



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

May 2019

Dear Beloved in Christ,

As most of you are well aware, many states have passed or are considering legislation to restrict access to legal abortion. Talking about abortion has never been easy in this country, and the same holds true in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. The members of this church have divergent beliefs and opinions about whether or not abortion should be legal.

No matter what your views on abortion are, as a church we are made up of members who have had abortions and members who have chosen not to. Among us are pastors, deacons, and others who have counseled with women, girls, and others they love. We are friends, loved ones, and relatives of people who have had to decide whether or not to get an abortion. We are all affected by the divisive discourse and the legal changes.

I commend you to study and discuss the ELCA social statement *Abortion*. Through this social teaching and policy statement, this church seeks to travel a moderating path by supporting abortion as a last resort.

Amid the legislative challenges to access to abortion, we must remember that this church supports ongoing access to legal abortion as well as access to abortion services and reproductive health care that is *not* restricted by economic factors.

I urge each of us to read, to study, to listen, to discern, and to discuss as church together. See <https://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Abortion> to read the full statement.

God's peace,

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America