# ANNUAL REPORT 2023



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

# A MESSAGE FROM PRESIDING BISHOP ELIZABETH EATON



Dear friends in Christ,

Over the past year we have continued to experience changes in the world around us. Even as our church finds ways to adapt to this changing world, we find hope in the unchanging and always present promise of God's love through Jesus Christ. We change and adapt not to conform to the world but because we believe that the gift of God's Son is for the world, and that our congregations and worshiping communities are places to gather and be sent into the world, where we will tell the story of God's love in word and deed.

The ministries of our congregations, our synods and the churchwide organization provide ways for the church to move beyond the boundaries of structures and geography and to share God's love with people in our neighborhoods, our cities, our country and beyond. We engage in this ministry knowing that our church walks by faith, trusting in God's promise in the gospel, and that we exist by and for the proclamation of this gospel word. In John 15:5, Jesus reminds us, "I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing." We are connected by the promise that we do all through Christ and can do nothing apart from him.

God gives the Holy Spirit, who uses gospel proclamation — in preaching and sacraments, in forgiveness and in healing conversations — to create and sustain this faith. Just as we rely on God to sustain our faith, we rely on each other to sustain the ministries that offer God's love to the world. Through your generosity to each expression of this church — your congregation, your synod and your churchwide organization — you add to our collective voice proclaiming God's love for all.

I am grateful for your generosity over this last year. My gratitude spreads far beyond your generous financial gifts. You've shared your gifts of time through countless hours of volunteering, serving and accompanying. You've shared the gifts of your voices as we've tried to discover and learn how God is calling us to be the church now and into the future. And, finally, dear church, you have shared the gift of the realness of God's love with the world around you. Be well, dear church, and stand steadfast in the promise of God's love and grace as you take that promise with you into the world.

Elization & Eat

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

\*\*I am the vine; you are the branches. Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing.<sup>??</sup>—John 15:5

#### HOLLYWOOD LUTHERAN CHURCH CONGREGATIONAL MEETING PART 2 MINUTES FEBRUARY 2023

I.Call to Order: the meeting was called to order by President Tom Scott at 12:00 noon.

#### II.Roll Call:

- a. Secretary Phyllis Lundine took the roll call.
- b. Nine members were present constituting a quorum.

#### III.Minutes:

- a. Minutes from the prior Congregational Meeting were read.
- b. A motion was made and seconded, approving the minutes.
- **IV.<u>President's Report:</u>** Review and brief discussion of the status of how we have managed without the regular services of an ordained pastor; also, a plea to members to consider offering time and talent by serving on Council and/or various committees.
- V.<u>Pastor's Report:</u> (Presented by President Tom Scott): With the departure of Pastor Ed, worship services have been led by a patchwork of supply pastors and supplemented by Ted Goulet on Sundays when a supply pastor was not available.

## VI.<u>Treasurer's Report:</u>

- a. Fred Curley presented a financial report.
- b. A motion was made and seconded approving the financial report.

#### VII.Old Business:

- a. Main issue was nomination and election of officers.
- b. To fill two openings on the Council, Cherie Magnus and Kevin Elam were nominated.
- c. A vote was taken, and both were elected by acclamation.
- VIII.<u>New Business:</u> President Tom Scott led a brief discussion covering ongoing building maintenance and repairs and the expected costs.
- IX.<u>Next Congregational Meeting:</u> Date to be determined later.
- X.<u>Adjournment:</u> President Tom Scott adjourned the meeting at 1:00 pm.

Respectfully submitted by

Phyllis Lundine, Acting 2023 Council Secretary

# HOLLYWOOD LUTHERAN CHURCH CONGREGATIONAL MEETING PART II AGENDA FEBRUARY 4, 2024

## I. Call to Order: President Tom Scott

- II. Roll Call: David Conrad
- III. Devotion: Pastor Keith Youngblood
- IV. President's Report: Tom Scott
- V. Minutes: Minutes from December

#### VI. Purpose of this meeting is to:

- a. . To vote on the nominations made in Congregational Meeting Part I for Council Members.
- b. . To discuss the future of Hollywood Lutheran Church

c. .

