



Mission Interpretation

Telling stories of our hands doing God's work

Mission Memo #566

July 12, 2022



6th Sunday after Pentecost (July 17, 2022)

Perhaps the church, at its best, is "all ears." God urges the faithful, again and again, to "listen up!"—to heed the word that gives life. So it was with Abraham and Sarah, Mary and Martha, and the early church at Colossae. So it is today as we join the assembly to hear the word of God, the word of life.

Readings

- [Genesis 18:1-10a](#) - *The hospitality of Abraham and Sarah to three visitors of the Lord*
- [Psalm 15](#) - *Lord, who may abide upon your holy hill? (Ps. 15:1)*
- [Colossians 1:15-28](#) - *Hymn to Christ, the firstborn of all creation*
- [Luke 10:38-42](#) - *Jesus says: Martha, your sister Mary has chosen the better part*

Unexpected and Intentional Distraction

As digital tablets and smart phones keep us busy and on the go, today's gospel reminds us of a struggle: when are we to set aside our busy calendars, duties, and to-do lists and simply rest in God's presence, listening to what God has to say to us? This tension mounts in our gospel as Jesus addresses Martha's busyness, worry, and distraction, juxtaposed with Mary's contemplation, focus, and desire to sit at the feet of the great teacher. But is "quietly sitting" even possible in our age of distractions? Perhaps we can find helpful advice in our first reading, as Abraham rests in the heat of the day. In that time of rest, he was ready to receive the three guests who came bearing the news that Sarah would have a son, fulfilling God's promise given years earlier. With the heat keeping him from moving on to other things, the guests had Abraham's undivided attention. These readings remind us how crucial it is to set aside time to spend with God. We might even wonder what sort of things Jesus was saying to Mary. Were they profound words, akin to the "mystery" the author of Colossians addresses in the epistle? Jesus was the person in whom God was pleased to dwell, that same one who is "the hope of glory."



A 60-Day Journey Toward Justice in a Culture of Gun Violence

The Evangelical Lutheran Church in America is saddened by the all-too-frequent occurrences of gun violence in the U.S. We mourn the loss of life. We grieve for the victims and their families, who often feel silenced. And we lament for those who have done violence to others and often feel removed from a community of faith.

We invite you on a journey of prayer, scripture, stories and church teachings with this resource, "[*A 60-Day Journey Toward Justice in a Culture of Gun Violence.*](#)" Together through daily observances, it calls us to work toward the prevention of gun violence as people of God who strive for justice and peace in all the world. It may be used for individual reflection, group Bible study, adult education sessions, and congregational daily devotions. Your journey is intended to start on June 16th, but this resource can be used at any time.

In 1994, the ELCA adopted the social message [*Community Violence*](#), calling for advocacy to end the cycle of violence in the U.S. Twenty-five years later, this message is still relevant and should be considered another resource on your journey. Also available to download are an easy-to-use guide and appendix noting key documents and actions, and a gun violence litany.

Resources

[**A 60-DAY JOURNEY TOWARD JUSTICE**](#)

[**60-DAY SUMMARY OVERVIEW**](#)

[**60-DAY APPENDIX**](#)

[**GUN VIOLENCE LITANY**](#)

Bishop Eaton issues pastoral message on SCOTUS ruling regarding Roe v. Wade

Dear church,

Whatever personal perspective one might take on the June 24 abortion ruling from the Supreme Court, it is the legal framework in which we now minister, and I wish to speak a pastoral word at this time.

The Supreme Court has voted to overturn Roe v. Wade, removing federal constitutional protection for safe and legal abortion and leaving decisions about

abortion law largely to the states. As a result, safe and legal abortion will likely not be [accessible in every state](#). This church's 1991 social statement [Abortion](#) argues that "the number of induced abortions is a source of deep concern" but teaches that the practice should be legal (pp. 3, 9-10). In other words, "Laws should be enacted and enforced justly for the preservation and enhancement of life, and should avoid unduly encumbering or endangering the lives of women" (p. 9). Overturning *Roe v. Wade* and placing decisions about abortion regulation at the state level encumbers and endangers the lives of all persons who need to make decisions about unexpected pregnancies.

