



Eastern Washington Idaho Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

Rev. Martin Wells, Bishop
Rev. Helga Jansons, Director for Evangelical Mission

Annual Meeting letter, 2017

Grace and peace to you from God our Father and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ! AMEN!

Dear friends in Christ and members, with me, in the Body of Christ,
I greet you at this dawn of the new year, 2017, with thanksgiving for your generosity and with prayers for your ministry in the year ahead.

I know that I have said it before (and will keep saying it!) but **there has never been a more important time to be the Church of Jesus Christ.**

That said, it is not an easy time to be the church of Jesus Christ! We live in a world deeply confused, if aware at all, about the notion of God and Ultimate Trust. Add to that all those who suffer today, wondering about the presence and mercy of God. Finally there are those who erect their own gods, even themselves, as they have no focus for ultimate trust outside of themselves. This world is stiff-necked and oh-so vulnerable!

So it is for us a time of witness, a time of testimony, and a time when our action, our hands and our feet--wherever they find themselves--bears more witness than our words. That ultimate Word, Jesus of Nazareth, continues to bear witness by his life and death and resurrection and the world still knows his unique love. Now that world turns—even if it doesn't know it—to see if the people of Jesus imitate his sacrifice or protect themselves in fear.

I ask you to pledge fearlessness in the year ahead! As you act through your budget, through your program plans, and through your worship and prayers, let us turn to the neighbor in solidarity and persistent hope. Thank you for making it possible for the synodical church and national church to join you in this mission through your mission support, that portion of your budget that gives your ministry regional, national, and international scope. Together we are Church for the World and servants of Christ.

May God bless you and keep you. May God turn his face to you and shine upon you.
May God give you peace in believing and fearless hearts for the days ahead!

Your brother in Christ,
Bishop Martin Wells