



# The Evangel

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October 2021

## October Is Stewardship Month!

### What is Stewardship? What is Discipleship?

“Stewardship” and “discipleship” are not everyday words. Rarely does one hear conversation about stewardship or discipleship outside the walls of a church, although “stewarding the earth” is a popular phrase reflecting growing concerns related to the environment. What then, does it mean to be a steward? A disciple? Stewardship is most often defined as supervising or managing something entrusted to one’s care. In Jesus’ time, a steward was the manager of the household. The steward was not the owner but rather a trusted administrator of the owner’s<sup>1</sup> property. We are God’s stewards of ALL things inherited and entrusted to us. Stewardship is the act of “stewarding” the earth, our wealth, our time, our possessions and our bodies. Being God’s steward is a role and a responsibility to which one wholly and enthusiastically commits in response to God’s grace and goodness. Discipleship literally means “one who engages in learning through instruction from another, a pupil.”<sup>2</sup> As Christians, the term “disciple” refers to following Jesus and becoming like Jesus in every way. As Lutheran Christians, we enter a life with Christ through our baptism – a life of imitating and following Jesus so others will know Jesus through us. In our Affirmation of Baptism, we commit to continuing in the covenant God made with us. The ELCA “Five Gifts of Discipleship” – Live, Hear, Proclaim, Serve, and Strive – help guide us in the practice of our baptism in daily life.

### What is Generosity?

The word “generosity” is a popular word today, both inside and outside the walls of the institutional church. It often seems a nicer and safer approach to a conversation about money. But the concept and practice of generosity is not a substitute for, nor the same as, stewardship.<sup>3</sup> The modern English word “generosity” is derived from the Latin word generōsus, which means “of noble birth.”<sup>4</sup> As God’s stewards and disciples of Jesus, we are called “to be” – to be noble and generous in spirit, generous with our time, talents and resources. Being generous is our response to the character of God, like the fruit in an orchard (Galatians 5:22-23). Eric Law, in the preface to his book, *Holy Currency Exchange*,<sup>5</sup> offers this explanation: “As a Christian, I believe in a compassionate God who shows me the pattern of God’s will and action in the person of Jesus. At the heart of holy currencies is the consistent choice to exchange our resources according to God’s will, following in Jesus’ footsteps” [Law, p. xi]. Law reminds us that generosity is in both the giving and receiving. “We all have resources – time, place, leadership, relationship, truth, wellness, and money. What makes these resources holy is a dynamic process of exchanging them to empower the cycle of blessings that sustains communities” [Law, p.xii].

*Continued on page 2*

***Our Saviour  
Lutheran Church***  
*is a congregation of the  
Indiana-Kentucky Synod of the  
Evangelical Lutheran Church  
in America.*

*We welcome all  
to share in life with Christ  
as a community  
of faith in mission.*

### ***OSLC’s Vision & Mission***

*God calls us to be a community of  
discipleship for all, making Christ’s  
love real in our daily lives.*

*Grow in faith and Christian calling  
Love and serve God and neighbor  
Proclaim the Gospel of Jesus Christ*

### ***Worship***

9:00 A.M. (Online and in-person)

11:30 A.M. (In-person only)

Join the Zoom Meeting or watch  
live on OSLC’s facebook page.

Email Sandra ([sandra@osluth.org](mailto:sandra@osluth.org))  
and she’ll send you a bulletin and  
a Zoom invite.



***Randy Schroeder, Pastor  
Candice Hinkle, Intern***

Change is upon us once again. Yet, we welcome this change: the changing of seasons and the beginning of Fall. At one of the last Pints with a Pastor gatherings, the first discussion starter was, “What is your favorite part about fall?” Our answers revolved around the cooling temperatures, the crispness of the air, the smell of campfires, the leaves changing colors and their scent, the ability to wear a warmer wardrobe, basically the change of the season. The change of season from summer to fall is a familiar one in the Midwest and therefore it is often anticipated and embraced, especially after all the summer heat and humidity.



I wish all change was as easy to accept as the transition from summer to fall. Some changes are difficult. The pandemic has placed us in a constant state of change and uncertainty. The changes of the pandemic are much different. They are not familiar and therefore we do not anticipate them and (dare I say never...) we will never welcome them.

Then there are changes in life such as graduations, marriages, promotions, children, etc., that are chosen, yet challenging. These changes are part of life’s adventure. We know they are coming, for the most part and can plan for them. Moving from being a senior in high school to a college freshman is exciting and nerve wracking. Leaving one job for another is exhilarating and a leap of faith. We know the risk moving forward and still we proceed, believing the challenges are worth the reward as we pray everything will work out for the best.

