

ELCA Facts

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As of December 31, 2015, there were 3,668,034 baptized members in the ELCA. There were 9,320 congregations organized in 65 synods in nine geographic regions.

The ELCA is a diverse church body, becoming more so every day. This church is committed to growing in diversity and strengthening its global, ecumenical and interfaith relationships around the world.

ELCA congregations are led by gifted men and women who have been called by God to serve their community. The ELCA calls both women and men to serve as pastors and lay rostered leaders. Here are some facts about ELCA leaders:

As of September 15, 2015, there were 17,777 leaders on the ELCA roster including 966 associates in ministry, 59 deaconesses, 200 diaconal ministers and 16,435 ordained clergy. In 2015, 25 percent of clergy on the ELCA roster were women. In the ELCA's eight seminaries, the numbers of women and men preparing for ministry are about equal.

About 86 percent of ordained women and 83 percent of ordained men are actively serving in congregations.

The ELCA offers opportunities for Lutheran education at every level and considers education as an important part of our calling. We offer quality education at every level through our institutions. In addition to the eight ELCA seminaries and two seminary extension centers, there are 26 colleges and universities, 50 or more lifelong learning programs, 14 high schools, 296 elementary schools, 1,573 early childhood programs, 145 camp and retreat centers serving 450,000 annually.

The ELCA is committed to making the world a more just and peaceful place to live. Through programs, ministries and partnerships ELCA congregations, synods and the churchwide organization work every day to address inequities in political, economic and social systems and to end conflict and violence all over the world. We are a church that believes God is calling us into the world – together. This is Christ's church. There is a place for you here.

To access the ELCA presiding bishop's biography, [click here](#).