



HIV & AIDS STRATEGY

From www.ELCA.org/aids, "About the Strategy"

Recently named the "single greatest reversal in human development" in modern times, the HIV and AIDS crisis has already claimed more than 25 million lives. While tremendous advances have been made in response to AIDS over the past two decades, there is so much more to be done. In 2009, the Church Council of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA) adopted the ELCA Strategy on HIV and AIDS and called on the ELCA to respond faithfully and effectively to this pandemic.

Why the ELCA Strategy on HIV and AIDS?

- Each day, more than 6,800 people become HIV-positive, and more than 5,700 people die from AIDS.
- There are 33.2 million people living with HIV and AIDS worldwide, 1.2 million in the United States alone.
- AIDS is the leading cause of death in sub-Saharan Africa. More than 12 million children under the age of 18 in sub-Saharan Africa have lost one or both parents to AIDS.
- In countries hardest hit by HIV, life expectancy has declined by 20 years, poverty has deepened, and economic growth has been reversed.

What are the goals of the ELCA Strategy on HIV and AIDS?

The ELCA believes a world is possible where new cases of HIV are prevented and all individuals living with HIV or AIDS are able to live with dignity. The strategy names the following goals:

- Halt the spread of HIV through effective prevention, treatment, and care.
- Eliminate the stigma and discrimination experienced by those who are HIV-positive.
- Reduce the conditions of poverty and marginalization that contribute to the spread of HIV.

How will the ELCA accomplish these goals?

With over 4.7 million members and more than 10,400 congregations in the United States, in addition to the relationships with 68.3 million Lutherans worldwide, the ELCA is well-positioned to respond faithfully to those infected and affected by HIV and AIDS. Specific actions include:

- Raising \$10 million dollars to fund the goals of the strategy.
- Equipping congregations with study materials, worship and devotional resources to engage in dialogue and theological reflection.
- Encouraging ELCA congregations, synods and church-related social ministry organizations to welcome, support, and advocate with individuals living with and affected by HIV and AIDS in their communities.
- Sharing resources with trusted global partners and companion churches that will enable them to expand their service to the most vulnerable through effective ministries of HIV and AIDS prevention, treatment, care, and advocacy.

MONTHLY BIBLE VERSE

This Bible verse was selected by Harold Usgaard, bishop of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod, for everyone in the synod to study.

"He sent them out to proclaim the kingdom of God and to heal."

LUKE 9:2



ABOUT OUR SYNOD

The Southeastern Minnesota Synod is a faith community of 131,000 baptized people in 182 congregations as well as related institutions of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). Its geographic area includes 15 counties in the southeastern corner of Minnesota.

The Bridge is a monthly publication of the Southeastern Minnesota Synod, ELCA. For more information, contact the synod office:

SOUTHEASTERN MINNESOTA SYNOD, ELCA

1001 14TH ST. NW, SUITE 300

ROCHESTER, MN 55901-2551

(507) 280-9457

WWW.SEMNSYNOD.ORG