



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

Dear Sisters and Brothers in Christ,

I am delighted to welcome you to the 2016 Montana Synod Assembly and Theological Conference, June 3-5 in Billings, Montana. Much more information about the Assembly, and registration is online at [www.montanasynod.org](http://www.montanasynod.org).

“Deepen Faith and Witness” is our benchmark theme this year, and we are highlighting the upcoming 500<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the Reformation. Dr. Mary Jane Haemig of Luther Seminary will be our keynote speaker, and we have scheduled a number of Reformation-themed workshops. Whether your interest is hymnody or teen suicide, we have workshops for everybody.

Because this is a theological conference year, we will keep business to Friday and Sunday. All of Saturday will be keynotes, workshops and guided conversation of the future directions and priorities of the ELCA.

Business is kept to a minimum. We'll elect some Synod Council members and other positions, and adopt a budget. You can find information online at the synod assembly web site. We'll also consider a memorial adopted by the Synod Council asking the Churchwide Assembly to repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery.

On Friday night during worship we'll have our “Procession of Mission Support Intentions,” with congregations processing during the offering with their intent forms. And we'll install Pr. Mark Donald as Director of Christikon. We expect a group of Christikon staff to be there. On Saturday morning we'll recognize our newest class of LPA graduates. And during Sunday's closing worship, we'll ordain Tonia Fisher-Clark, who has completed TEEM and has been called to St. James in Columbus. Clergy—remember to bring your vestments and red stoles for Sunday morning.

The Rev. Kevin Strickland will be our ELCA representative. He serves as Assistant to the Presiding Bishop for worship. He will present the churchwide report, and guide us through our conversation on the future direction of the ELCA.

You'll hear an update on the Synod House and our timeline. And you'll have an opportunity to volunteer for next year's house-raising.

This year's offering is designated for the Campaign for the ELCA, a multi-year multi-million dollar campaign to strengthen ministries across the church. Envelopes were sent out to congregations with registration materials. We look forward to seeing you in Great Falls.

In Christ,

Jessica Crist, Bishop