



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

September 24, 2020

For he is our peace; in his flesh he has made both groups into one and has broken down the dividing wall, that is, the hostility between us. —Ephesians 2:14

A Pastoral Word on the Grand Jury Decision in Louisville

In response to the grand jury decision in Louisville, Ky., we offer a word of prayer and healing following the decision not to charge police officers for Breonna Taylor's death. As a nation, we are struggling with and divided by the decision. It has affected so many of us in so many ways. We grieve the brokenness of the criminal justice system. We are tired and weary of the violence. Has not God created all of us to have inherent dignity, value and worth?

Despite the anger, violence and injustice connected with this sad and horrible tragedy, we should not abandon our neighbors. Our baptismal covenant with God calls us to better relationship with one another than we are currently demonstrating. We are called to be the hands and feet of Christ's presence in the world. The covenantal relationship we have with God in Christ leads us to our neighbors in a common cause to confront the reality of systemic racism in our country.

We come together at the cross. The proclamation of the gospel is the only nonnegotiable in the life of this church. Yet, we know the gospel can be divisive for us in our ministry for justice and peace. As we dwell in God's word, we pray God will give us the strength and the courage to act in service of the gospel's free course for the life of the world.

Because of the cross, we have peace; we have hope; we are loved. We join with you in prayer for the Taylor family, Officer Hankison and his family, the prosecutor and his family, the grand jurors and their families, the community of Louisville and all who work for justice and peace.

In Christ,

Elizabeth A. Eaton
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

William O. Gafkjen
Bishop
Indiana-Kentucky Synod, ELCA

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About the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America:

The ELCA is one of the largest Christian denominations in the United States, with 3.3 million members in more than 8,900 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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