



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

Stand With Our Jewish Siblings

ELCA Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton Weekly Video Message

Jan. 28, 2022

Earlier this month, Beth Israel synagogue in Colleyville, Texas, was the scene of hostage-taking. We give thanks to God that the hostages were, in fact, rescued safely. But this is just another in a string of increased anti-Semitic actions in this country and around the world. It's not unusual in times of stress that sometimes someone gets to be the scapegoat. But this is contrary to our understanding of being children of God.

In 1994 the ELCA adopted "A Declaration of the ELCA to the Jewish Community," in which we state and acknowledge our complicity in the long history of Christian anti-Semitism — in particular, Martin Luther's own work that was used by the Nazis in the '30s and the '40s of the last century. But in this statement, we are saying very clearly that we stand against anti-Semitism and we stand with our Jewish brothers and sisters.

The declaration says in part, "Grieving the complicity of our own tradition within this history of hatred, moreover, we express our urgent desire to live out our faith in Jesus Christ with love and respect for the Jewish people. We recognize in anti-Semitism a contradiction and an affront to the Gospel, a violation of our hope and calling, and we pledge this church to oppose the deadly working of such bigotry, both within our own circles and in the society around us. Finally, we pray for the continued blessing of the Blessed One upon the increasing cooperation and understanding between Lutheran Christians and the Jewish community." Now more than ever, may we live into this declaration.

Be well, dear church.