

# CORE VALUES

*devotional* for congregation councils



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

CHRIST-  
CENTERED

GENEROSITY

RELATIONSHIP

RECONCILIATION

## Core Values

Core Values reveal our DNA together as synod. They are values that will guide our work together—values that have been in our DNA for generations and will be into the future. Today, we explore:

**Reconciliation** *God's deep desire is to reconcile all relationships—with each other and creation. We actively strive to experience the fullness of God through radical welcome, diversity, justice, compassion, peacemaking, advocacy, and healing.*

## Prayer

By your word, eternal God, your creation sprang forth, and we were given the breath of life. By your word, eternal God, death is overcome, Christ is raised from the tomb, and we are given new life in the power of your Spirit. May we boldly proclaim this good news in our words and deeds, living into our baptismal calling to strive for peace and justice in all the earth, rejoicing always in your powerful presence, through Jesus Christ our risen Lord. Amen.

## Read 2 Corinthians 5:17-20

*Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, the new creation has come: The old has gone, the new is here! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation: that God was reconciling the world to himself in Christ, not counting people's sins against them. And he has committed to us the message of reconciliation. We are therefore Christ's ambassadors, as though God were making his appeal through us. We implore you on Christ's behalf: be reconciled to God.*

**Meditation on the Scripture** Hold a moment of silence as a group.

**Exploring Our Values More Deeply** In this video conversation, Bishop Tim Smith, Deacon Tammy Jones West, and the Rev. Sara Ilderton share what reconciliation means for them and our synod.

## Questions to Consider

Turn to a neighbor seated near you and share your thoughts on these three questions. After you have had a chance to share in small group, share as a larger council for several minutes.

\*What broken relationships in our world are weighing on your heart today?

\*What does it mean to be called into the ministry of reconciliation, to be an ambassador of Christ?

\*In which of these areas might God be asking your congregation to consider reconciliation: radical welcome, diversity, justice, compassion, peacemaking, advocacy, healing? Why?

## Closing Prayer

Lord, make us instruments of your peace. Where there is hatred, let us sow love; where there is injury, pardon; where there is discord, union; where there is doubt, faith; where there is despair, hope; where there is darkness, light; where there is sadness, joy. Grant that we may not so much seek to be consoled as to console; to be understood as to understand; to be loved as to love. For it is in giving that we receive; it is in pardoning that we are pardoned; and it is in dying that we are born to eternal life. Amen. —*attributed to Francis of Assisi*