



# Mission Interpretation

Telling stories of our hands doing God's work

## Mission Memo #458

June 4, 2019

### Day of Pentecost (June 9, 2019)



Pentecost is a day of promises fulfilled. The promised Spirit of God is poured out. The baptized have become "children of God" and "joint heirs with Christ." By the power of the Spirit we have seen the face of the Father in his only begotten Son and been saved by him. Bless the Lord, O my soul.

#### Readings

- [Acts 2:1-21](#) - Filled with the Spirit to tell God's deeds
- [Psalm 104:24-34, 35b](#) - Send forth your Spirit and renew the face of the earth. (Ps. 104:30)
- [Romans 8:14-17](#) - The Spirit makes us children of God
- [John 14:8-17 \[25-27\]](#) - The Father will give you another Advocate, the Spirit of truth

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#### What Does This Mean?

"What does this mean?" the devout ask (Acts 2:12). For those gathered in that house, the event meant the birth of sudden, surprising, unmerited new life. Filled with the Holy Spirit, they burst from the house with a story to share about God's wonders. But what does this event of Pentecost mean for us, today, many centuries later? God is at work here, now, in the world. Through the gift of the Holy Spirit, the Advocate, God is walking alongside as friend, truth-teller, comforter, and guide.

The writer of John's gospel speaks of it in this way: the Advocate, the one whom the Father will send, will teach the disciples everything they need to know. God is not yet finished revealing who God is, and the disciples are not yet finished learning. Through the Spirit of truth, the disciples will do the work of Jesus, and his life will continue through them.

In holy baptism, the Spirit rests on the heads of young and old alike. Filled with the Holy Spirit, the baptized have an old, old story to tell of Jesus and his love—

and a new, new story of how God is birthing sudden, surprising, and unmerited new life all around us, every day. God is at work, here, now in the world through the lives of everyday Christians. Jesus' work continues through the lives of all the baptized. We discover meaning from this Pentecost story today, not only for our own sake but for the sake of the world that so hungers for this life.

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### **An Update from Pastor Betty**

In recent Memos we have shared news of the arrest and move to deport Pastor Betty Rendon and her husband. In spite of an outpouring of support for Pastor Betty, ICE moved quickly and deported them on May 28, thus separating another family. In spite of her personal travail, Pastor Betty is seeking to help others. Here is a message posted by Pastor Betty shortly after she landed in Bogotá where she had been deported from the United States. Not surprisingly, in the middle of her suffering, she is planning to launch a new ministry... please take the time to read:

"Thank you God and thank you to all of you who are praying for peace and justice.

These are the suitcases prepared by ICE for people arriving in their destination cities. The only items in these suitcases are papers...letters received by people we love, and the medicine we receive.



I think it is necessary to develop a Ministry in the Colombian consulate that provides better care and a better welcome to these people who arrive with broken hearts, without suitcases, without clothes, without possibilities of making a call and without money to eat and buy the passage to finish arriving at the destination place. Each person has felt violently attacked by ICE, either because they violently entered their home or were attacked at their place of work, on the street, or in their car. The prisons seem purgatory, a place you only hear the crying and the gnashing of teeth.

I am now in Bogota because I found a good Samaritan. A family that has given me solidarity and support. Thank you, Beautiful family for all your care.  
Pastor Betty Rendon

We pray for the safety of Pastor Betty and her family and hope they may be reunited. Advocating for reform of our refugee and immigration remains a priority.

## **Bishop Eaton addresses well-being of children in detention centers**

Children coming to our nation for safety and protection are still dying at our southern border while in U.S. detention.

Carlos, a 16-year-old youth from Guatemala, [died](#) May 20 in the custody of the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) Customs and Border Protection (CBP). Wilmer, a 2-year-old, [died](#) May 14, also in the custody of CBP. They were preceded in death by [Jackelin](#), [Felipe](#), [Juan](#) and a 10-year-old girl from El Salvador who [died](#) in September 2018 but whose death has just been disclosed. One year ago, [Claudia Patricia Gómez González](#), a 20-year-old woman from Guatemala, was shot in the head and killed by a Border Patrol agent while seeking safety in the United States.

I am deeply dismayed by the deaths of these children, made in the image of God, who came to our southern border as refugees and asylum seekers to ask us for protection. As a nation we denied them that safety, instead placing them in detention facilities, sometimes for months.

Our nation and its leaders have moral and legal obligations on behalf of those who seek safety in our land. As Congress considers federal funding for DHS, we advocate against further funds for immigration detention, deportation, and border militarization, and oppose intentional policy choices that harm children and families. We follow a Lord who instructed, "Let the little children come to me, and do not stop them; for it is to such as these that the kingdom of heaven belongs" (Matthew 19:14). As we continue to serve and love our neighbor, we pray for the well-being of children and families in detention, and we urge the presidential administration to seek alternatives to the detention of children.

