



## “We Are Church:” ELCA Churchwide Assembly Report

On August 5, 2019 the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), began its fifteenth churchwide assembly in Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Under the theme *We Are Church*, nearly 1000 voting members and guests gathered to worship, review the work of the churchwide organization, and vote on matters of governance and policy. Twenty-one voting members from the Northwestern Minnesota Synod participated in the assembly along with similar contingents from the ELCA’s other 64 synods.

Major actions taken by the Assembly included:

- Re-electing Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton on the first ballot, with over 81% of the vote. Bishop Eaton, who was first elected in 2013, will serve a second 6-year term through 2025.
- Electing Deacon Sue Rothmeyer as Secretary of the ELCA. The Secretary is an officer and executive administrator for matters pertaining to the ELCA’s governing documents, organizational structure, and maintenance of the rosters of ministers and congregations.
- Adopting the social statement, *Faith, Sexism and Justice: A Call to Action* along with its implementing resolutions. Read the statement at [https://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Current-Social-Writing-Projects/Women-and-Justice?\\_ga=2.42569253.1467322994.1565617712-1136517837.1447278879](https://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Current-Social-Writing-Projects/Women-and-Justice?_ga=2.42569253.1467322994.1565617712-1136517837.1447278879)
- Approving *A Declaration of Inter-Religious Commitment* which now complements the 1991 ELCA statement, *A Declaration of Ecumenical Commitment*. Read the *Declaration* at [https://www.elca.org/Faith/Ecumenical-and-Inter-Religious-Relations/Inter-Religious-Relations/Draft-Policy-Statement?\\_ga=2.9038389.1467322994.1565617712-1136517837.1447278879](https://www.elca.org/Faith/Ecumenical-and-Inter-Religious-Relations/Inter-Religious-Relations/Draft-Policy-Statement?_ga=2.9038389.1467322994.1565617712-1136517837.1447278879)

- Approving a change to the ELCA constitution stating that the entrance rite for deacons (rostered ministers of word and service) will be **ordination** rather than consecration.
- Receiving and approving **budgets** for the churchwide organization during the next triennium. To find out how you contribute to the life and mission of the ELCA go to: [Where does my offering go?](#)
- Receiving the results of *Always Being Made New: The Campaign for the ELCA*. This \$198 million campaign was approved by the 2013 Churchwide Assembly. At the Campaign's conclusion on June 30, 2019 nearly \$250 million has been raised through gifts, pledges, and planned giving.
- Presenting a [Declaration to People of African Descent](#) to representatives of the African Descent Lutheran Association—and voting to commemorate June 17 as a day of repentance and remembrance in the ELCA for the deaths of the “Emanuel Nine” who were murdered on June 17, 2015, during a Bible study at Emanuel African Methodist Episcopal (AME) Church in Charleston, South Carolina.
- Celebrating the 50th Anniversary of the ordination of women, the 40<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the first ordination of a woman of color in the ELCA, and the 10<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the ELCA's acceptance of persons in committed same-sex relationships (since 2015, marriages) on the ELCA rosters of ministry.

Lawrence R. Wohlrabe  
 Bishop, Northwestern Minnesota Synod ELCA  
 Concordia College  
 Officed at the Riverside Center  
 310 14th Avenue South  
 Moorhead, MN 56562  
 Office phone 218.299.3019  
 Fax 218.299.3363  
 Email: [wohlrabe@cord.edu](mailto:wohlrabe@cord.edu)  
 Synod Website: [www.nwmnsynod.org](http://www.nwmnsynod.org)  
 Personal Blog: <http://larrywohlrabe.blogspot.com/>

***"When Jesus died, something happened as a result of which the world was a different place. By six o'clock on the evening of the first Good Friday, the world had changed. A revolution had begun." N.T. Wright, The Day the Revolution Began, p. 355.***