Biographical Sketch: Beth A. Lewis
Beth Lewis is the President & CEO of 1517 Media, the ministry of publishing of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA). 1517 Media is the parent organization for Augsburg Fortress, Fortress Press and Sparkhouse.

Personal and Education: Originally from Lexington, KY, Beth is a lifelong Lutheran. She attended the University of Kentucky and completed her undergraduate degree at Maryville University in St. Louis. She is also a graduate of the Advanced Management Program of the Harvard Business School. In May 2008, she received the Doctor of Divinity honorary degree from the Wartburg Theological Seminary. In 2015, she was recognized with the Women in Business Award by the Minneapolis/St. Paul Business Journal. Beth is an active member of Calvary Lutheran Church in south Minneapolis.

Beth is married to the Rev. Dr. Richard (Rick) Rouse, who consults with congregations on becoming missionally oriented and on implementing the catechumenate. He is also author of several books related to congregational life and mission. Beth & Rick are often invited together as speakers on a wide variety of topics for church leaders. They have three adult children and five grandchildren.

Professional Background: Beth spent 22 years working for three Fortune 500 publishing companies, Time Warner, McGraw-Hill, and Times Mirror. In 1998, Beth decided to pursue a more entrepreneurial venture and acquired a privately owned computer training school, Computer Coach, Inc. in Boca Raton, FL.

In August 2002, Beth was called to her current role as President & CEO of 1517 Media. In this role, she has led the staff in turning around this ministry of publishing and moving from a traditional ink-on-paper publishing company to a media company creating web-based subscription content, video-based curricula, over 2000 eBooks and mobile apps in addition to print content. In 2009, they launched a new ecumenical publishing division, Sparkhouse. Their highly regarded and popular curricula for children, youth and adults include Spark, Holy Moly, Connect, Whirl, re:form, CoLABorate, and animate. In 2015, Sparkhouse Family was launched to provide faith formation resources for the home including books, story bibles, and videos. In 2016, Sparkhouse launched Frolic, a faith formation resource for use in both church and home with children ages birth to three years old.

Beth is a popular keynote speaker and teacher in both Lutheran and ecumenical gatherings on a wide variety of topics to assist church and not-for-profit organization leaders: from turnaround strategies for faith-based organizations to strategic thinking to effective use of technology to congregational hospitality. In June 2015, this publishing ministry was named one of the Top Workplaces in Minnesota by the Minneapolis Star Tribune. Beth is the immediate past-President of the PCPA (Protestant Church-Owned Publishers Association). She also serves on the Luther Seminary Board of Directors executive committee.

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