



**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in Canada**
In Mission for Others

April 2, 2020

Dear members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada,

We are about to enter into Holy Week, that time when we follow Jesus from his triumphal entrance into Jerusalem through to his betrayal, arrest, crucifixion and death. At this most holy time of the year we are not going to be able to physically gather in worship.

The writer C. S. Lewis once wrote that “God whispers to us in our pleasures, speaks to us in our conscience, but shouts to us in our pain.” Certainly, when viewed from that perspective, Holy Week, particularly this Holy Week, might well be described as being God’s megaphone. During these special days, the distance between the lament of Jesus and the lament of humanity is shortened to the point where we can begin to believe that maybe our anguished cries can reach the one who can save us!

We know that these are difficult and challenging times for all of us – our patterns of life have been disrupted and there is much anxiety around us. Please know that we are praying for you. We invite you to pray for each other: for our faith communities, for our government leaders, for those who are medical providers, for those who still work to meet our needs in places like grocery stores and in the transportation industry, for those who are most vulnerable, for those who are alone or afraid.

We invite you to enter fully into Holy Week, through online worship or through your own personal devotions. In these special days of looking backwards through Jesus’ life, we, who must still “live our lives forward”, are given sustenance, power and encouragement for the journey. Remember, that we are Easter people, and that our risen Lord is walking with us in these difficult days. Although we are not able to physically gather in worship, Easter is not postponed. Resurrection is coming! Jesus still comes to each of us into our isolation and says peace be with you!

May God bless you in the solemnity of Holy Week and sustain you always in the joy of Easter.

Your bishops,

The Rev. Susan Johnson
National Bishop, ELCIC

The Rev. Dr. Greg Mohr
British Columbia Synod

The Rev. Dr. Larry Kochendorfer
Synod of Alberta and the Territories

The Rev. Dr. Sid Haugen
Saskatchewan Synod

The Rev. Jason Zinko
Manitoba/Northwestern
Ontario Synod

The Rev. Michael Pryse
Eastern Synod