



# Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

*ELCA clergy of the greater Iowa Quad Cities Area*

January 28, 2026

Dear Senators Grassley and Ernst,

As you know, this week, the Senate will vote on the FY26 Homeland Security Appropriations Act that recently passed the House of Representatives. The bill funds the operations of Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) and Customs and Border Patrol (CBP), agencies whose aggressive presence in Minnesota in recent weeks led to the killing of Renee Nicole Good and Alex Pretti, the detention of children, refugees, and U.S. citizens, and caused both widespread fear and faith-filled resistance.

Accountability and oversight over the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) are desperately needed. We urge you to exercise leadership in the Senate. We ask you to not support any additional funding for immigration enforcement. Furthermore, we ask you to advocate for accountability and oversight for DHS.

As members and pastors of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), our faith teaches that when one person suffers, we all suffer. We ask you to protect our neighbors by prioritizing accountability for ICE, not additional funding for actions that are harming our communities.

The six ELCA bishops in the state of Minnesota wrote recently: "We know that all our neighbors bear the image of God... We also know there are voices around us that challenge the truth of who we are and who our neighbors are. It is our fervent hope that every one of us would remain deeply rooted in our identity as God's beloved."

In Christ,

Rev. Leah Holloway-Nilsen, Calamus Lutheran Parish, Calamus  
Rev. Dr. Carrie Lewis La Plante, Faith Lutheran Church, Eldridge  
Rev. Heather Geest, Faith Lutheran Church, Eldridge  
Rev. Rodney Underwood, Gloria Dei Lutheran and St. Paul Episcopal, Durant  
Rev. Stephanie Wood, Grace Lutheran Church, Davenport  
Rev. Kirsten Lee, Grace Lutheran Church, Davenport  
Rev. Joel Nau, Redeemer Lutheran Church, Bettendorf  
Vicar Bryce Hewlett, St. James Lutheran Church, Bettendorf  
Rev. Janine Johnson, St. Mark Lutheran Church, Davenport  
Rev. Sara Olson-Smith, St. Paul Lutheran Church, Davenport  
Rev. Katy Warren, St. Paul Lutheran Church, Davenport  
Rev. Madeleine Tyler, St. Paul Lutheran Church, Davenport  
Rev. Stephen Nilsen, Trinity Lutheran Church, Pleasant Valley  
Rev. Clark Olson-Smith, Zion Lutheran Church, Davenport