As we prepare for the OSLC 2022 budget, we are in the midst of change once again. The pandemic has placed us in an unfamiliar position. It’s a place we did not plan to be, yet this is where life’s adventure is taking us. This past year we added a staff member because of the necessity of Hybrid Worship (worship in-person and on-line). Three months ago, we hired Michael Williams as our Live Stream Production Specialist. Each week he continues to learn and provide expertise we never thought we would need. I have heard many of you say over the last 18 months, “I can’t wait to get back to normal,” and I have said it myself. But I don’t think that is possible anymore. The days prior to COVID are in the past. Our normal is now shifting. The “new normal” is upon us. We didn’t plan it this way, but with any change in life we will adjust and move forward. We will take risks, knowing there will be challenges that lie ahead and pray that all will work out for the best.

When you have the opportunity, read this daily meditation by Richard Rohr, *Rights and Responsibilities*, found at <https://cac.org/rights-and-responsibilities-2021-09-22/> The following line from that article has caught my attention as we live into the new normal.

“Jesus’ words must be seen as descriptive (*what is possible*) much more than prescriptive (*what must be done*). He is always describing and thus inviting his listeners into a big, inclusive life of love, which he calls the Reign of God.”

Ask yourself, “What is possible?” What can we do as we live into the new normal around us? This situation was not planned. It was not our choice. But now that we are here... What is possible? One thing I know for sure: We are invited to live fully into what life is offering, knowing God is with and guiding us. As we dream for the future and prepare for the next two, five or ten years down the road, allow the words “What is possible?” to guide your thoughts and your generosity. Jesus is inviting us to step out in faith as we explore the Reign of God together as OSLC.

Peace,  
Pastor Randy

*Continued from page 1*

To summarize: Being generous is a role and responsibility of being God’s steward we joyfully fulfill. Living generously is the giving of our whole selves as students who want to be like Jesus. Generosity is an exchange of resources, both giving and receiving, that blesses and sustains communities. Generosity is God’s promise. Jesus’ example. Our wholly, holy practice.

<sup>1</sup> Staats, Linda. “The Generosity Project Foundation and Fundamentals” is based on a paper created by the author for keynote presentation at The Stewardship Summit, Southaven, MS Jan. 23, 2018. 2 3 4 5

<sup>2</sup> [https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Disciple\\_\(Christianity\)](https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Disciple_(Christianity)).

<sup>3</sup> Living our Baptismal Covenant. ELCA.

<sup>4</sup> “What is Generosity?” Science of Generosity. College of Arts and Letters. University of Notre Dame.

<sup>5</sup> Law, Eric H. F., Holy Currency Exchange (Chalice Press. Saint Louis, MO. 2015).

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## News & Notes

### Council Highlights September 8, 2021

- Landscape Team Report: Pastor Randy shared drawings from Aaron T.
- It's time to set up the Council Nominating Committee.
- Thanks to Julie for joining the Council when Cindy had to step down.
- We'll look into using the Rent a Rower service to take care of some outside chores that need attention. Matt and Carl will supervise.

Dear OSLC community,

It is with wide and open arms that my family and I have felt welcomed into your faith community. We feel very blessed and honored to spend this year of our lives worshipping and serving Christ with all of you through my Internship at Our Saviour Lutheran Church and Purdue Lutheran Ministry.

My family and I live between Logansport and Monticello. We moved into our house about nine years ago. The house sits on 20+ acres of woods. As a family, we spend lots of time outside strolling through the woods, riding around the neighborhood in our Ranger, and in the fall and winter we cut wood for our wood burning stove. We have a coonhound named Pace, who loves a good-hearted howl.

My handsome hubby and I have been married for 21 years. (His real name is Jeremy but I call him Handsome!) Together Handsome and I have three children. Our oldest son, Thomas, lives with us and just celebrated his fourth anniversary working at Cole Hardwood. He is the first of our children to have a college degree. Our second oldest son, Mason, is in his senior year of high school. He is active in many school activities and just received word that he was selected for Indiana All State Honor Choir. He is starting the process of applying to colleges and keeping an eye out for scholarship opportunities. Valerie is our youngest child, rounding out our children with a female touch. She is also active in many extracurricular activities and is eagerly anticipating the upcoming and final Logansport Children's Choir tour in June of 2022 to Washington D.C.

I'm excited and energized to get to know the OSLC community and work with Purdue students. If you are ever in the neighborhood and have a few minutes, I would love for you to stop by my office in the PLM building and/or drop me a line at [interncandice@gmail.com](mailto:interncandice@gmail.com)

Intern Candice Hinkle

Philippians 4:4



### Stewardship Article

“All too often we regard stewardship simply as a matter of our giving to God, but this aspect is secondary. Before we can give, we must possess, and before we possess we must receive. Therefore, stewardship is, in the first place, receiving God's good and bounteous gifts. And once received, those gifts are not to be used solely for our own good. They must also be used for the benefit of others, and ultimately for the glory of God the giver. The steward needs an open hand to receive from God and then an active hand to give to God and to others.”—Murray J. Harris

You are appreciated! Your generosity and understanding of Harris' quote above allow OSLC to continue to grow, learn and minister to the Greater Lafayette Area. We pray that you will continue to grow in your stewardship of time, talents and treasures over the next two, five and ten years.