## VII. Old Business:

### VIII. Adjournment:



# HOLLYWOOD LUTHERAN CHURCH

# TABLE OF CONTENT

Congregational Meeting Part 2 2023	Pg.3
Agenda Congregational Meeting	Pg.4
Presidents Report	Pg. 6-7
Treasurer's Report	Pg. 8
Balance Sheet: Profit & Loss Report	Pg. 9
Secretary's Report	Pg. 10
Property's Report	Pg. 11
Food Pantry's Report	Pg. 12
Mariposa Ministry Report	Pg. 13
Archivist's / Mutual Ministry's Report	Pg. 14
Hospitality Report	Pg. 15
Worship and Music Report	Pg. 16
Pastoral Letter	Pg. 17



# HOLLYWOOD LUTHERAN CHURCH PRESIDENT'S ANNUAL REPORT DECEMBER 31, 2023

I hope everyone at Hollywood Lutheran Church had a great and prosperous year.

The year 2023, Hollywood Lutheran's 102<sup>nd</sup> year, was a tumultuous year with many challenges to overcome. As your president, I did my best to make Hollywood Lutheran run as smoothly as possible.

Due to our lack of a permanent Pastor, I found myself more involved in the day-to-day operation of the Church. To help me with this task, I gave Bianca, our Parish Administrator, more control over the functions of the campus. She took on the responsibilities of managing the room rentals and managing the repair projects. She and I met face-to-face twice a week to discuss what needed to be done around the campus. We also communicated by email and phone calls, to ensure we were on the right track to ensure the campus was well maintained.

One of the biggest challenges was our continued search for a new Pastor to lead us spiritually and to guide us financially. This search was led not by me alone, but with the help of Ted Goulet. Ted did a great job of working with the Synod to find a Supply Pastor to fill our needs. He also took on the task of writing Sermons and Preaching on one Sunday each month when no one was available to preach.

In our search for a new Pastor, we came across Pastor Marc Morh. He was able to fill in on many Sundays and even was considered as an interim Pastor. We would have loved to have him as our interim, but his many endeavors outside of Hollywood Lutheran Church made it impossible for us to hire him for this purpose.

As we continued our search, the Synod recommended Pastor Keith Youngblood, a TEEM Pastor in training, as interim. As I write this report, we are evaluating him to determine if he is the right person to fill our needs as an interim Pastor.

Another challenge that came up in 2023 was filling the position of Organist. After almost a year of having Ma-Li Lin as our organist and listening to her perform beautifully, we found ourselves at odds with some of her demands and her inflexibility. She abruptly terminated her contract with us, and so the search for a new organist began. Thanks to Janet Weber, our previous organist and longtime congregant, we were never without music for the services. We screened several applicants, and finally, in August, the good Lord brought us Michael Anderson. Michael has been with us since then.

We also faced many maintenance issues over the past year. Drains backing up, roofs leaking, and floors needing repair or replacing, to name a few. Our Sexton, Abílio Seguro, with his many talents and skills, guided us through these repairs, saving us untold dollars that would have been spent hiring outside contractors. For this, we thank him very much. We also thank David Conrad for his work as janitor, which allowed Abilio to focus on maintaining our campus.

Continues on the next page.

As we begin 2024, there are still challenges that face us. Our congregation is dwindling and bringing in new members is difficult. Currently, many young people are not joining established churches, and as such, many congregations suffer from a lack of new members.

I don't know how many more years Hollywood Lutheran Church can survive, those of us in this congregation are committed to keeping our doors open to anyone and everyone who is seeking spiritual needs. Our many outreach programs, such as our Food Pantry Program and Prison Ministry will continue to operate as long as possible. The church will continue to offer low-cost space rentals so those in recovery from alcohol and drug addiction have a place to meet and find support so they can beat or keep their addiction at bay.

As President of the congregation, I have tried to see that we have spent our money wisely to prolong our closing as long as possible. And as I have been nominated to serve as your President for another year, I will continue to do that going forward.

It has been a pleasure being your President.

Respectfully Submitted,

Tom Scott, 2023 President Hollywood Lutheran Church Council

# HOLLYWOOD LUTHERAN CHURCH TREASURER'S ANNUAL REPORT JANUARY 2024

#### Treasurer's Report

It's been a challenging year. Increasing costs and decreasing revenues, as well as the absence of a regular pastor for the first 10 months have made it particularly so. We also incurred substantial expenses on some much needed roof repair.

On the positive side, we have been able to continue our community ministries in full force. Due to grants received by the LA Regional Food Bank (and the effort & expertise of the Food Pantry Coordinator Tom Scott), the Food Bank was able to provide significant discounts to us, limiting our costs to \$1825 in the year. Our Prison Ministry costs of \$922 were entirely supported by donations from the trust fund of a current inmate. Our Mission Support donations to the Synod totaled \$3200, as well as \$1500 to ELCA Disaster Response – Middle East Crisis.

