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Week of January 4, 2026

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1. Concern, Prayers for Venezuela

The ELCIC joins with [The Lutheran World Federation \(LWF\)](#) and stands in solidarity with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Venezuela and with the communities affected by the situation in the country that has been deteriorating for months. ELCIC National Bishop Larry Kochendorfer offers the following prayer:

God most mighty, God most merciful, you are our refuge and strength. We come before you with heavy hearts, lifting up the people of Venezuela following the U.S. military action on January 3. Bring calm where there is fear, clarity where there is confusion, and restraint where there is anger or despair. We pray for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Venezuela.

where there is anger or despair. We pray for the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Venezuela and its Bishop, Gerardo A. Hands Colmenares. Let the church be a living sign of your grace and a place of refuge, truth, accompaniment, and hope for all who suffer. Where systems oppress and voices are silenced, raise up pathways of accountability, reconciliation and peace. Guide us all in the way of building peace built on justice, equality, and recognition of every human life as sacred. We entrust Venezuela, its people and your church into your loving hands, trusting not in our own strength but in your steadfast love made known in Jesus Christ, who is our peace, and whose name we pray. Amen.

To read the statement published by LWF on January 3, please click on the button below:

[LWF Statement](#)

2. New Year's Message 2026

The light of Christ changes how we see the world and “God can make us humans new by drawing us into this new perspective,” says The Lutheran World Federation (LWF) General Secretary Rev. Dr. Anne Burghardt in her New Year message to the global communion of churches.

Reflecting on the words of Revelation 21:5 ‘See I am making all things new’, Burghardt reflects on the way that God’s promise “stretches across time, from the moment those words were first spoken to the early Christian community,” up until our present day. How do we receive this message, she asks? “With hope or with fear? With longing or with resistance?” To read the full message, please click on the button below:

[New Year's Message](#)

3. Justice Updates

ELCIC Volunteer Opportunities - Ecumenical Justice Committees

The ELCIC is seeking representatives for two ecumenical committees:

- [Project Ploughshares](#) management board
- [The Commission on Justice and Peace](#)

Both groups are affiliated with The Canadian Council of Churches. For more information and if you're interested in applying, please contact Rev. Paul Gehrs, Assistant to the Bishop, Justice and Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations at pgehrs@elcic.ca by January 15.

Join Our ELCIC Inclusion and Justice Task Forces

The ELCIC is calling on passionate members from coast to coast to join one of three task forces driving our church's work in justice, inclusion, and faithful witness. By sharing your insights and experiences, you'll help shape national initiatives and support the ELCIC's vision of a welcoming, accessible, and compassionate church for all.

Task Forces:

- Ability & Inclusion Task Force
- Task Force on Addressing Racism, White Supremacy and Racial Justice
- Affirming Grace Task Force: Diversity, Equity and Inclusion for All Task Force

