

# The Epistle

June 2018

## Reign of God

As we enter the month of June we also say goodbye to Easter and to that first half of the church year marked by special seasons: Advent, Christmas, Epiphany, Lent, and Easter. With the beginning of June our paraments turn to green along and our gospel readings return to the gospel of Mark. We pick up from the early ministry of Jesus in Mark 2 and continue to read the gospel more or less chronologically for the rest of the church year.

We begin with Jesus speaking quite a bit about the Kingdom of God, telling parables that compare it to common, everyday things (in Jesus' day, at least) although these parables also often have some kind surprise or riddle. What strikes me about all of this focus on the Kingdom, or Reign, of God, is that this terminology is often connected with eschatology, or the end times.

We hear end time language usually as very scary or threatening: "Shape up now or else!" But what will read over the next month is not so much scary as it is encouraging. That truly is the goal of nearly all eschatological writing we find in the Bible, even what we call the apocalyptic writings like the book of Revelation. Watch out for people who try to scare you with Revelation or Daniel. Watch out especially if they try to predict the future using those books.

In Mark, the overall idea that Jesus seems to communicate about the Reign of God is that it is a place of shelter and safety. The idea is that even as the world may threaten, we know we are safe because we remain always under the care of God. This may have been a particularly powerful message to those who first heard this gospel; people whose lives were under threat because they followed Jesus.

I think this message is of particular importance to us today as well but probably for a different reason. We may not be particularly concerned about persecution because of our religious beliefs, but our thirst for security and stability in our time is very great. We are often unconscious of how much we desire these things, but we act on that desire all the time. Consider all the marketing aimed at us

that is carefully designed to appeal to our insecurities. Consider how politicians appeal to voters on a variety of issues using fear. Fear is the name of the game in our time, even as we live in greater safety and security than any generation before us.

So, if we hear Jesus speak to us, reminding us again and again that we always remain under God's care, no matter what comes our way, then what do we do? There is a temptation to make it about yourself. Being selfish, living out of a mindset of scarcity, we are tempted to say to ourselves, "Great, Jesus loves me, and I can keep that in my back pocket while I get back to making my life safer, bigger, and better." Unfortunately, that is missing the point, right? Living under mindset of scarcity means we remain unchanged, and we have stepped out of God's Reign once again.

We hear and receive Jesus' promise of life in the Reign of God; that is the promise that we always remain under God's care. When we can remain in that path, it means that we can live with confidence no matter what. That confidence (that is, faith) means that the all the little threats, fears, and insults of life have less power over us. The temptation to react to them is less because they simply has less pull on us. It means that we remain in that same mind as Christ, full of compassion and working for healing the world God has created. It means that we can become and remain conduits of the love of God, living lives that are full of joy and possibility.

We are invited to walk with Jesus over the coming months and to pay attention to the new possibilities that lay before us. Being released from fear and the scarcity mindset opens us in ways we may not expect. As we also read from one of Paul's letters to the Corinthians this season, we receive this exhortation: "open wide your hearts also."

In the grace and peace of Christ,

Pastor Clark

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## ST. TIMOTHY LUTHERAN CHURCH FINANCES

April 2018	Actual	Budgeted	Diff
<b>Income</b>			
Offerings	\$13,185	\$10,002	\$3,183
Building Use	\$3,621	\$3,608	\$13
Faith Giving	\$625	\$708	(\$83)
Misc Income	\$533	\$500	\$33
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$17,964</b>	<b>\$14,818</b>	<b>\$3,146</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Loan Principal	\$614	\$614	\$0
<b>April Net</b>	<b>\$3,398</b>	<b>(\$837)</b>	<b>\$4,235</b>
<b>YTD 2018</b>			
	Actual	Budgeted	Diff
<b>Income</b>			
Offerings	\$37,925	\$40,037	(\$2,112)
Building Use	\$14,477	\$14,433	\$44
Faith Giving	\$2,597	\$2,833	(\$236)
Misc Income	\$2,251	\$2,000	\$251
<b>Total Income</b>	<b>\$57,250</b>	<b>\$59,303</b>	<b>(\$2,053)</b>
<b>Expenses</b>			
Loan Principal	\$2,420	\$2,420	\$0
<b>YTD Net</b>	<b>(\$6,041)</b>	<b>(\$3,932)</b>	<b>(\$2,109)</b>

## SERVICE COMMISSION



Our goal was \$250 for a fish farm as requested by ELCA, but our generous congregation donated \$306 so they may be able to add a few chicks or a goat.