Soon you will receive our annual Stewardship Information Packet in the mail. It will include a letter from me, Pastor Randy. Carl Behnke and I have updated the budget brochure to answer questions of, “Where does your offering go?” and there is also a 2022 proposed budget from the Finance Team. Once again, the Finance Team requested budgets from the Ministry Teams to assemble the proposed budget of 2022. The packet will also include a pledge card and return envelope.

Please return your pledge in person on October 17<sup>th</sup>, or send it in the mail using the included envelope. Prayers are with you and your family as you discern your ability to pledge and tithe for the coming year.

Pastor Randy Schroeder.

Our  
Saviour  
Leading with  
Compassion

# OCTOBER UPDATES

The next Pints with a Pastor will be Tuesday, October 26 at 7 P.M. via zoom.

Look for an invite in your email from Pastor Randy.

**Wednesday Zoom with Kiddos:** Every Wednesday at 4:30, elementary age kids Zoom with Dale. Family Promise kids will be joining on the first Wednesday of each month.

**Sunday School for all ages meets at 10:15 A.M. each Sunday.**

Our kiddos through age 12 will be meet in-person using a wonderful Lutheran curriculum entitled “Whirl.”

Our **Adult Forum**, which includes teens, will continue to meet virtually over Zoom, BUT if you would like to be at the church we will have a “live-feed” of the Zoom set up on the big screen downstairs in the fellowship hall. We have an excellent line-up of speakers this semester. All safety precautions regarding COVID will be adhered to so as to make sure everyone who is present in the building for Sunday School is safe.

### Here’s the October line up of Adult Forum presentations:

October 3<sup>rd</sup> – NO FORUM (Ministry Teams meet for Servants Sunday.)

October 10<sup>th</sup>- Chris Campbell—“What’s Happening at the State House”

October 17<sup>th</sup>- Aaron Johnson—Topic TBA

October 24<sup>th</sup>- Dr. Jeremy Adler—“COVID, 20 Months Later”

October 31<sup>st</sup>—Students and teachers from OSLC share about the new school year

### Other Resources:

- **Facebook**-“Like” OSLC’s page for Sunday Worship streamed live, updates and upcoming events: <https://www.facebook.com/osluth/>
- **RightNow Media** (bible studies, devotions, video resources for individuals & families)-FREE OSLC membership:

<https://www.rightnowmedia.org/account/invite/OurSaviour>



rightnow MEDIA



dale@osluth.org

### Mark your calendars:

- ◆ **Each Monday at 7 P.M. Confirmation Class meets on the second floor of OSLC.**
- ◆ **Wednesday Zoom with Kiddos: Meets every Wednesday at 4:30 P.M.**
- ◆ **Sunday, October 3, following worship, Faith Formation Team meets.**
- ◆ **Thursday, October 21, 7:30 P.M.: Social Justice Discussion continues via Zoom. Where do we go from here?**

Halloween is just around the corner! We’re planning something special for that weekend. Watch the bulletin announcements for more details!



### Mixed signals

A newcomer approached the pastor after worship and said, “I’d like you to pray for my hearing.”

Placing hands on the man’s ears, the pastor said a very passionate, earnest prayer and then asked the visitor, “How’s your hearing now?”

With a confused look, the man said, “Well, it’s scheduled for tomorrow.”



**The Book Discussion Group will meet October 24 . We’ll be determining other books we’d like to consider. We’ll be meeting on zoom. Look for an invitation close to the meeting date. All are welcome!**

# Some Thoughts on the Reformation

## Women of the Reformation

Although the names most often associated with the Reformation are male, women also played key roles in maintaining the integrity of the church. “Most were wives and mothers,” professor Justin Holcomb writes. “Some were also authors, apologists, ex-nuns and queens. All were faithful servants of Jesus.”

