

Grußwort

Reverend Viking Dietrich
Regional Representative for Europe, the Middle East and North Africa
Global Mission, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

vor der 12. Generalsynode der VELKD
auf ihrer 4. Tagung,

am Freitag, dem 11. November 2017, in Bonn

Vielen Dank Prof. Dr Hartmann, für diese Zeit und die Gelegenheit, die Grüße aus Amerika in die Synode zu bringen. Entschuldigen Sie, dass ich auf English spreche, ich meine, dass mein Deutsch ist noch nicht sehr gut.

Dear Brothers and Sisters,

I bring you warm greetings from the people of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, on behalf of our Presiding Bishop, the Reverend Elizabeth Eaton; the Executive Director of Global Mission, ELCA, Reverend Ralfael Malpica Padilla; and from the Director of our Desk for Europe, the Middle East and North Africa, Bishop Cindy Halmarson. I would also greet you on behalf of several of our synods who have partnerships with Landeskirche or Kirchenkreise : synods from northern Pennsylvania, southern Ohio, Minneapolis, and Southeastern United States.

I have recently started as Regional Representative for the ELCA, and have recently moved to Berlin with my wife and youngest daughter who is now 17. I look forward to working with you during the upcoming years and getting to know each of you better.

Our Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton has sent a letter of greeting that is being copied for you. In the interests of time, I was asked to share highlights from the letter.

- Bishop Eaton remarks that the 500 Jubilee has been an “opportunity to look back on the history for our tradition, and to discern how we are being called forward, together, in Christ.”
- She notes that “this anniversary is unfolding in a spirit of reconciliation, that our church and the global church together with our Roman Catholic sisters and brothers, and other ecumenical companions, have taken significant steps on the way to unity, justice and peace.” Also, “with our inter-religious neighbors, we also have deepened mutual understanding across religious lines and collaborated for the common good.”
- In this context of hope for greater unity and understanding, Bishop Eaton that during “this commemoration year, we have been inspired by the ways in which Lutherans [across the Federation] continue to share boldly the gifts of our tradition, [particularly] Martin Luther’s insistence that the unconditional promise of God’s love in Jesus Christ frees us to love and serve our neighbors.”
- She concludes her greeting, saying, “In this Reformation year and into God’s future, we are called to be a public witness to how God is continually at work, in and through us, re-forming the body of Christ in a world broken by sin. Thanks be to God for our participation in God’s mission.”

Thank you very much for this time to bring greetings and best wishes from your friends in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America.