

Dear brothers and sisters in Christ,

The hard but undeniable fact of deeply embedded racism in American society has come to the fore in painful ways this past year through high-profile occurrences of racial discrimination, hatred and violence – including racially motivated killings. As Lutheran Christians, what should be our response and witness? As members of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, how are we called to confront the sin of racism?

We need to talk and we need to listen, but we also need to act. As one important step in this process, I invite you to join me and **William B. Horne II**, an ELCA lay leader and member of the ELCA Church Council, for a live webcast conversation on the complexity and implications of racism on Thursday, **Aug. 6, at 8 p.m.** (CDT).

Through our church's social statement – "Freed in Christ: Race, Ethnicity, and Culture" – the ELCA collectively has expressed its calling to confront racism and advocate for justice and fairness for all people. You can read this social statement here. In addition, I have made several public statements on behalf of the church recently on this subject. Those statements are available here.

God's intention for all humanity is that we see the intrinsic worth, dignity and value of all people. Racism undermines the promise of community and fractures authentic relationships with one another. As Christians, though, we live in the conviction that the church has been gathered together in the joyful freedom of the reign of God announced by and embodied in Jesus. That reign has not come in its fullness, but the message of God's "yes" to the world breaks down all dividing walls as we live into that promise.

I urge you to deepen your involvement in and commitment to this important work to which we all are called. I believe our live webcast on this topic on **Aug. 6** is one useful way for us to pursue this together, and I hope you will view and take part in it.

You may read more about this webcast at www.ELCA.org/webcast, where a link to the live webcast will be embedded. A live stream also will be available at www.Facebook.com/Lutherans. Twitter hashtag is **#ELCAConfrontRacism**. If you would like to submit a question to be considered during the live webcast, please send it to livinglutheran@elca.org and provide your name and your congregation's name, city and state.

Join me for this important conversation.

Your Sister in Christ,



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