Women who made notable contributions include:

- Katherine von Bora, the former nun who married former-priest Martin Luther
- Argula von Grumbach, a Bavarian noblewoman who published letters and debated with university faculty
- Olympia Fulvia Morata, an Italian scholar who lectured on the teachings of Luther and Calvin — and was persecuted and imprisoned
- Jeanne d’Albret, queen of Navarre and a leader in France’s Huguenot movement, who tried to peacefully resolve tensions between Catholics and Protestants
- Marie Dentièrre, an aristocrat who left an Augustinian monastery to speak in public — even on street corners! — about church reform

## Reformation Cornerstones

Every October, many Protestants celebrate the work of reformers who brought about much-needed change in the Christian church. At the center of their contributions were four teachings:

- Scripture alone: The supremacy of the Bible as the surest guide for faith and life.
- Grace alone: The supremacy of God’s undeserved love. God counts us “right” with him when we accept his free gifts of forgiveness and salvation.
- Faith alone: The supremacy of faith. Only by believing and trusting in God’s promises, and through no works or achievement of our own, do we receive eternal life.
- The priesthood of all believers: Christians are “members of one another” (Ephesians 4:25, NRSV). In God’s eyes, Christians are all on the same level. We each have a ministry to fulfill to one another and to people outside the faith. Martin Luther said we’re “reciprocally and mutually one.”

*Sola Gratia*  
Grace Alone

*Sola Fide*  
Faith Alone

*Sola Scriptura*  
Scripture Alone



## A Prayer for Reformation

God, you have reformed the church countless times. Reform my heart again today so I may live for you. Amen.



# Social Justice

## Our annual fall food drive kicks off on October 15 and runs through November 30

Food drives are a great way for businesses, organizations, and groups of all sizes to make a difference in the fight against hunger. In 2020, the Drive Away Hunger food drive helped Food Finders Food Bank collect more than 1,000,000 meals for people in need.

With more than 76,000 of our neighbors across North Central Indiana not knowing when or where their next meal is coming from, getting involved in this food drive is more important than ever. You can make a difference by hosting a traditional food drive or a virtual food drive!



**Food Finders  
Food Bank, Inc.**  
*fighting hunger. giving hope*

MEMBER OF  
**FEEDING  
AMERICA**



**LAFAYETTE  
URBAN  
MINISTRY**

There are many different opportunities for volunteering, from working one-on-one with a child in Youth Programs to helping out at the 44-bed emergency homeless shelter.

There are opportunities to fit every schedule, from regular long-term commitments such as being an advocate once a week with the Immigration Clinic, Good Samaritan Program or ID Clinic — or doing data entry at the LUM Food Pantries or intake for our shelter guests each weekday — to annual events such as Hunger Hike, LUM Camp, Community Thanksgiving Feast, Turkey Trot 5K Run, Port of Hope fundraising event or Jubilee Christmas. Some volunteer positions require training, others require only a willing heart and a helping hand. Go to <https://www.lumserve.org/volunteer/> to see a full list of volunteer opportunities.

**Port of Hope** is an exciting fundraising event benefiting the LUM Immigration Clinic, which includes hors d'oeuvres from local restaurants, live performances, a Marketplace with unique experiences, and a cash bar. Port of Hope details are as follows:

**Date:** Thursday, November 4

**Time:** 5:30 – 8 p.m.

**Place:** Lafayette Brewing Co., 622 Main St., Lafayette

**Tickets:** \$50 per person



For more information, to purchase tickets or to make a donation, go to [LUMserve.org/port-of-hope](https://www.lumserve.org/port-of-hope).



*Hunger Hikers Missy and Scott*

## \$1,775.55 Raised by OSLC

For **29 years**, Hunger Hike has brought much needed attention — and raised more than **\$2.2 million** — to overcome malnutrition, food insecurity & hunger locally, regionally & globally. So far this year, close to **\$110,000** has been raised. **And YES!** You still may donate to Hunger Hike, a Hunger Hike Team, or a “Hiker.” To donate by text, text **HHIKE** to **71777**. Help Hunger Hike 2021 exceed last year’s total of \$125,000.



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

# More Opportunities for Service

## How Can We Help Our Afghan Allies?

Here is how LIRS helps Afghan Allies in America:

When Afghan wartime allies are approved by the government for resettlement in the U.S., our experts provide vital welcome services to ensure they receive a warm welcome and a firm footing as they build a new life in a new country. **For example, LIRS and its volunteers will provide modest furniture, a stocked pantry of culturally familiar foods, and all of the basic amenities of an American home.**

Over the course of the next few months, case managers support the individual or family in learning to navigate their new community. Adults are enrolled in English language classes, children are enrolled in school, and case managers guide families in using public transportation and accessing community resources. Case managers support our new neighbors in learning financial literacy and help them find a job or vocational calling. They are also introduced to new neighbors and church and community groups that will play an important role in providing each refugee family with support and companionship for years to come. For more info, go to the LIRS website: <https://www.lirs.org/help-our-afghan-allies/>



**Lutheran Immigration  
and Refugee Service**

**Dear God,  
Open our hearts to migrants and  
refugees in need, so that we  
might see in them your own mi-  
grant son. Give us courage to  
stand up in their defense against  
those who would do them harm.  
Amen.**

At LIRS, we believe in the **Long Welcome**. After the initial resettlement of our **50,000+ Afghan neighbors**, we will need communities to continue to offer support and welcome. We expect volunteer opportunities and needs to continue for months, even years – because the work we are doing is about more than simply getting our allies out of Afghanistan. The work of welcome is providing the support, compassion, and community that our allies need once they arrive to the United States. Our work is just beginning. When our new Afghan neighbors arrive in the United States, many have little more than the clothes on their backs. Your gift helps provide essential support for newly arrived families, including emergency medical care, temporary housing, financial support for basic necessities, and more.

