect for anyone – pastors, lay leaders, choir directors, Sunday school teachers, organists and more – who seeks to find ways of engaging an assembly in song in a truly authentic way. No previous experience necessary!

Hear what Lutherans are saying about Music that Makes Community:

Thanks for your encouragement to do this. I know this is going to have an impact on Morning Prayer. Even the keyboardists among us, including myself, came to see the value in leading voice-to-voice, and face-to-face. All of us came away transformed by the power of this form of music-making. – Lorraine S. Brugh

Theoretically, I've always known that music creates community, but this was an experience of that reality. Singing together without paper not only creates community, it empowers and transforms it. I really believe singing in this way changes the ways that we are church together. – Bradley Schmeling

To learn more about upcoming events and see the growing number of resources on our newly redesigned site, go to www.musicthatmakescommunity.org.



[Join the conversation!](#)
ELCA Worship is on Facebook.



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Learn more: www.ELCA.org/worship

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