Our Thrivent Mission Endowment fund showed a net Investment gain in the year of \$23,893 (14%).

As we have been doing for many years, we continue to operate at a substantial deficit. We are currently utilizing the proceeds from the 2021 sale of our bungalow property to meet the shortfall in our operating expenses, which came to \$148,315 in 2023. Our combined bank and investment accounts as of the close of the year total \$517,518.

We continue to face the challenge of eradicating our deficit before running out of cash. We do have sufficient reserves to keep us going for several years to come. I urge us all to move forward with a renewed spirit of commitment and faith, as well as thankfulness that we are able to continue to serve the congregation and community despite the many challenges we face.

Thank you and God Bless.

Fred Curley, 2023 Treasurer

Hollywood Lutheran Church Council, 2023 Treasurer

(Balance Sheet and Profit & Loss Report on the next page.)

#### HOLLYWOOD LUTHERAN CHURCH ANNUAL BUDGET SHEET JANUARY 2024

Balance Sheet	Dec 31, 23
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Checking/Savings	
1015 - General Account	5,594.64
1020 · Mission Plus (Designated Funds)	311,451.89
Total Checking/Savings	317,046.53
Other Current Assets	
1070 · Thrivent Mission Endowment Fnd	200,471.43
Total Other Current Assets	200,471.43
Total Current Assets	517,517,96
Fixed Assets	
1310 - Building	1,466,000.00
1320 - Equipment	190,000.00
1330 - Furniture	1,955.00
1340 · Education Building	228,000.00
1350 · Other Real Estate	44,000.00
Total Fixed Assets	1,929,955.00
TOTAL ASSETS	2,447,472.96
LIABILITIES & EQUITY	
Equity	
3000 - Opening Fund Balance	1,366,385.10
3500 · Designated Funds	
3504 · Capital Imp/Rep	-8,936.67
3512 - Susan Tapia Music Ministry	1,536.34
3513 · Columbarium Fund	86.62
3514 · Ken Noernberg Bequest	
3514-A · Noemberg Bequest Tithe Acct	25,663.98
Total 3514 - Ken Noemberg Bequest	25,663.98
3515 - David Chierichetti Estate	10,679.44
3524 - Flowers	261.29
3526 · Organ Fund	5.83
3527 · Sound/Video Systems	762.16
3529 - Hollywood Call Back	158.09
3531 - Mariposa Prison Ministry	520.54
3540 · Pastor's Discretionary Equity	1,624.83
3542 · Food Pantry	-1,375.23
3543 · Bluthner Piano Fund	6,699.91
3544 · Bungalo Sale	273,764.76
Total 3500 · Designated Funds	311,451.89
3600 · Thrivent Mission Endowment Fund	200,471.43
3900 · Retained Earnings	717,479.45
Net income	-148,314.01 -
Total Equity	2,447,472.96
TOTAL LIABILITIES & EQUITY	2,447,472.96

	Profit & Loss (condensed)	YTD
	Ordinana Income Transmo	Total
	Ordinary Income/Expense Income	
ł	5000 · Offerings	28,167.80
)	5100 · FacilityShare Costs	99,412.56
}	5200 · Miscellaneous Income	1,060.00
	5400 · Pastoral Acts	0.00
3	5700 · Fund Distributions to Gen Acct	173,091.54
3	5800 · Designated Fund Income	16,981.03
ì	5900 - Mission Endowment Fund Gain	45,814.10
	Total Income	364,527.03
)	Gross Profit	364,527.03
)	Expense	
)	6000 · Benevolence	3,419.85
)	6100 · Ministry Areas	2,084.91
)	6200 · Payroll & Benefits	192,036.28
}	6300 · Administration	13,506.09
;	6400 · Facility Expense	86,752.85
	6800 · Designated Fund Expenses	193,121.30
	6900 · Mission Endowment Fund Loss	21,920.66
	Total Expense	512,841.94
}	Net Ordinary Income	-148,314.91
	Net income	-148,314.91

(expanded Profit & Loss Report available upon request)

#### HOLLYWOOD LUTHERAN CHURCH SECRETARY'S ANNUAL REPORT DECEMBER 2023

During 2023, the Council of Hollywood Lutheran Church met each month on the third Sunday. Meetings were held in Hoick Hall after the Sunday worship service. Several motions were made during the year. All these motions were second and passed.

