

RE•FORMATION

THEN • NOW • ALWAYS

Vision for the Rocky Mountain Synod 2017 Commemoration of the Reformation

OVERVIEW: Our theme is intended to highlight the 500th commemoration of the Reformation while also reminding us that the church is a place where we are formed (and re-formed) in faith, both as individuals, and as a community of disciples. We will not only highlight the heritage by which our Lutheran perspective on the gospel has been shaped, but also focus on our commitment to church unity, especially with the Roman Catholic branch of the Christian family. Finally, we will explore what our Lutheran contribution to the life of the whole Body of Christ might be in this new century.

CORE COMPONENTS:

- As the ELCA we recognize that we are church better together – in our congregations, in our conferences, in our synod, across our church, globally and ecumenically. The Spirit’s work of formation and re-formation of our faith always happens in the context of community and relationship. Thus this theme will place a high priority on building relationship within, across and beyond the church.
- As the ELCA our faith continues to be shaped by a particular understanding of the gospel that we call “Lutheran.” What has this meant and what does this continue to mean? Exploring the heart of our Lutheran theology and witness in light of our contemporary context will be central to this theme.
- As the ELCA we are part of a global Lutheran communion and have much to learn from Lutheran churches in other parts of the world. Thus we will live out this theme with an intentional focus on what we might learn in the global context.
- As the ELCA we are committed to the unity of the church and to building our relationships with other parts of the Body of Christ. In exploring our unity, we have the gift of our Full Communion relationships and the fruits of 50 years of Lutheran-Catholic dialogue. Building these relationships in positive ways will be a primary goal of this theme.



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

TIMING:

This theme to begin after the 2016 Synod Assembly and continues until the end of 2017. There will be three main periods of focus:

THEN: ENGAGING OUR STORY

Fall 2016 – Focus on the honest telling of our heritage: the story of the Reformation, the story of the ELCA, and the story of each congregation. A team will develop resources for helping congregations explore their Reformation heritage honestly, focussing on story of the Reformation, the story of the ELCA (and predecessor churches in the US), and the story of each congregation. (Heritage Events)

NOW: DEEPENING OUR UNITY

Spring 2017 – Focus on church unity, including intentional engagement with the Roman Catholic Church at both a judicatory and local level. A team will develop public events within the eight Roman Catholic Dioceses that overlap with the territory of our synod (Wyoming, Utah, Denver, Colorado Springs, Pueblo, Santa Fe, Las Cruces, El Paso). A current resource that has been approved by the ELCA Conference of Bishops and will be presented to the Catholic Conference of Bishops is “Declaration on the Way: Church, Ministry and Eucharist” which highlights the agreements and achievements that are the fruits of international and regional Catholic-Lutheran dialogue for the past 50 years. (Unity Events)

ALWAYS: RECLAIMING OUR CALL

Fall 2017 – Focus on the future of our ELCA witness through congregational work on a “catechism for our day” and celebrate Reformation worship with full communion partners. A team will develop guides for congregations to use in exploring Luther’s Small Catechism and in developing a “catechism for our day” that articulates the keys components of the faith to be shared in families and in communities in our 21st century North American context. (Re•Formation events)

GLOBAL FOCUS: We hope to engage our companion synods in the Malagasy Lutheran Church during this period of time to highlight how our Lutheran perspective on the gospel takes shape in different cultural contexts

ASSEMBLY: Our 2017 Assembly will be a time when all aspects of this theme can be brought together. Of particular importance at the Assembly will be a focus on church unity, highlighting both our relationship with the Roman Catholic church and our Full Communion partners.