First, as a pastor of this church, I want to acknowledge that this decision affects many people, especially those whose pregnancies unfold in complex situations and the people who love them. Many now find their moral agency restricted because federal law no longer guarantees access to legal and safe abortion. They already face difficult moral questions, and the Supreme Court decision only adds to their anguish. As our social statement reminds us, we have both the freedom and the obligation to serve neighbors in complex situations. As a church, we are called at this moment to recognize and spiritually support people who are struggling with decisions around pregnancy.

[\(Click here for the remainder of the Message\)](#)



The 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly will be held in Columbus, Ohio, Aug. 8-12, at the [Greater Columbus Convention Center](#). We gather under the theme, *Embody the Word*.

ELCA hosts "Embody the Word" online Bible study series

In preparation for the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, ELCA members are encouraged to participate in a series of online Bible studies that will explore the assembly theme, "Embody the Word," from Luke 24. The assembly, the highest legislative body of the ELCA, will meet in Columbus, Ohio, Aug. 8-12.

The Bible study series will comprise four online sessions to be held Sundays in July from 3 to 3:45 p.m. Central time. Each session will focus on the meaning of "embodiment," open with a video presentation and continue with a moderated discussion.

Members are encouraged to consider the double meaning of the assembly theme, "Embody the Word": "embody" can mean both the incarnation of Jesus Christ and the life of the church emerging from a pandemic, whereas "word" can mean both Jesus Christ and Scripture.

The Bible study schedule is:

July 10 - Rev. Jay Alanís, pastor of St. John Lutheran Church in San Juan, Texas.

July 17 - Sally Azar, currently studying in Germany with plans to serve the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land (ELCJHL) as its first female pastor.

July 24 - Man-Hei Yip, assistant professor of systematic theology at Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa.

July 31 - Denise Rector, doctoral student in womanist theology and race and history at the Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago.

The series will culminate at the assembly on Aug. 10 with a theological presentation hosted by the Rev. Anthony Bateza, associate professor of religion at St. Olaf College in Northfield, Minn. [Register](#) for the live Bible study series.

[Find out](#) more about the 2022 ELCA Churchwide Assembly, including livestream information.

The sessions will also be available on demand from the ELCA YouTube Channel.

Ukraine and Eastern Europe Crisis Response

Since the beginning of Russia's war against Ukraine on Feb. 24, millions of people have fled the country and are seeking refuge in neighboring countries including Hungary, Moldova, Poland, Romania and Slovakia. There are major humanitarian concerns for both internally displaced people and refugees. Many people fleeing their homes in Ukraine need shelter and basic necessities such as food, water and toiletries. Care for people also includes pastoral and psychological support to address the trauma they've endured.

Lutheran Disaster Response is accompanying our companions in Ukraine, Hungary, Poland, Romania, Slovakia and Moldova, as well as ecumenical partners such as Lutheran World Federation and Church World Service, in their humanitarian responses to the crisis created by Russia's war against Ukraine. These partners provide refugees with immediate support and supplies such as food, blankets, water

and hygiene kits. Your gifts will support people impacted by the war. Gifts designated to "Eastern Europe Crisis" will be used in full (100%) for direct response to assist those affected. (You will find a link on www.elca.org)

Metro-Chicago Synodical Women's Organization 2022 Convention 2022 SWO Convention

"We Are One: Putting Pieces Together"
October 15, 2022,



Trinity Lutheran Church
3637 Golf Road Evanston, IL 60203
(847) 673-8564



We are so excited to be able to once again meet in person for our convention this year! We are privileged to have Pr. Christina Montgomery as our keynote speaker, and Pr. Rebekah Wendt Costello as our homilist.

You won't want to miss this. More to follow -keep watching!

	Event/Activity	Resources
August 8-13, 2022.	2022 Churchwide Assembly Columbus, OH at the Greater Columbus Convention Center	For more information check https://www.elca.org/churchwideassembly
Sept 11, 2022	"God's work. Our hands." Sunday A Day of Service	ELCA.org/DayofService
Sept 16-18, 2022	ELCA Mission Interpreter Gathering in Winston-Salem, NC.	Learn more and register at: https://demdsynod.org/elca-mission-interpreter-fall-2022-gathering/
Oct 15, 2022 8:30 to 2:30	Metro Chicago Synodical Women's Organization Annual Meeting, "We are one - putting pieces together" Trinity Lutheran Church, 3637 Golf Rd, Evanston, IL	Details to come soon