#### Members of the 2023 Council

#### Members at Large 2023

Tom Scott Cherie Magnus David Conrad Fred Curley President Vice President Secretary Treasurer

Jaffa Castañeda Carrera (ADORE LA) Julia Morales (ADORE LA) Phyliss Lundine Andrew Infinger Brian Anderson

## ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL (1-2) MEETINGS:

<u>December 3, 2023 – 1<sup>st</sup> Meeting</u> <u>February 4, 2024 – 2<sup>nd</sup> Meeting</u>

Respectfully submitted by,

David Conrad, 2023 Secretary Hollywood Lutheran Church Council

# HOLLYWOOD LUTHERAN CHURCH PROPERTY COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT DECEMBER 2023

#### Projects Completed:

- 1) The upstairs HLC restroom, aka the Men's Room, has been renovated. The (2) "privacy partitions" have been removed; however, for privacy the inner door remains.
- In the Gallery {worship site of Mt. Hollywood Church} the appropriate A/C has been installed. Pr. Ashley & her congregants are very happy and thankful. Note: Thanks to Abilio's working with the electrician, we saved approx. \$700 on this installation.
- 3) The Choir/Music Room, the room next to the Chancel on the north side, was totally emptied out. This included all music & extra/special event hymnals. All the sheet music for choirs is now being stored downstairs. Also, new windows were installed. We are not sure what the future will be for this room. Possibly, it could be rented as office space. Of course, it could always be re-designated as the Choir room. Now, we only need enough congregants to form a choir.
- 4) Our entire rear building has been re-shingled. This work was done by Abilio Salguero & Edwin Mayen. Thanks to their carpentry skills, we were able to save approximately \$15,000. Because a large section of the wooden roof was rotten, an entire side of the roof had to be totally rebuilt.

Report respectfully submitted by:

Bill Richards & Andrew Infinger 2023 Property Committee Co-Chairs

#### HOLLYWOOD LUTHERAN CHURCH FOOD PANTRY REPORT DECEMBER 2023

Well, another year has come and gone but hunger and food insecurity is still with us. At the Hollywood Lutheran Church Food Pantry, we are doing our best to help those who live in our neighborhood cope with those issues.

In 2023, my volunteers and I have distributed over 156,00 pounds of food to our clients.

Each week, the Food Pantry serves approximately 180 families, which translates to feeding 583 people.

We saw a small surge in clients during the writers' and actors' strikes. The unrest in Ukraine also brought in more clients.

To do this, the Food Pantry needs volunteers, and we have been lucky to have Arphi, Luba, Mary Francis, Leslie, Doreen, and Brian help Tom Scott set up, distribute, and put away the food.

I have worked hard to keep the cost to the Church as low as possible while still serving our clients. This year I will continue to do the same with hopes of feeding even more people with food insecurities.

At the Food Pantry, we had several special visitors, including Santa Claus, who, with the help of Sincerely,

Respectfully submitted:

Tom Scott, 2023 Food Pantry Coordinator Hollywood Lutheran Church

# HOLLYWOOD LUTHERAN CHURCH MARIPOSA MINISTRY ANNUAL REPORT DECEMBER 2023

The Mariposa Ministry started the year of 2023 with 105 prisoners. By the end of 2023 there were a total of 86. This reduced number of prisoners on the active list resulted in prisoners being paroled.

There are ten volunteers who write letters. They are from Time Bank of Los Angeles.

I checked the letters sent from the prisoners and their return addresses. If it was different, I updated the master list and the envelope list.

Each month, a copy of the Master List is made, and each CDC# (California Department of Corrections #) is checked. if they are paroled, they are removed from the list, and if they have moved to another prison, it is changed.

In December 2023, a letter was created for the holiday season and mailed along with 5 Christmas cards, 5 envelopes, and 5 stamps to each prisoner. These were stuffed in another bigger envelope stamped with six stamps and then mailed.

Respectfully submitted by,

David Conrad 2023 Mariposa Ministry Team

#### HOLLYWOOD LUTHERAN CHURCH ARCHIVES / MUTUAL MINISTRY ANNUAL REPORT JANUARY 2024

#### Mutual Ministry

We had no issues to consider.

Archives

Despite my inability to be present at church for a couple of months of the year, as I look back, a great deal was accomplished. Thankfully!

