



Southwestern Texas Synod

Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

From the Office of the Bishop



February 18, 2021

Friends in Christ,

Grace and peace to you all. The winter storms this week have impacted millions of people across the United States and within our synod, and our hearts go out to everyone who continues to struggle with lack of power and water. We are thankful for the ways in which many of our congregations have already responded to needs in their communities, and as the extent of the damage is revealed in the coming days, we offer you our ongoing prayers and encouragement. Below you will find a variety of resources from the Office of the Bishop and the synod Disaster Team.

Supporting Each Other

- Bishop Sue invites all people of our synod to join her on Saturday, February 20th at 9:30 AM for a time of prayer and reflection.

Join [Zoom Meeting](#)
Phone-In: 1-346-248-7799
Meeting ID: 821 2052 9815
Passcode: 602092

- If you are a worship planner and looking for timely resources, click [here](#) to find prayers, hymns, and a litany from Lutheran Disaster Response.
- If property damage or conditions prevent your congregation from hosting worship, consider partnering with another congregation.

How Your Congregation Can Respond

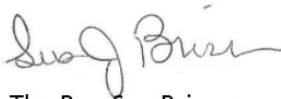
- Use phone trees to check on members
- If you are able and if there is a need, considering offering your space as a warming station, charging station, or shelter or allow people to fill containers of water
- Post prayers and encouragements on social media
- Offer a time for your congregation to join together on Zoom to check-in and pray together

State and Local Resources

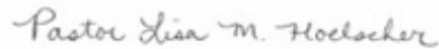
- Find a local warming station at <https://tdem.texas.gov/warm/>
- Track power outages at <https://poweroutage.us/area/state/texas>
- Check road conditions at www.drivetexas.org
- Report damage to your home or business by using the [self-reporting survey](#) from the Texas Dept. of Emergency Management
- If you or someone you know is experiencing a mental health crisis, seek help by calling 1-800-985-5990 or text TalkWithUs to 66746 to speak with a trained crisis counselor available 24/7, 365 days a year (sponsored by the Substance Abuse and Mental Health Services Administration)

Grant funding will soon be available to assist congregations incurring expenses due to damage or providing community support.

In Christ's Peace,



The Rev. Sue Briner
Bishop of the Southwestern Texas Synod



Pastor Lisa Hoelscher
Chair, SWT Synod Disaster Response Team