**Foster families are urgently needed** to support the increase of unaccompanied migrant children coming to the United States, including those from Afghanistan. We ask that you and your family consider this opportunity to serve and help migrant children in need of a loving home.

## Close to Home: Afghan refugee families at Camp Atterbury—How you can help

You can make in-kind or financial donations to Team Rubicon, a veteran-led organization focused on disaster response, by giving to their "Ready Reserve Fund" online or by visiting their online wish list and emailing [resettlementsupport@teamrubiconusa.org](mailto:resettlementsupport@teamrubiconusa.org) for shipping and drop-off locations.

You can also make a financial contribution to the American Red Cross, which has been providing items like food, water and toiletries. To give, visit [redcross.org/donate/cm/indiana-pub.html](https://redcross.org/donate/cm/indiana-pub.html) or call 1-888-684-1441.

Exodus Refugee Immigration is preparing for when refugees exit the camp and begin the resettlement process, gathering household items, clothing, IndyGo passes and gift cards for some retailers. To see the full wish list, visit <https://www.exodusrefugee.org/take-action/household-donations/> and email [csanborn@exodusrefugee.org](mailto:csanborn@exodusrefugee.org) to arrange a time to drop off a donation.

To volunteer as an English language tutor, visit <https://www.exodusrefugee.org/take-action/volunteer/>.



**Indiana-Kentucky Synod**  
**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

**The Reverend Dr. William O. Gafkjen**  
Bishop  
Email: [bishopbill@iksynod.org](mailto:bishopbill@iksynod.org)

August 26, 2021

Dear Partners in Mission,

Thank you for your gracious Mission Support thus far this year! As we turn toward fall and find our way through this challenging stage of our journey in the coronavirus wilderness, I am moved by the generosity of the people of God across this territory, including yours.

If there ever was a time for us to empower, equip, and encourage one another, it is now. Your Mission Support has made it possible for synod ministries to keep moving forward and to do so in new ways. We will continue offering weekly recorded sermons and prayers for the foreseeable future, even as we begin limited travel to preach and lead worship and other gatherings in person. We have accompanied congregations and their leaders in making difficult decisions about how to live and work together in this troubled time. We have not only been able to sustain shared ministry conversations and transformational ministry initiatives, like E-Connect, but they have grown in significant ways over the last few months. Since the first of the year, we have ordained six new pastors and installed six pastors (not all the same that we ordained) for ministry with congregations new to them. And there are more of both to come in the months ahead.

Now, as we look toward the last few months of this year and beyond with uncertainty, confusion, and some trepidation, thanks to your support, we are committed to growing our ministries of empowering, equipping, and encouraging one another across this mission territory. For example, look for soon-to-be-shared information about a series of webinars for both rostered ministers and lay leaders focused on discovering faithful, effective, and practical ways to be the body of Christ for the world that is emerging from this pandemic. We will resume check-ins with the bishop for rostered and other ministers every other month beginning in September. We will also add quarterly check-ins for lay leaders of local congregations and ministries with the bishop and synod lay leaders Ted Miller (Vice President,) Patricia McIntyre (Secretary), and Chris Walda (Treasurer). Both check-ins will be offered via Zoom to involve as many folks as possible across this 75,000 square mile territory.

Thank you for your generosity in Mission Support, in prayer, and in partnership. I look forward to seeing growth in all three areas through the end of this year as, together, we look for the new things God is doing in, through, and around us and we do everything we can to empower, equip, and encourage one another to get on board with them!

*Now to God, who by the power at work within us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than all we can ask or imagine, to him be glory in the church and in Christ Jesus to all generations, forever and ever. Amen.*

[Ephesians 3:20-21]

Peace be with you,

Rev. Dr. William O. Gafkjen, Bishop

Empower, equip, and encourage the people of God to make Christ known

911 E. 86th Street, Suite 200 • Indianapolis, IN 46240  
Ph. 317.253.3522 • Fax 317.254.5666 • [www.iksynod.org](http://www.iksynod.org)

## More Opportunities for Service Here in the Community

### Come and make a meaningful difference in a senior's life!

Walk out your faith and love your neighbor as God calls us! Caregiver Companion simply needs you to visit or provide practical, non-medical help to often homebound neighbors who are in need of compassionate companionship. Often 1 hour per week is all that's needed to come alongside the aging widow(er) who feels alone in your community.