During the year,

Many boxes of old financial records were 'tossed'. Council minutes through 2022 are now safely stored in the safe. There continues to be a great deal of work left; undoubtedly, old financial records and service bulletins are no longer needed. Specific historical documents are safely in the safe, though additional items must be placed in the safe. The council approved the 'tossing' of the remaining Childcare records, which must now occur.

In the office, I could reorganize and update the general church file system in the file cabinets. The records of marriages, baptisms, and deaths are in better shape now. Also, members provided personal contact information, which was available to pastors, and updated the general member address and birthday lists.

Realizing that the framed original document of signatures of the first HLC members was fading, a very skilled Kevin Elam produced a visually better copy of that document. The reproduced framed item will now find itself, hopefully, hanging in the library. The original document is now safely in a dark place for preservation.

At this time, I need to resign as HLC archivist, for health reasons. However, I hope that at a later time, I can resume that responsibility. Serving in this capacity over these past few decades has been my honor.

Thank you.

Respectfully submitted,

Joan Riedell 2023 Archivist/Mutual Ministry Chair

# HOLLYWOOD LUTHERAN CHURCH HOSPITALITY ANNUAL REPORT DECEMBER 2023

Food and fellowship continue to be an important part of the worship experience. This year, your hospitality committee served refreshments for fifty-two Sundays, two of which were outdoor seasonal events enjoyed with Mount Hollywood Congregational Church and ADORE LA. This year, we welcomed Irene Yaro as Co-Chair of the committee. Irene prepares the "croissant sandwiches" and helps with the preparation and clearing of the serving area.

Also, this year, food offerings are not just commercially wrapped cookies and treats, but homeprepared fresh cold dishes.

Starting a few months ago, an offering basket was placed on the table to allow cash donations, which helps with the recurring cost of disposable serve ware and coffee.

Many thanks are due to Ted Goulet, Tom Scott, Raul Tapia and Cecelia Ortega for their contributions and help this year.

Please keep in mind that prepared food and/or beverages are always welcome.

Thanks, and "Bon Appetit"

Respectfully submitted by

Phyllis Lundine and Irene Yaros 2023 Hospitality

#### HOLLYWOOD LUTHERAN CHURCH WORSHIP AND MUSIC COMMITTEE ANNUAL REPORT JANUARY 2024

This past year has been one of many challenges for HLC and yet, with God's help, we continue to share our worship with a beloved congregation.

2023 began with an inspiring message from Bishop Brenda Bos, leading our service on the first Sunday of January. We gratefully welcomed Pr. Marc Mohr, who served as our Supply Pastor for most of the year. We also were blessed with sermons from Pastor Toni Casteneda-Carrera, Pr. Evangeline Dai and Deacon Tempie Beaman, as we searched for an Interim Pastor. Joyously, with a letter of Dispensation from the Synod, our own sacristan, Ted Goulet, presided and preached about once a month.

Each month, the committee chose the hymns for the next month's services, with the assistance of Janet Weber, our organist emeritus.

With the accompaniment of our organist, Ma-li Lin, Janet Weber, pianist, David Conrad, cantor, and the skills of Ted Goulet, lay leader, we did hold the Lenten Holden services.

In mid-summer, not renewing Ms. Lin's contract, we held auditions with two musicians, resulting in our offering the job of organist/pianist to Michael K. Anderson. He accepted the position and continues to do a very fine job for us.

In the fall, the Synod recommended Pr. Keith Youngblood as a worthy candidate for the position of our Interim Minister. He began to serve HLC in this capacity on Sunday, November 5, 2023. Pr. Youngblood shall assume the chairmanship of this committee, at our next meeting on Tuesday, January 16, 2024.

Respectfully submitted by

Ted Goulet and Karla Richards 2023 W&M Committee

#### HOLLYWOOD LUTHERAN CHURCH PASTORAL LETTER JANUARY 2024



PASTORAL ANNUAL REPORT

#### JANUARY 2024

Grace and Peace to you in the name of Jesus Christ,

Beloved, Hollywood Lutheran I have been blessed to be here in the house of God. Through God's Spirit, God speaks to those persons he has called to serve as pastors and ministers of His Church. The great Reformer Martin Luther described this inward call as "Gods voice heard by faith". Those whom God has called know this call by a sense of leading, purpose and growing commitment.