In Christ,

The Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton  
Presiding Bishop, ELCA

## **Second Chances: A Migrant Story - By Rev. Jaime Dubon**

In 2013, Juan began the journey to the United States, spurred by extreme poverty and lack of opportunities in El Salvador. He left his wife, Ingrid, and their two children behind.

After several days of walking and taking a public bus in El Salvador and Guatemala, Juan made it to Mexico. There, he attempted to get on "La Bestia" (The Beast) - a network of Mexican freight trains used by migrants to travel from the



southern region of Mexico north towards the U.S. border.

During his attempt to climb aboard, his legs were trapped by the wheels of the train, causing him to lose both his legs. The seriousness of the injury caused Juan to be in an incredible amount of pain. He almost died.

With the aid of a friend, Juan arrived at a local hospital, where he spent several weeks before returning to El Salvador.

A block from Juan's home is Our Redeemer, a congregation of the Salvadoran Lutheran Church (ILS). The pastor, Francisco Aguilar, heard about Juan's story. Pastor Aguilar is one of many pastors who were trained through ILS's migrant program, La Pastoral del Migrante.

Pastor Francisco visited Juan and Ingrid's home to offer spiritual support. After talking and listening to their story, he prayed and gave them a food basket.

Through another part of the program, Juan and Ingrid were given seed money to start their own business. Having already known how to weave before migrating and having learned the Mexican style of weaving while recovering in Mexico - a style highly valued and sought after in El Salvador - Juan used the seed money to buy supplies to make hammocks. Now, Juan and Ingrid sell their products at the local market, and that income allows them to support their family.

After the horrible experience in Mexico, including the loss of his legs, Juan never gave up hope. Instead, he, Ingrid, and their children have grown stronger together as a family. And with the accompaniment of the church, they are moving forward.

The Salvadoran Lutheran Church, with support from [Lutheran Disaster Response](#) through the [AMMPARO Strategy](#), works to go beyond pastoral and psychosocial care, to offer practical and economical means for families, like Juan and Ingrid, to thrive in El Salvador.

## **Churches in the Americas: Witnessing together for justice and**

**peace** - Nearly 60 church leaders from [the Latin America and Caribbean \(LAC\)](#) and [the North American region of the Lutheran World Federation](#) gathered for a [regional leadership conference in Lima, Peru, May 10-14](#). Leaders committed to strengthening collaboration throughout the Americas, particularly relating to issues of migration, theological formation,

public witness, youth action, climate justice and gender equity. The conference emphasized the importance of grounding all aspects of ministry in faith in Jesus,



which compels the body of Christ to action in responding to the needs of all people. ([Click here](#) for more of the story)

### Lutheran Disaster Response

Long after the storms are over and the media has left the church is there to help in healing and recovery. Here is an example. Thanks to partners like [Lutheran Services Carolinas](#) our church is still a healing presence for the survivors of Hurricane Matthew. Two and a half years later, your dollars are still at work helping people like Bill Creech get back into their homes.

<http://ow.ly/NK4O5OutJJJo>



### Lutheran World Relief at Work



In places like the Democratic Republic of Congo, our gifts can be life-saving. The country is in the midst of one of the worst Ebola outbreaks ever. Our gifts provides life-saving items like soap and sanitary supplies, protective gear and medical equipment - items desperately needed to protect children and families at risk of this extremely contagious and highly fatal disease. [Now through](#)

[July 24, gifts given to Lutheran World Relief for those families will be matched - dollar for dollar, up to \\$167,667!](#)

**SYNOD ASSEMBLY** - Just a reminder, if you will be at the Assembly, please plan to spend a little time at the MI display to help tell people what we do.

#### Coming Events:

Date	Event/Activity	Resources
June 7 and 8, 2019	2019 MC Synod Assembly, Tinley Park Convention Center, 18451 Convention Center Dr., Tinley Park, IL	For more information visit <a href="http://www.mtselca.org/assembly/">http://www.mtselca.org/assembly/</a>
Aug 5-10, 2019	ELCA Churchwide Assembly, at the Wisconsin Center, Milwaukee, Wisc.	For more information visit <a href="https://www.elca.org/churchwideassembly">https://www.elca.org/churchwideassembly</a>
Sept 8, 2019	"God's Work. Our Hands." Sunday At as many locations as possible	For information and resources see <a href="https://elca.org/dayofservice">https://elca.org/dayofservice</a>