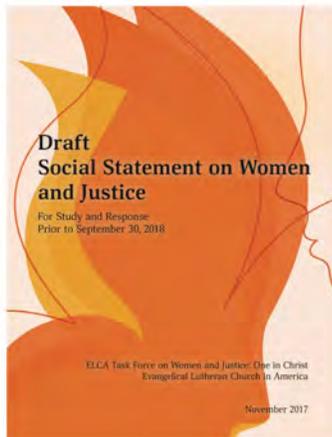
The next I-Help for Women dinners are June 6 and July 4.

Yes, they are hungry on holidays too. If you can help, the sign-up sheet is in the narthex.

Thanks.

Your Service Commission

## SOCIAL STATEMENT ON WOMEN &amp; JUSTICE



After years of study and intentional listening, the ELCA Task Force on Women and Justice: One in Christ has issued a draft social statement for comment. The task force, comprised of diverse individuals from around our church, wants to hear from the whole church before it sends a proposed statement for consideration at the ELCA Church wide Assembly in 2019.

This is an invitation to help discern what this church should teach about contemporary issues related to sexism and patriarchy in our society. To read the Draft Social Statement on "Women and Justice" order paper copies or get tips for leading discussion groups, visit: [ELCA.org/womenandjustice](http://ELCA.org/womenandjustice). Feedback is due by Sept. 30, 2018.

A copy of this draft is available in the St. Timothy Office. **A forum has been scheduled for June 24th after Worship Service at 11:30am to discuss this statement.** Our feedback will join the body of responses that inform the task force's thinking as it revises this draft to create a proposed social statement by January 2019.

## ST TIMOTHY LANDSCAPING



In recent meetings, the property committee has been considering the need to improve the landscaping around the church property so that it looks better and requires less effort and expense to maintain. Matt Schulz has taken the lead in doing research and planning for the project. So far, two master gardeners who live in the area have visited the property and have provided advice on the kinds of native plants that would thrive on the property, look attractive, require little maintenance and require no water other than the natural seasonal rainfall.

Matt has also recently attended a class on "Gardening With Natives" by the Monterey Peninsula Water Management District. Using links to the websites of organizations such as the California Native Plant Society, the California Native Garden Foundation, and links to specific plants recommended by the master gardeners, Matt has put together a binder that includes pictures and information about plants that would thrive on St. Tim's property. The plants range from sun-loving to shade tolerant; plants that will thrive under the oaks and pines along Via Esperanza and plants that will thrive in the sun along Soledad; they include ground cover, small shrubs, large shrubs, grasses, annuals, perennials, ferns and vines. The vast majority of these plants will provide food and shelter for birds, bees, and butterflies.

The binder consists of a single page of information -- including a picture -- for each plant. It will be available in the church office and on the church website. Members of St. Tim's are invited to browse through the plants and indicate their preferences. A form is available in the binder for this purpose. Diagrams showing the layout and locations of plants will be used to keep the congregation informed and to solicit input. The diagrams can be found in the binder and on the website. It might take years to improve all of the property around St. Tim's but the hope is to have the area along Soledad completed by this fall. This first accomplishment may require a work day or two where everybody pitches in! With low maintenance plantings, a little work in the beginning should pay big dividends in the long run. Look for further information and opportunities to help with this project in the future!