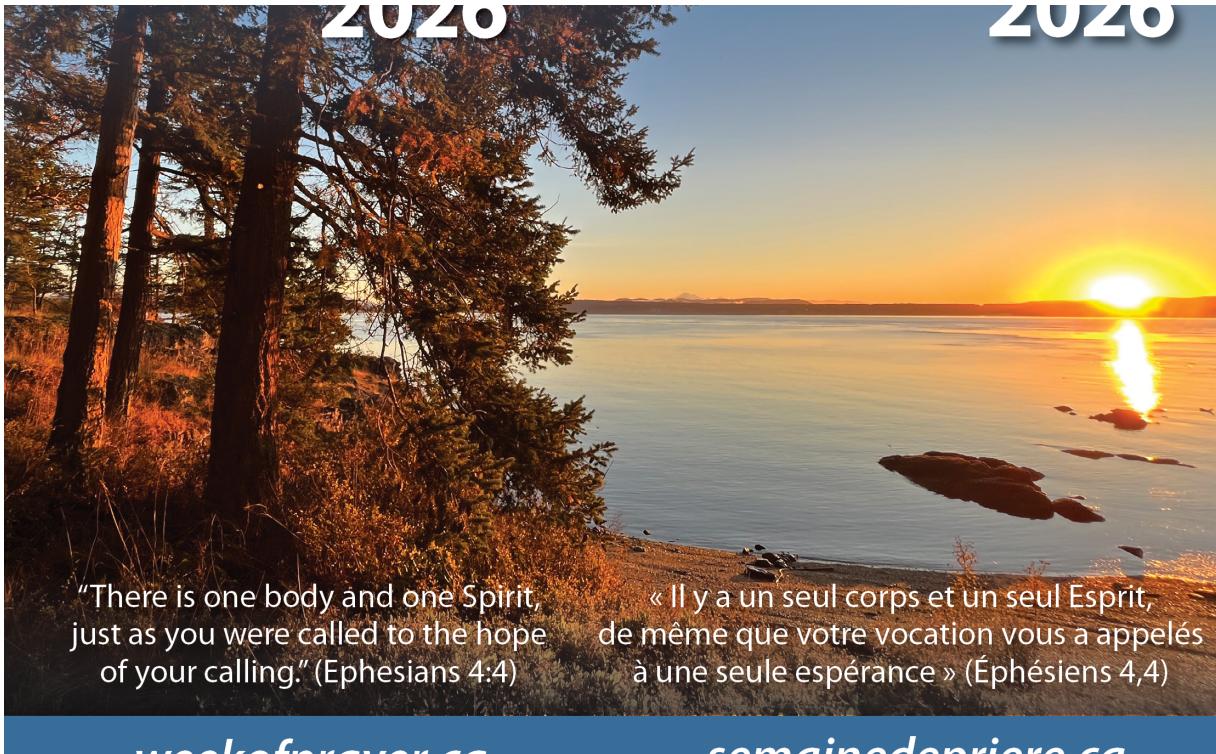
Who should consider applying: ELCIC members - lay or rostered - who care deeply about justice, inclusion, accessibility, spiritual renewal, and the future of our shared ministries. Lived experience, ministry involvement, professional expertise, and passion for equity are all valuable gifts.

Deadline: Applications are open **until January 15, 2026**. If you feel called to contribute, learn more and sign up through the JotForm link below.

Questions or would like more information? Please contact [Carmen Ramirez, Assistant to the Bishop for Diversity, Equity and Inclusion.](#)

[Apply Here](#)





“There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the hope of your calling.” (Ephesians 4:4)

« Il y a un seul corps et un seul Esprit, de même que votre vocation vous a appelés à une seule espérance » (Éphésiens 4,4)

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Prairie Centre for
Ecumenism



Canadian Centre
for Ecumenism

INFORMATION • DIALOGUE • RECONCILIATION

Week of Prayer for Christian Unity 2026

The 2026 Week of Prayer for Christian Unity (WPCU) theme, chosen by the faithful of the Armenian Apostolic Church together with the Armenian Catholic and Evangelical Church is *“There is one body and one Spirit, just as you were called to the hope of your calling”* (Ephesians 4:4). This year’s WPCU invites Christians to draw on our shared heritage and to deepen our fellowship in Christ - a unity that connects believers around the world.

As you plan your WPCU celebration, please remember to share your event details using the webform so your gathering can be featured on the weekofprayer.ca 2026 listing page. Be sure to explore the Annotated Worship Service and other helpful resources available for planning and reflection.

The Week of Prayer for Christian Unity takes place each year from January 18-26. For WPCU resources, please click the button below:

[WPCU Resources](#)

7. Executive Partnerships

Lutheran-Anglican-Moravian Cycle of Prayer

The following are the prayer petitions for: **Sunday, January 11**

ACC: Ryan Weston, Lead Animator, Public Witness for Social and Ecological Justice; Executive Director, Will Postma, and staff of Alongside Hope

ELCIC: Interim-Executive Director, Michael Pryse, and the staff of Canadian Lutheran World Relief

MOR: Justin Rabbach, Executive Director, and staff of the Board of World Mission

WCC Job Posting - Director of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism

The World Council of Churches is looking for candidates to fill the position of Director of the Commission on World Mission and Evangelism. This full-time position will be based in Geneva, Switzerland. The deadline for application is on January 31, 2026. For more information and to apply, please click on the button below.