Some current volunteer opportunities:

- Visiting and helping a homebound widow with organizing once a week
- Visiting and running occasional errands for a neighbor who has cancer
- Grocery Shoppers for frail widows and other elderly community members
- Driving frail seniors to their local doctor's appointments
- Simple in-home repairs or yard work assistance



Our neighbors just need a little encouragement and companionship to know they are not alone as they age and become more isolated. You will be amazed at the blessings that come from being there for someone in their time of need! **Contact the office at (765) 423-1879 or [caregiver95@gmail.com](mailto:caregiver95@gmail.com) to schedule a volunteer interview.**



It's our favorite month of the year SOCKtober! Over the next few weeks, LTHC is asking for your help to stock our sock shelves! We are hoping to collect **10,000 pairs of new, adult socks** to help get us through the next few cold months.

If you want to order online, please have them shipped to Attn: Jennifer Shook at LTHC Homeless Services, 815 North 12th Street, Lafayette, IN 47904.

If you want to drop some off, we accept donations on weekdays between 9 am - 4 pm at Door #4 of the Engagement Center. That's the only door on the 13th Street side of the building -- you can use the unloading zone, ring the bell, and give staff a few minutes to get to you and help.



LTHC Homeless Services

815 North 12th Street  
Lafayette, IN 47904

765-423-4880

<http://www.lthc.net>



## Telling and Teaching the Truth: The Church's Obligation to Education about the Ongoing Legacy of the Doctrine of Discovery

From Churches Beyond Borders: Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada, Anglican Church of Canada, The Episcopal Church, and the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

As another school year commences, we are reminded that the educational systems we have handed down to our children often teach national narratives that perpetuate white supremacy by deleting and ignoring the histories and contributions of Indigenous People and other marginalized communities and peoples in both Canada and the United States. The ongoing legacy of the Doctrine of Discovery and the sinful acts of racism in North America are rarely if ever taught in our school systems or churches with the fullness and import that is necessary and just.

When Christians engage history with honesty, humility and a spirit of confession, it is clear that the church was and is complicit:

- In the hunting and killing of Indigenous Peoples,
- In the dishonorable breaking of thousands of treaties that federal governments made with First Nations and Native nations,
- In the forced removal of Indigenous Peoples from their original homelands,
- In the relocation of Indigenous Peoples into reserves and reservations where poverty, starvation, desperation, missionization, addiction, and suicide were allowed to become the rule for generations of Indigenous people,
- In the making of long-term federal policies that enforced family separation,
- In the stealing of Indigenous children away to brutal assimilation camps known as Indian boarding schools in the US and residential schools in Canada,
- In the ongoing plight of Missing and Murdered Indigenous Women and Girls,

In the coverup of all of these evils, including through systemic efforts to erase Indigenous Peoples from our collective memory.

Scripture reminds us that the truth is costly. In Proverbs 23:23 we read, "Buy truth, and do not sell it; buy wisdom, instruction, and understanding" (NRSV). Our churches' work to repudiate the Doctrine of Discovery begins with the costly work of telling the truth.

Only then will we be able to start making good on our promises as churches and, together across borders, to seek truth and healing for Indigenous and non-Indigenous Peoples by:

- Providing educational opportunities for all of our churches' people,
- Leading advocacy efforts for legally mandated inclusion of accurate and truthful history and narratives of Indigenous people in our educational systems at all learning levels,
- Standing in solidarity with residential and boarding school survivors and their descendants,

Doing the necessary research to reveal as much truth about this shameful part of our churches' histories.

**As a sign of our cross-border commitments to the work toward truth, healing, justice and accurate education, we invite all members of our churches to commemorate September 30, 2021 ([www.orangeshirtday.org](http://www.orangeshirtday.org)) as a day for truth and healing. We encourage you to learn about residential and boarding schools, honor survivors, and remember those who never made it home from the schools. On September 30, we invite you to wear orange as a sign of remembering, solidarity, and commitment to seeking healing. You may also choose to wear orange to Sunday worship on September 26.**

Presiding Bishop Elizabeth A. Eaton  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
National Bishop Susan C. Johnson  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in Canada

Presiding Bishop Michael B. Curry  
The Episcopal Church  
Archbishop and Primate Linda Nicholls  
Anglican Church of Canada

## More from the ELCA

### 2021 Hein-Fry Book of Faith Challenge Announced

CHICAGO (September 16, 2021) — Some people may hope for a return to normal after the world-changing events of the last 18 months, but sociologists tell us our future will revolve around living into a “new normal.” Presented by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA), the 2021 Hein-Fry Book of Faith Challenge will probe this new normal. Under the theme “Imagining Scriptural Encounters in the New Normal,” four online presentations by ELCA seminary students will help participants deepen their encounters with Scripture and strengthen their relationships with God in a time of extreme and continuous change.

