



Oregon Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's Work. Our Hands

December 20, 2020

Dear Friends and Members of the Oregon Synod,

I am thankful that through all the challenges of 2020, and as we begin to turn toward all the unknown challenges ahead, we dwell in a God of grace and generosity. It has been pure gift for me personally in this last year to be inhabiting with you exactly what the root of the word “synod” means - walking together into courageous love. Thank you for the ways you have prayed faithfully, shared generously, adapted creatively and visioned courageously with us. I am inspired by the many ways you inhabit the good news of the gospel of Christ in your unique place and time, even in a pandemic.

Please know that my prayers are with you as you gather for your congregational meeting. The life and vitality of your faith community are important. The work we do together as the Oregon Synod is important. And, our unity as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is important.

As of now, our Synod Assembly is scheduled for April 30-May 2nd at Sunriver. Please mark those dates in your calendar. Due to the vaccine roll-out schedule, however, it appears we may be having the assembly online again this year. We will make the final decision with your synod council by February 1st.

So, there are a couple of things to consider as you prepare for Synod Assembly 2021:

- 1) **voting members.** Your elected voting members must be people comfortable with (or willing to learn how to join) an online meeting (and the access to resources to so),
- 2) **additional voting members.** If we do go online again, the financial impact on congregations will be much less than when we meet in person, so it would be a perfect year to make sure you have voted for your additional voting members (up to 2 people who identify LGBTQIA+, up to 2 people for whom English is not their first language AND, up to 2 Youth/Young Adult voting members).

What a time to be God’s church! Yet, as the gospel of Matthew tells us, though, “with God all things are possible.” We have learned, grown and changed thanks to the Coronavirus, and it’s not over yet.

With your prayers, financial support and deepening relationships, we are capable of doing more than we dare dream or imagine. Please consider inviting Juan Carlos La Puente, Pr. Melissa Reed or myself to your congregation during the year. Many of our creative and phenomenal deacons, mission developers, and ecumenical and interfaith partners would love the opportunity to be with you as well.

I look forward to sharing this work with you throughout the new year. Let us dare to love one another!

Yours in Christ,

Laurie L Caesar

Bishop Laurie