Seaside Daisy



Ceanothus





- 1** Remember in prayer leaders and delegates gathered for the Lower Susquehanna, Delaware-Maryland, South Carolina, Southeastern, Montana, Sierra Pacific and Southwest California synod assemblies, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and encourage them for God's work in the world and growing the church.
- 2** Remember in prayer leaders and delegates gathered for the Southern Ohio, Allegheny, West-Virginia-Western Maryland, Florida-Bahamas, North Carolina, Northwest Synod of Wisconsin and Eastern North Dakota synod assemblies, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and encourage them for God's work in the world and growing the church.
- 3** Pray that travelers, vacationers and students on break will be renewed in their faith, life, work and relationships through experiences of sabbath, rest and play this summer.
- 4** Remember in prayer leaders and delegates gathered for the Upstate New York Synod Assembly, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and encourage them for God's work in the world and growing the church.
- 5** Pray our church continues to respond to the needs of Syrian refugees through the presence and work of The Lutheran World Federation and other partners, that people who have been displaced from their homes and countries devastated by conflict and war have shelter, food, access to water and sanitation facilities, education and skills training, psychosocial support and other services; pray for an end to this humanitarian crisis and a lasting diplomatic resolution of this conflict.
- 6** We ask God to stir in us humility, wisdom and eagerness to proclaim Jesus Christ as Lord through our faith and all we do.
- 7** Remember in prayer leaders and delegates gathered for the Central States, Central/Southern Illinois and New England synod assemblies, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and encourage them for God's work in the world and growing the church.
- 8** Remember in prayer leaders and delegates gathered for the Northwestern Minnesota, Southwestern Minnesota, Metropolitan Chicago, Western Iowa, Northeastern Iowa and La Crosse Area synod assemblies, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and encourage them for God's work in the world and growing the church.
- 9** Remember in prayer leaders and delegates gathered for the Northwestern Ohio, Northeastern Ohio, Northeastern Pennsylvania and Virginia synod assemblies, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and encourage them for God's work in the world and growing the church.
- 10** We pray the Holy Spirit will equip and inspire us to live lives that can't be ignored or go unnoticed, lives that cause people to ask who we are, what motivates us and how they too can share in our faith, joy and hope – not for our own recognition, gratification or legacy, but for God's glory.
- 11** Vacation Bible schools, day camps and outdoor ministries share the good news of God's love through Jesus Christ with children and youth in neighborhoods and communities across the country. Pray for the Spirit to inspire and equip leaders, volunteers and outdoor ministry staff in their work with young people, that their impact will be deep and enlivening.
- 12** We ask God to grant us courage, wisdom and persistence in fighting racism, working for reconciliation and healing, and recommitting our church to work for racial justice and inclusion, to work against white privilege, and to be a church that truly welcomes all.
- 13** Give thanks for the service and witness of the ELCA missionaries and eight young adults serving in the Young Adults in Global Mission program in Israel, Jerusalem/West Bank, Jordan and Palestine, working with our companions to grow the church, support Lutheran schools and engage in issues of peacemaking, reconciliation and interfaith dialogue.
- 14** Remember in prayer leaders and delegates gathered for the Grand Canyon, Northwestern Pennsylvania and Southwestern Pennsylvania synod assemblies, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and encourage them for God's work in the world and growing the church.
- 15** Remember in prayer leaders and delegates gathered for the Northern Illinois, Upper Susquehanna, Caribbean and Metropolitan Washington, D.C., synod assemblies, that the Spirit will strengthen, guide and encourage them for God's work in the world

and growing the church.

**16** When life seems dark, our problems deep and insurmountable or we long for forgiveness, pray to the Lord and trust God's word, steadfast love and power to save.

**17** Ask God to help us be attentive and receptive when we listen to parables, stories, metaphors and artistic expressions that catch us off guard, break through our assumptions, connect faith to daily life and deepen our understanding of God's truth and wisdom.

**18** Remember in prayer parents and children during the summer months, a time when challenges of child care, hunger and meaningful, safe activities for youth can be complicated and acute; pray for wisdom and inspiration in creating services, programs and activities that support and strengthen families in your community.