The annual Hein-Fry Book of Faith Challenge is an endowed theological lecture series that seeks to enliven the biblical engagement of the whole church by encouraging the development of faithful, innovative and effective ways to teach and learn Scripture. The event is sponsored by the seven ELCA seminaries, the Hein-Fry planning team and the ELCA Book of Faith Initiative.

Every year, one student from each seminary is invited to develop and present a class or series for people both familiar and unfamiliar with biblical texts. The students are then invited to report their findings.

This year the challenge will comprise four online events:

**Kaylie H. Ines from Pacific Lutheran Theological Seminary in Berkeley, Calif., will present “Hope Remains: A Creation Care Faith Study” on Wednesday, Oct. 20, at 1 p.m. Pacific time.**

**Aneel Trivedi from Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa, will present “Return to Baptism, Return to a New Normal” on Friday, Oct. 22, 2 p.m. Central time.**

**Katrina Steingraeber from Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago will present “Looking at Today’s World Through the Psalms” on Thursday, Oct. 28, at 10 a.m. Central time.**

**Melissa J. Harris from United Lutheran Seminary in Gettysburg, Pa., will present “Environmental Stewardship: Reconsidering the Creation Narratives in the 21st Century” on Friday, Oct. 29, at 1 p.m. Eastern time.**

The Rev. Dr. Diane Jacobson will serve as online host.

The public is invited to attend these free online events, but registration is required for each of them. Registration information is available at <https://www.bookoffaith.org/>.

The Hein-Fry Book of Faith Challenge was established after the American Lutheran Church (ALC) and the Lutheran Church in America (LCA) merged into the ELCA in 1988. The series combines the ALC’s Dr. Carl Christian Hein Memorial Seminary Lectures and the LCA’s Franklin Clark Fry Theological Lectures.

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### School for Lay Ministry

This is a 12-month learning journey for everyday disciples and lay leaders who want to deepen their faith and grow in their capacity to serve in the church and world.

If you’re a lay leader—or if you have lay leaders in your congregation—you know the variety of work involved in any given week. From opportunities to preach and teach to hospital visits and team meetings, there’s no shortage of hats to wear.

One of the strengths of lay leadership is a natural intuition for how things should be. Still, that intuition has its limits, doesn’t it?

If you’ve ever found yourself deep in theological questions or conversations – with your pastor, or in our Learning Lab—you’re not alone. The work you do can only benefit from some structured theological training. That’s why we’re so excited about our upcoming **School for Lay Ministry Learning Community!** From the fundamental questions of faith and the historical Jesus to church history and congregational leadership, we’ll cover the questions you’re asking and spend time (12 months, in fact!) growing closer to each other and God.

This is starting October 16, so head to the website for your chance to register.

<https://faithlead.luthersem.edu/school-for-lay-ministry/>

Dear Missionary Sponsoring Congregation:

Just a reminder that I would be very happy to make contact with the membership of your church to share about my ministry as a seminary teacher here in Singapore/Indonesia. Please let me know how I might do that, especially by means of Zoom, etc.

I will continue to live in Singapore and work at my "old" school, Trinity Theological College, until the church in Indonesia is able to secure a work visa for me. Currently, I am teaching courses in worship and preaching online to students at Seminari Tinggi Theologi in Pemantangsiantar, Indonesia.

Recently, I came to the conclusion that I needed to completely revise the way that I teach preaching. Basically, my approach up to now seems to take the students too far away from the text when devising their sermon outlines, so I needed a simpler, more text-based approach, one that allows the students to structure their sermons based on the outline of the text. Fortunately, I found such an approach in a book by an early-twentieth century Lutheran scholar by the name of Richard C. H. Lenski (1864-1936), who just happened to teach at the predecessor institution of my own seminary, Trinity in Columbus, Ohio. Yes, I know that using a textbook that is almost one-hundred years old will raise some eyebrows. But then again, if it works, what does it matter if it is 100 years old or 1,000 years old?

Re-tooling one's work is never easy. Who wants to re-do many if not all of their lectures? But I wonder whether the real issue here isn't simply pride. Who likes to admit that they were on the wrong path? Many people don't. We live in an age when, faced with ugly or inconvenient truths about themselves, many people "double down" and insist they were correct and that anyone who accuses them of being wrong has something "wrong" with them! Sound familiar?

