



Evangelical  
Lutheran Church  
in America



Through your generosity, God is at work across the ELCA. A portion of your offering, called Mission Support, advances the ministry of our church, helping the ELCA nurture Christian community, raise up leaders, serve our neighbors and strive for justice. Read stories and learn more at [LivingLutheran.org/SOFIA](https://LivingLutheran.org/SOFIA).



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ANNUAL REPORT  
2024



# A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDING BISHOP ELIZABETH EATON



Dear friends in Christ,

All around us, we see signs of God's love and goodness. A person who has stepped away from church for many years steps back into a congregation, feeling the call of the Holy Spirit. Young adults feeling isolated in a digital-first world start gathering in person in a small group, enjoying the warmth of a hug and a new friend asking about their week. A mother plants a garden, and it yields fruits and vegetables, giving her nutritious food for her kids and extra produce to sell at the local market. Everywhere we look, we see signs of Christ's love. In Psalm 93, we read: "More majestic than the thunders of mighty waters, more majestic than the waves of the sea, majestic on high is the Lord! Your decrees are very sure; holiness befits your house, O Lord, forevermore" (4-5).

God's love is a majestic thing, and it moves us to share it in word and deed. The ministries of our congregations, our synods and the ELCA churchwide organization are all working together to share God's love with people in our neighborhoods, across our country and around the world.

I am so grateful for you, dear church. Your generosity to each of these three expressions of the church — your congregation, your synod and the churchwide organization — has bolstered the church's ability to share the message of God's love to people who are longing for it. Through your

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—Psalm 93:4-5

financial resources, your time volunteering and accompanying others, and your voices, you've helped carry this message of God's majestic love. Thank you, dear church. As we look ahead to the coming year, I encourage you to stand steadfast in God's promises, sure of God's love and goodness.

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton  
Presiding Bishop  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

# ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING OPENING LITURGY

Confident in God's generosity and gathered into one by the Holy Spirit, let us praise God and give thanks ...

God, we praise you and give you thanks.  
**You are good, and your mercy endures forever.**

You gave us a garden with good food to eat.  
**We praise you for food that nourishes us.**

You rescued your people from slavery.  
**We praise you for freedom.**

You gave us prophets to correct, rebuke and encourage us.  
**We bless you for your justice and mercy.**

You gave us your Son, Jesus, to love, redeem and save us.  
**We praise you for his death and resurrection.**

You gave us your Holy Spirit to be our Advocate and Comforter.  
**We bless you for the gifts of every tribe and nation.**

Strengthen your church with every spiritual gift  
**and commission us again to be your servant people.**

Multiply in us the fruit of the spirit:  
**love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, generosity, faithfulness, gentleness and self-control.**

Send us in your love and mercy,  
**that the world may know you and praise you.**

## Now Thank We All Our God



1 Now thank we all our God with hearts and hands and voices,  
2 Oh, may this bounteous God through all our life be near us,  
3 All praise and thanks to God the Father now be given,



who wondrous things has done, in whom this world rejoices;  
with ever joyful hearts and blessed peace to cheer us,  
the Son, and Spirit blest, who reign in highest heaven,



who, from our mothers' arms, has blest us on our way  
and keep us all in grace, and guide us when perplexed,  
the one eternal God, whom earth and heaven adore;



with count-less gifts of love, and still is ours to-day.  
and free us from all harm in this world and the next.  
for thus it was, is now, and shall be ever more.

*Evangelical Lutheran Worship, 840*

Text: Martin Rinkhart, 1586-1649; tr. Cathering Winkworth, 1827-1878

Music: NUN DANKET ALLE GOTT, Johann Crüger, 1598-1662

Let us pray.

Gracious God, you are the giver of every good gift. Bless us with all that we need for ministry in your name, that we might be a blessing to others. In the name of the one who broke bread and fed the multitudes, Jesus Christ, our Lord.

**Amen.**