



Southwestern Washington Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

The Rev. Richard E. Jaech, Bishop

A message from the Synod Anti-racism Work Team and Bishop Rick Jaech

“Sense cannot be made of the murder of a young man at the hands of the five men whose vocation and calling are to protect and serve. This was senseless and evil.”

Bishop Michael Curry, Presiding Bishop, The Episcopal Church

Our hearts ache with the murder of another innocent Black child of God, killed by Memphis officers while they were on duty and representing the public. We call on every person of faith to think deeply about how we might carry forward the biblical message that we are all created by God in God’s own image.

Blackness is part of the image of God that was entrusted to Tyre Nichols, just as Tyre was entrusted to us. God mourns Tyre’s suffering and that of his family and friends. We mourn with them.

As members of the ELCA, we must look honestly at ourselves, rather than just criticize the actions of others. We confess that racism is embedded in our own habitual actions, structures, and systems. As our Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton said, “Dear church, now is the time to focus, listen, learn, counsel, advocate for just reforms, and lament a grief that seems relentless, that is awoken again with each act of tragedy and injustice across this nation.”

We pray that the Spirit of God will stir, heal, and renew us all in this painful time.

In Christ,

The Synod Anti-racism Work Team and Bishop Rick Jaech