



In Mission for Others **A Theology of Mission**

God calls us, through Word and Sacrament, to be disciples and to make disciples. Our discipleship is defined by the life, death and resurrection of Jesus of Nazareth. Our mission is to share the Gospel of Jesus Christ with people in Canada and around the world through the proclamation of the Word, the celebration of the Sacraments, and through service in Christ's name. On the basis of the Scriptures and the Lutheran Confessions:

We believe, teach and confess . . .

That God is revealed in the incarnation, the scandal of the cross, and in the wonder of the resurrection of Jesus Christ—not in human power and glory.

That people find their true worth, meaning and purpose in life through the free gift of God's grace in Christ alone—not through their own accomplishments and efforts.

That the crucified Christ calls us into a life of discipleship in which we are to be persons for others.

That in the resurrection of Jesus Christ, we face the future with a hope and confidence that is based on Christ alone.

That everything we have is a gift from God entrusted to our nurture and care, and that the Christian life is a life of stewardship.

That the Holy Spirit calls and gathers the whole church into the mission of God, which takes seriously both the reality of the world, and the reality of Christ, with equal care.

We understand that the present reality of the world involves significant changes in our society, economy and culture. Technological innovations, globalization, economic and political uncertainties, and shifting morals and values have increased the sense of insecurity for many people. We further understand that the needs of the world and our opportunities for mission are found on our doorsteps and not simply at a distance.

We believe that the reality of Christ is that God promises to be with us unconditionally in the midst of the changes in our world. The church is called to name those things that cause us to be less than human. The church is called to proclaim the truth of the Gospel to others and to live according to it as a community. The church is called to stand in solidarity with, and to welcome into its midst, all those who are marginalized because of sin and who experience injustice. The cross of Christ stands opposed to any ideology that treats people as commodities or proclaims that people can earn salvation by hard work or positive thinking.

We, as the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, celebrate and rejoice in the gifts which God has given us to carry out our mission in the world today. Where we see need, we will take action. We will use our gifts deliberately to be the people of God for others. Over the next decade:

We commit ourselves as church . . .

To worship the Triune God through Word and Sacrament. Our worship will be faithful to Scripture and tradition, celebrating diverse forms of worship and speaking to our context. Our worship will strengthen us to be God's people in mission in all of our vocations.

Through prayer, study, and conversation, to discern what it is for us to live faithfully under the cross at this time and place, seeing the world through the event of the cross. We will enter into the lives of people in our local, national and global communities.

To equip all members to be people in mission and to live as faithful disciples. We will emphasize ongoing learning for both lay and rostered members. We will make full use of the resources of the people in our congregations, schools, seminaries and leadership positions in the church. We also will work intentionally with other churches.

To encourage companionship and advocacy with those who are treated unjustly, whether in our local, national or global communities. We will do this ecumenically in as many ways as possible.

To share our gifts with the whole people of God beyond our specific denomination and national context. We will seek ways of working cooperatively wherever we are able.

To communicate clearly with one another and with society. We commit ourselves to openness and trust. We will listen to the voices of our church and society, and respond to their needs.

To respond faithfully, promptly and flexibly to the many opportunities for mission. We will pursue creative and effective ways for mission and ministry in our local, national and global communities.

Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada
11th Biennial Convention, June 2007