[Apply Now](#)

Applications for 2026 Certificate in Interreligious Studies

The World Council of Churches (WCC) Ecumenical Institute at Bossey has opened applications for 2026 Certificate of Advanced Studies (CAS) in interreligious Studies. To learn more, please click below.

[Click Here](#)

Join Our Ecumenical Shared Ministry Educational Event - February 12

As the landscape of Canadian churches changes across the country, interest in Ecumenical Shared Ministry (ESM) as a means of supporting vibrant and sustainable church presence and witness in communities from coast to coast to coast is growing. ESM involves the moving into an intentional partnership with one or more of the other Christian churches in your neighbourhood or town to share more of your life and ministry together. This can include things like sharing programs, ministers, buildings, worship services, and more. This online educational event is designed for people in local congregations who are interested in exploring the possibility of ESM as a fit in their context, and who want to learn more.

Special guests include Canadian ESM experts such as Rev. Dr. Sandra Beardsail, and Ms. Cathryn Wood, from the Prairie Centre for Ecumenism, together with members of the

national Lutheran-Anglican-Moravian Commission. While the gathering will have some specific focus on the potential relationships of these three full communion churches, participation from other denominations is also warmly welcome and encouraged.

Curious about what shared ministry could look like where you live? Register now for the February 12 ESM Education Event and take the first step in exploring ecumenical partnership.

[Register Now](#)

5. Days of Emphasis

The ELCIC observes Days of Emphasis to highlight key aspects of faith and service. Beyond worship, Days of Emphasis invites members to engage in tangible ways of serving both the church and the wider community.

- **Global Mission Sunday, February 1**
- **Diaconal Sunday, February 22**

Resources for Global Mission Sunday will be available shortly and will include a sermon from National Bishop Larry Kochendorfer, prayers, and a bulletin insert. Please check on our website by clicking on the button below from time to time.

[Global Mission Sunday Resources](#)

Resources for the upcoming 2026 Diaconal Ministry Sunday are [now available for download and use off the ELCIC website](#). The ELCIC lifts up diaconia through Diaconal Ministry Sunday on the last Sunday of February, annually. This year it will be celebrated on February 22. To learn more about the service and leadership offered by the ELCIC's diaconal leaders download the 2026 Diaconal Sunday sermon video and written text, as well as a service guideline resource for use at home or in your congregations below:

[Diaconal Ministry Sunday Resources](#)

6. From the National Office

Annual Report Covers

Does your congregation need Annual Report Covers? These covers can be used by any ELCIC congregation or ministry as part of your Annual General Meeting's annual report. Included on the back page of the Annual Report Covers are devotions to open and close your meeting. These resources are available free of charge from the national office (your congregation is invited to consider covering postage costs to send these out - approximately \$25 per package). If you wish to place your orders, please click on the button below:

[Order Here](#)

Do the officers, council and members of your congregation receive ELCIC News directly? From information and resources, to upcoming events -- ELCIC News keeps you connected!

Encourage them to sign up for ELCIC NEWS today.

ELCIC News is an electronic Newsletter full of information and resources from the ELCIC National Office.

Please share this information widely.

Forward this email to others in your congregation.

Items can also be copied and pasted into worship bulletins, calendars and announcements.

Follow the ELCIC on social media by following the links below:





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**Evangelical Lutheran
Church in Canada**

Living Out God's Grace & Unconditional Love

Some of the resources mentioned in ELCIC News are available from the ELCIC National Office. If you prefer to order those materials in print, phone 1.888.786.6707 ext 177 or 204.984.9177; email orders@elcic.ca; or fax your order to 204.984.9185 "Attn Orders Desk". Be sure to fully describe the item and tell us the quantity you need. You will be invoiced when the order is filled.

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