



Metropolitan Chicago Synod
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

Bishop Curry's 2019 Christmas Message



“When they saw that the star had stopped, they were overwhelmed with joy.”
Matthew 2:10

When the world seems shrouded in pain, we look for signs, a star to guide us, a leader to unite a scattered flock. Magi travel, gifts in hand. Shepherds carry unspeakable hopes through valleys and desert paths. Mary and Joseph, cold and afraid, keep with them a small and holy promise given to them by angels and dreams. Who will this be, the prince of peace? Who will this be, the shepherd of the sheep? Who will this be, Immanuel, God-with-us, a savior for all? Hopes fixed on this child to be, an unlikely collection of people travel toward a stable, waiting and watching for a gift from God.

In my brief time as bishop, I have been deeply blessed to visit many of our synod's congregations, worshipping communities, and agencies. It has been a joy to see this church in action and to bear witness to its many unique and holy expressions. As I have celebrated and communed with many of you, one thing has become increasingly clear. We really do come from different ends of the earth. We inhabit different terrains. We come from varied and diverse races and genders, ethnicities and nationalities, abilities, classes, and sexualities. We speak many languages. We sing a multitude of songs.

Yet, wherever we are, whomever we are, we come to this church filled with hope, carrying small promises given to us by angels or by dreams. And following yonder stars, we arrive, together, one body made of many members, waiting and watching for a gift from God.

May hope move us again this Christmas season as we gather to celebrate the birth of Christ among us, the child in a manger, the holy gift of God.

In Christ,

Yehiel Curry
Bishop
Metropolitan Chicago Synod, ELCA