For Christians, believing the gospel means embracing the truth about ourselves and our sinful nature. We know that we are capable of doing wrong and we believe that this wrong offends God. Accordingly, we deserve God's punishment both in this life and in the life to come. The threat of God's punishment leads us to be a truth-telling, soul-searching kind of people. Yet, at the same time, we believe that God graciously and generously forgives those who accept the truth about themselves and seek to start over again on a new path. "If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. But if we confess our sins, God who is faithful and just will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:8-9).

Do you need to re-tool something in your life? Change directions? Start over? If so, recognizing that need is a good start. It's called repentance. But don't stop there: ask God for the strength and courage to do what the new way requires of you. God will supply what you need through the power of his Spirit at work in you.

Best regards in Christ.

Jeff Truscott

## From Our Missionary



### Did you know that October is Pastor Appreciation Month?



Many people have complex relationships with their pastors because faith, church and God involve a mix of emotions. We have particular ideas about church practices, congregational priorities, the minister's use of time, money, authority and more.

But most pastors are deeply devoted to Christ and believe that God has called them to serve in a certain place. They have the best of intentions and work hard to share the good news of the gospel. So in honor of Pastor Appreciation Month in October, consider the following:

**God doesn't call the qualified; he qualifies the called.** Your pastor may need time to learn and develop certain skills. (Everyone does!) Bless pastors with your patience.

**We don't change the message; the message changes us.** You probably won't like all your pastor's sermons or newsletter columns. But instead of complaining, ponder that something may rub you the wrong way because God is trying to change you. Keep an open mind and heart.

**If a church wants a "better" pastor, it just needs to pray for the one it has.** Pray often and caringly for your pastors, church leaders and their families. The role is challenging, so support them spiritually and ask God to reveal his love and grace to these special servants.

# Words of Wisdom

## Before saying yes

I keep learning the same lesson over and over (so maybe that means I haven't learned it yet). With church, school and community volunteer work, my schedule is packed. I'm exhausted! And to be honest, only about a third of the roles truly excite me. Of course, service is important and yields blessings. And in a pinch, helpers need to step up. But consider all these benefits of occasionally saying no:

- You give someone else a chance to shine and thrive.
- You free up your schedule to be present elsewhere.
- You protect your mental resources for existing roles.
- You gain a bit more sleep or rest.

The last time you felt fully alive while volunteering, what were you doing? Who was serving alongside you? Can you do this — or something similar — again?

Before quickly agreeing to a request, see if God is tugging your heart in a certain direction. If he prompts you, by all means, shout yes! If not, "rest" assured that it's okay to say no.

—Janna Firestone

## Lessons from lilies

Recently I was challenged to think about what consumes me — and what distracts me from giving God more. In Matthew 6:25-34, Jesus tells us not to worry about what we eat, drink and wear. I've read those verses numerous times and usually respond, "Yeah, but the birds and lilies don't have mortgages and bills! How can I not worry?" I'm finally realizing that if I put Christ first, then my trust in him affects my day-to-day decisions. Plus, negative thoughts start to fade.

When do you respond, "Yeah, but ..." to God? Maybe it's when you want to sleep in on Sunday, or when the offering plate is passed, or when you're asked to teach Sunday school. Try reciting Matthew 6:33 often: "But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you" (ESV). When we prioritize Jesus, he guides us toward him and away from worries.

—Julie Lee

## What God is like

Before her death in 2019, Rachel Held Evans started writing a book with her young children in mind. The goal was to help them explore images for God, who is love. *What Is God Like?* (co-authored by Matthew Turner) acknowledges, "That's a very big question, one that people from places all around the world have wondered about since the beginning of time." The book highlights such biblical images for God as an eagle, a shepherd, a fort, wind, an artist, a "strong and safe" mother, and a "gentle and safe" father.

Just as Evans remained open to questions as a means to grow in faith, her book concludes: "Keep searching. Keep wondering. ... But whenever you aren't sure what God is like, think about what makes you feel safe ... brave ... loved. That's what God is like." What images for God come to your mind? Indeed, what is God like — for you?



## For love of animals

St. Francis of Assisi, known for his affection for animals, is honored on October 4. Some congregations observe this day by blessing pets, remembering that God pronounced animals — along with all creation — good. God saved not only Noah's family but animals of all kinds from the Flood. And despite Jonah's protests, God had compassion on Nineveh — "and [its] many animals" (Jonah 4:11). How intriguing that the prophet adds this point!

Care for all living creatures is clearly part of the divine character. Animals don't do anything to earn God's favor except be themselves. From this, we can learn that God pours out love unconditionally. As Psalm 36:6 (CEV) declares, "All people and animals are under your care."

News items for the October *Evangel* are due to Sandra Vana (sandra@osluth.org) by 10/25/2021. Please type "Evangel" in the subject line.

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*The Evangel*



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