Since my first sermon November 5, 2023, it has been a true blessing to engage with Hollywood Lutheran learning together the plans God has for His Flock and His purpose and His plans for all here at Hollywood Lutheran, for God knew our journey and path long before we were placed by Him here at Hollywood Lutheran. It has been a spiritual journey and growth process for all of us, working together in unity and having meetings to help each other process this new union of myself and Hollywood Lutheran.

As we continue to empower Hollywood Lutheran together working as a team, me listening to the needs and goals of Hollywood Lutheran working together to do God's Will and purpose for His house. I want to thank Hollywood Lutheran Church Council and members for making myself and my wife Debra Youngblood welcome and becoming part of your church family. I know how much time, energy and love Hollywood Lutheran put into the ministry here, and it's such a blessing to know we can rely on you. Thank you for the hours you've spent assisting our church. Thank you for being a friend to those who need it most. Recognizing the importance of the Elders and leaders of Hollywood Lutheran my transition to the Pastoral responsibilities has been a smooth and blessed transition, Ted Goulet and Bill Richards the Assistant ministers helping during church Services and Tom Scott council president and the executive board assistants.

Humbling Serving,

#### Keith Youngblood

Pastor Keith Youngblood

"O Lord, you are my God; I will exalt you; I will praise your name

For you have done wonderful things, plans formed of old, faithful and sure

Isaiah 25:1

# HOLLYWOOD LUTHERAN CHURCH 101TH YEAR,

We are a congregation of the Southwest California Synod Evangelical Lutheran Church in America. Pastor Keith Youngblood Email: hollyluth@sbcglobal.net Phone: (323)667-1212 Website: www.hollywoodlutheranchurch.net YouTube: HLCstudios

As a reminder, this community is inclusive and welcomes all of God's people. Our intentional welcome to the LGBTQ+ community.

## **Special Dispensation**

Pastor Keith Youngblood, as a candidate for ordained ministry in the ELCA, has been authorized by Bishop Brenda Bos of the Southwest California Synod, to preside over Holy Communion.



A letter to:

Hollywood Lutheran Church & everyone on Campus,

Thank you, to the HLC council members, committee members, congregants, visitors, workers, volunteers, and renters. Thank you for all the work everyone has done, seen or unseen. A special thank you to the HLC employees on campus daily for keeping everything running smoothly.

We thank everyone who continuously prayed for the strength, hopefulness, healing, safety, and wellbeing of members, families, friends, neighbors, and our surrounding community.

> May the Lord bless you and keep you. May the Lord smile down on you and show you kindness. May the Lord answer your prayers and give you peace.

We pray that you & your loved ones are filled with love, strength, and peace.

With much love & appreciation, HLC 2023

# ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING OPENING LITURGY

Son of God, Eternal Savior

Recognizing that our faith is a living, busy, active and mighty thing, may the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ and the communion of the Holy Spirit be with each of you.

#### And also with you.

Teach us to love you with all our heart, soul, mind and strength.

#### Receive our prayer, O God.

Descend on our hearts, that we may love others in the ways Jesus loves us.

#### Receive our prayer, O God.

Empower us to be enthusiastic in pursuing your vision for our congregation.

#### Receive our prayer, O God.

Move us to engage issues in our community in Christlike ways, and to pursue deep and authentic relationships with those with whom we serve and partner.

#### Receive our prayer, O God.

Strengthen us to face the barriers we encounter in doing your work, learning to work with others amid disagreement.

#### Receive our prayer, O God.

Give us the ability to adapt to the cultural, economic and social changes that occur in the neighborhoods we serve.

#### Receive our prayer, O God.

Guide us to be a healthy congregation that learns from its failures as well as its successes and offers wisdom to others.

#### Receive our prayer, O God.

As we strive to become the church that we proclaim to be, raise up leaders who focus on the gospel of freedom, forgiveness and reconciliation as given to us through God's indescribable act of love in the death and resurrection of Jesus Christ. Renew us daily in our baptism, that we may discover vitality in our relationships with you, each other and those we serve in the world. **Amen.** 



Evangelical Lutheran Worship, 655

Text: Somerset C. Lowry

Music: IN BABILONE, Oude en Nieuwe Hollantse Boerenlities en Contradansen, 1710; arr. Julius Röntgen

Text and music are in the public domain. May be reproduced without restriction.

Through your generosity, God is at work across the ELCA. A portion of your offering, called Mission Support, advances the ministry of our church, helping the ELCA nurture Christian community, raise up leaders, serve our neighbors and strive for justice. Read stories and learn more at ELCA.org/SOFIA.

