



Mission Interpretation

Telling stories of our hands doing God's work

Mission Memo #503

November 10, 2020

24th Sunday after Pentecost (November 15, 2020)



Our readings during November speak of the end times. Zephaniah proclaims that the coming day of the LORD will be filled with wrath and distress. Paul says it will come like a thief in the night and urges us to be awake and sober. Jesus tells the parable of the talents, calling us to use our gifts, while we still have time, for the greater and common good. In a world filled with

violence and despair, we gather around signs of hope—word, water, bread, and wine—eager to welcome the good news of Christ's coming among us.

Readings

- [Zephaniah 1:7, 12-18](#) - *The day of the Lord*
- [Psalm 90:1-8 \[9-11\] 12](#) - *So teach us to number our days that we may apply our hearts to wisdom. (Ps. 90:12)*
- [1 Thessalonians 5:1-11](#) - *Be alert for the day of the Lord*
- [Matthew 25:14-30](#) - *The story of the slaves entrusted with talents*

Awake to the Grace of God

Linked with the reading from 1 Thessalonians and Psalm 90, Jesus' parable of the talents invites a full-hearted response to God's lavish gifts of faith and purpose: "Use 'em if you've got 'em!" The people of God are meant to be engaged, alert, and ready to share what we have received from our prodigally (wastefully) generous God. While the parable has sometimes been interpreted in the context of judgment, a careful reading also spotlights the beauty of the faith-generated response to God's lavish grace.

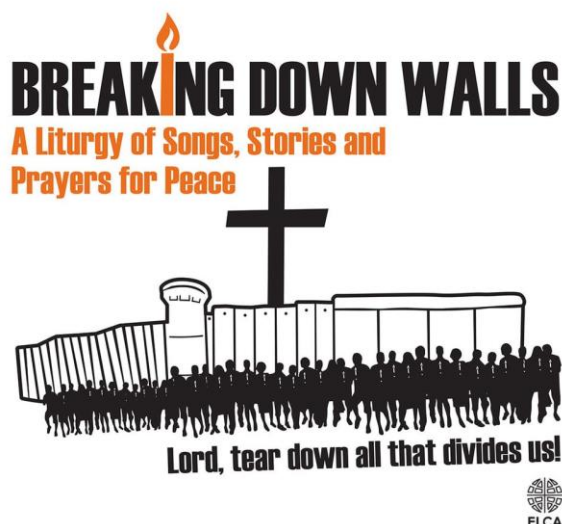
One word for this is *stewardship*. Presented in light of God's gift of faith and purpose, this "churchy" term can today be transformed to new understanding in the proclamation of the gospel text. Instead of the weight of obligation and duty we so often associate with religion, we are invited today to another way: What does it mean to be awake to the grace of God?

On the surface Jesus' parable is a simple premise: the contrast of workers who please and workers who disappoint their master. Psalm 90 sings to us to carefully

treasure our lifetimes, for there is something at stake. First Thessalonians is a letter reminding people they have exactly what they need to survive and thrive.

What does it mean to be awake to the grace of God?

In a time in history when so many people are discouraged with work, home, life, and church, a word from Jesus' parables may be healing, enriching, and startlingly attractive. The gospel text today is an opportunity to remind the people of God that there is a depth to faith that is sustainable. In fact, beneath the parables of Jesus is a depth it will take a lifetime to unpack.



November 9 marks the 31st anniversary of the fall of the Berlin Wall. Join with ELCA Global Mission in praying to bring down walls today, from the U.S.-Mexico border to Palestine.

Download the Breaking Down Walls toolkit here: <https://elca.org/Resources/Global-Mission>

While COVID put the program on hold last year, applications for the ELCA's Young Adults in Global Mission (YAGM) program are now being accepted for the 2021-2022 program year. If you (or someone you know) are a young adult ages 21 to 29, you can apply for an international service year that will shape your faith, career, identity and understanding of how you fit into God's work in the world.

Through YAGM, you'll learn what it means

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Young Adults in Global Mission

2021-2022 Program Year

APPLICATIONS ARE OPEN!

DEADLINE: January 15, 2021

ELCA

to serve in a spirit of accompaniment as you walk alongside global church companions. You'll immerse yourself in new community and form deep relationships with the people you meet. And you'll confront issues of wealth and poverty, racial privilege, gender privilege, economic disparity and globalization, all through the lens of faith.

Learn more and apply on the YAGM website [ELCA.org/YAGM](https://www.elca.org/YAGM). Deadline to apply is January 15, 2021.

Help from the Taiwan Lutheran Church



Help does go both ways. Lutheran Disaster Response recently connected the [Gulf Coast Synod, ELCA](#) and the Taiwan Lutheran Church, who reached out with an offer to donate face masks to a group in need. Because of the impact of Hurricane Laura on the region, face masks were needed more than ever in the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast region. Last month, a shipment of 2,000 disposable facemasks

arrived in Louisiana. The synod distributed them to several churches with food ministries, as well as St. Paul Lutheran Church in Lake Charles, Louisiana, which was damaged during Hurricane Laura. We are thankful for the generosity of the Taiwan Lutheran Church and for the work of the Texas-Louisiana Gulf Coast Synod as they respond to both the pandemic and multiple hurricanes.

Hurricane Eta Hits

Hurricane Eta brought devastating impacts to Nicaragua, Honduras, and other nations in Central America.

Pictured are the overwhelming floodwaters in Honduras, shared by companion church [Iglesia Cristiana Luterana De Honduras - ICLH](#). We continue to pray for those who have



lost loved ones and property, for the first responders, and for all those affected by the hurricane. Lutheran Disaster Response will be there to assist.



Beyond Borders and Barriers: Creating an Equitable World for Migrant Women and Girls

On Wednesday, December 9 at 4 p.m. ET, LIRS will convene experts and advocates for "Beyond Borders and Barriers," a panel discussion about the unique challenges migrant women and girls face internationally and in the United States, as well as ways in which we can further foster a safer, more equitable world.

[Register here.](#)

Check out the [Metro Word flipbook](#) for more stories and events

Coming Events:

	Event/Activity	Resources
June , 2021	Mission Moments - 33rd Annual Synod Assembly of the Metropolitan Chicago Synod, a virtual event	For more information visit http://www.mcselca.org/assembly/
August 3-5, 2021	The Eleventh Triennial Convention of Women of the ELCA, Phoenix, Ariz	For more information visit https://www.womenoftheelca.org/eleventh-triennial-convention
August 14, 2021	35th Annual Lutherdale Fest Quilt Auction	For more information visit https://www.lutherdale.org/
July 24- 28, 2022	ELCA Youth Gathering - Boundless: God Beyond Measure, Minneapolis, MN	https://www.elca.org/YouthGathering/COVID19
August 8- 13, 2022.	2022 Churchwide Assembly Columbus, OH at the Greater Columbus Convention Center	For more information check www.elca.org