

## NEWS RELEASE

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## FOR MORE INFORMATION

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### **Lutheran Publisher 1517 Media Announces CEO Transition Plan**

MINNEAPOLIS (November 3, 2016)—At an all-staff meeting this afternoon, Beth A. Lewis, President & CEO of 1517 Media, the ministry of publishing of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, announced that she will not seek a renewal of her current contract when it ends on August 31, 2018. She has served in this role since September 2002 and is currently halfway through her fourth four-year term.

Ms. Lewis told the staff, "These fourteen years have been times of incredible change--change in the church, in higher education, and in the publishing industry! We have gone from being a print-centric organization that was in dire financial straits to being a highly regarded, financially stable publishing ministry and innovative media business." She went on to say, "This decision to retire--even though it is nearly 2 years away--makes me a bit melancholy. I can't even imagine what it will be like to leave this place about which I care so deeply and each of you with whom I love partnering for the sake of the gospel. Yet, I am very excited about being able to spend more time with my husband, Rick, and our family."

Ms. Lewis's announcement to the staff was followed by an announcement from Chair of the 1517 Media Board of Trustees, Mark Brokering. Mr. Brokering began by saying, "It's been amazing to watch the turnaround Beth and all of you have achieved—especially during this time of turmoil in the publishing industry.... Beth has had to make many difficult decisions to bring this organization back to health under very challenging circumstances, and the result is this vibrant and innovative company that we have today. About a year ago, Beth told the board she wasn't planning to continue as President & CEO past her fourth 4-year term, which ends in August 2018. She had nothing to gain by giving us such early warning, but in the interest of this company's future, she wanted to give us lots of lead time to plan for a smooth transition."

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November 3, 2016

Page 2

Mr. Brokering then announced that following a comprehensive review of the needs of the organization including in-depth interviews with key stakeholders, the Board unanimously elected current Senior Vice President and Publisher Timothy P. Blevins as the President and CEO-elect. In announcing the election, Mr. Brokering said, "Tim has a proven track-record of success here at 1517 Media and prior to that at Thomson Reuters. He has been instrumental in shaping the strategy of the company and guiding work across the organization to strengthen existing lines of business while seeking new ways to serve new audiences."

Mr. Blevins will assume his new role on September 1, 2018. And, to further ensure a smooth transition, on that date Ms. Lewis has agreed to move into a one year, renewable, part-time role providing continuity with communications and relationships with key stakeholders, especially across the ELCA.

#### About 1517 Media

1517 Media designs and develops resources that enhance faith and enrich the life of the Christian church and the communities it serves. 1517 Media's innovative resources serve churches, higher education, and families at home—all delivered in a wide range of media including print and digital formats, videos, apps, and online subscription offerings. 1517 Media has three publishing units, Augsburg Fortress, Fortress Press and Sparkhouse.