**19** Peace Not Walls is an ELCA campaign working for justice and peace in Palestine and Israel. Ask God to bless and further our work in partnership with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Jordan and the Holy Land, The Lutheran World Federation and The National Interreligious Leadership Initiative on the Middle East to promote dignity, respect for human rights, mutual understanding among religions, healing and reconciliation in the Holy Land.

**20** It's sometimes tempting to underestimate our influence and impact in the world as children of God, followers of Jesus. Ask God to encourage us through the presence of the Holy Spirit to be confident and bold in bearing the good news of Jesus Christ and living, acting and advocating for the well-being of all people and communities.

**21** The ELCA and The Episcopal Church are committed to prayer, fasting and advocacy addressing cuts to public programs that are vital to hungry people who are living in poverty. Remember to pray for these concerns, our leaders and people in need on the 21st of each month through December 2018.

**22** Remember in prayer the congregations, youth, parents, leaders and synods preparing for and traveling to the ELCA Youth Gathering in Houston.

**23** Give thanks to God for the grace, new life and purpose we receive in baptism, and pray that remembering our baptism serves to keep us grounded in the good news of our salvation and call to join one another in doing God's work in the world.

**24** Pray for young people of color and those whose primary language is other than English who are gathered for the Multicultural Youth Leadership Event in Houston to celebrate their uniqueness, immerse themselves in Scripture, serve in the community, learn from teachers and elders, spread joy in fellowship and praise God who makes us one in the body of Christ.

**25** Pray that The tAble, a pre-event to the ELCA Youth Gathering, blesses and empowers young people who live with a range of physical, cognitive and emotional disabilities that they might grow as faithful, wise and courageous witnesses.

**26** Offer up prayers filled with thanks and praise for God's love, power and wondrous works for the benefit of humankind.

**27** Remember in prayer the thousands of youth and adults beginning their experience of learning, worship, witness, celebration and service at the ELCA Youth Gathering in Houston.

**28** Give thanks for the 12 ELCA missionaries serving in Tanzania with the Evangelical Lutheran Church in Tanzania and its health care and education programs, theological education for leaders, and water resources and development work throughout East Africa.

**29** *Peter and Paul, Apostles* Responding to God's call to follow and give witness to the good news of Jesus Christ, Peter and Paul left the familiarity of their occupations to become apostles who shared the gospel through their witness, preaching and writing. We ask God to so inspire us to be faithful and bold followers, witnesses and leaders sharing the light of Christ in the world.

**30** Many seasonal workers – of all ages – serve behind the scenes and in roles with little recognition or appreciation during the summer. Give thanks to God for their labor and contributions to the community and ask the Spirit to move us to regard them with respect, gratitude, generosity and mutual hospitality.

# June

Sun	Mon	Tue	Wed	Thu	Fri	Sat
					1 Synod' Assembly	2 Synod' Assembly
3 Worship Service 10:00am Synod' Assembly	4	5	6 I-Help 5:30am	7 Christ in Our Home Noon	8	9
10 Worship Service 10:00am	11	12 Altar Guild 1:00pm  Service 3:45pm	13	14 Property 9:30am  Christ in Our Home Noon	15	16
17 Worship Service 10:00am	18	19  Food Pantry 4:00-7:00pm	20 Council Meeting 12:00-2:00pm	21 Christ in Our Home Noon	22	23 Men's Breakfast 8:30am  Work Day
24 Worship Service 10:00am Women & Justice 11:30am	25	26 Dagny Circle 1:00pm	27	28 Christ in Our Home Noon	29	30

## JUNE BIRTHDAYS

Silas Schulz 6/6  
 Ross Slater 6/10  
 Kim Cantrell 6/11  
 Sofia Brown de Lopez 6/12

## ANNIVERSARIES

Sam Raskin 6/25  
 Matthew Schulz 6/25  
 TJ Racoosin 6/26  
 Connie & Bill Dallmann 6/12  
 James & Cathryn Chinn 6/13