



Youth Ministry

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

ELCA Youth Core Leadership Team

#9 5/13/2020

Candletime Online

Opening Game Name, Place, Animal, and Thing To Play,
leader picks a letter. Each person must list a famous person's name, place,
animal and thing that begins with that letter. The person who says it first gets to
give the next letter or you can play by typing it into the zoom chat.

Share your name and something you have heard about this week on the news.

Read the Bible Verse: Genesis 1:26-31(NRSV)

⁶ Then God said, "Let us make humankind^[a] in our image, according to our likeness; and let them have dominion over the fish of the sea, and over the birds of the air, and over the cattle, and over all the wild animals of the earth,^[b] and over every creeping thing that creeps upon the earth."

²⁷ So God created humankind^[c] in his image,
in the image of God he created them;^[d]
male and female he created them.

²⁸ God blessed them, and God said to them, "Be fruitful and multiply, and fill the earth and subdue it; and have dominion over the fish of the sea and over the birds of the air and over every living thing that moves upon the earth." ²⁹ God said, "See, I have given you every plant yielding seed that is upon the face of all the earth, and every tree with seed in its fruit; you shall have them for food. ³⁰ And to every beast of the earth, and to every bird of the air, and to everything that creeps on the earth, everything that has the breath of life, I have given every green plant for food." And it was so. ³¹ God saw everything that he had made, and indeed, it was very good. And there was evening and there was morning, the sixth day.

Meditation Ask everyone to close their eyes. To take three deep breaths. Find a place on your body that you can feel your heartbeat. (You can take 2 fingers and find your pulse on your wrist, at the base of your neck, your temples, or just place your hand over your heart) Keep your fingers or hand there.

Now feel your pulse. It's a remarkable rhythm. The rhythm of life. But how did you get here? Was it by chance? No... God made you in God's image.

You are not an accident. You are part of a grand design. And not only did God think the creation was good, God thought it was "Very Good." Repeat with me, 5 times, I am made in God's image... Take a deep breath after each time.

Share Bishop Eaton's Letter written today, May 13, 2020. Either Read or share it on your screen.

Talk about how the Bible reading and mediation might be helpful in our world today especially relating to Bishop Eaton's letter.

Ask What can we do? Especially knowing that God created all mankind in God's image and that we are all members of one body in Christ. (1 Corinthians 12:12) What should we do?

Light a candle or candles as a symbol that Christ's light shines around you and hears your prayers.

Take a moment to **pause** in silence. Feel God's presence with you.

Ask What prayers do you have for God? Who or What is on your heart to pray for?

Pray Ask everyone to share one petition.

Bless one another by marking the sign on the cross on your hand and raising it towards your camera.





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For just as the body is one and has many members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body, so it is with Christ. —I Corinthians 12:12

May 13, 2020

Dear church,

Christ is risen indeed! Alleluia!

During the uncertainty of the COVID-19 pandemic, I am encouraged by your resilience and creativity in our witness to the life, death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. I am also inspired by your generosity. Through the [ELCA COVID-19 Response Fund](#) and our [Daily Bread grants](#), we are providing critical support to struggling yet vital ministries across this church. Through [Lutheran Disaster Response International](#) we have intensified our accompaniment of global partners. *We are church together.*

This is a trying time for us all. At the same time, we know that a disproportionate burden of illness, death, discrimination and harassment falls on communities of color. This pandemic has exacerbated racism and racial inequities deeply entrenched in society and across the church. We see this in the growing anti-Asian racism and the disproportionate number of deaths in black, American Indian and Latinx communities. I have been learning from the leaders of the ELCA's [ethnic associations](#) how the [data](#) we see on the news is experienced in real life. I have listened to leaders of color share the impact of this pandemic on their communities — on their lives and on their ministries. These stories are difficult but important, so we are launching a special series on [LivingLutheran.org](#) to lift up these voices for us all to hear. We also seek to ensure that our COVID-19 response more effectively tends to the realities of racism and racial inequality. *We are church together.*

Recently, in cities across this country, we have seen horrifying anti-Semitic and white supremacist messages displayed during public protests against government orders that are intended to protect lives. No matter our politics or opinions about our elected leaders and their policies, all of us must come together on the basis of our church's commitments to condemn [racism](#) against indigenous people and people of color, [white supremacy](#), [sexism](#), and [anti-Semitism](#) whenever they occur. Whether our churches and communities are racially diverse or predominantly white, our work for racial and economic justice for all people is work for all of us. *We are church together.*

Just as God has joined us to the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ in baptism, we are joined to each other. Paul helps us to understand this by speaking of the one body of Christ, with many members. While this is always true, perhaps we feel it more acutely in this time of physical distancing. In our longing to be church together, let us be even more intentional in sharing with each other, easing each other's burdens, consoling each other in our fear and grief,

condemning what is contrary to the gospel and living out our baptismal covenant “to strive for justice and peace in all the earth.”

In partnership,

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton



Presiding Bishop, ELCA

To learn more, visit:

Centers for Disease Control and Prevention: “COVID-19 in Racial and Ethnic Minority Groups”
<https://www.cdc.gov/coronavirus/2019-ncov/need-extra-precautions/racial-ethnic-minorities.html>

ELCA social statement “Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture”
<http://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/RaceSS.pdf>

“Explanation of the Declaration of the ELCA to People of African Descent”
https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Slavery_Apology_Explanation.pdf?_ga=2.192539306.1607846328.1589383529-706161550.1552512868

ELCA social policy resolution “Condemnation of White Supremacy and Racist Rhetoric”
https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Condemnation_of_White_Supremacy_and_Racist_Rhetoric.pdf

ELCA social statement “Faith, Sexism, and Justice: A Call to Action”
<https://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Current-Social-Writing-Projects/Women-and-Justice>

“Declaration of the ELCA to Jewish Community”
https://download.elca.org/ELCA%20Resource%20Repository/Declaration_of_The_ELCA_To_The_Jewish_Community.pdf?_ga=2.71932119.591108520.1588614831-706161550.1552512868

<https://elca.org/News-and-Events/8037>

About the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

The ELCA is one of the largest Christian denominations in the United States, with nearly 3.5 million members in more than 9,100 worshiping communities across the 50 states and in the Caribbean region. Known as the church of “God’s work. Our hands,” the ELCA emphasizes the saving grace of God through faith in Jesus Christ, unity among Christians and service in the world. The ELCA’s roots are in the writings of the German church reformer Martin Luther.

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