



Mission Interpretation

Telling stories of our hands doing God's work

Mission Memo #441

November 6, 2018

25th Sunday after Pentecost (November 11, 2018)



Widows are visible everywhere in today's readings. Jesus denounces those scribes who pray impressive prayers but devour widows' houses. He commends the poor widow who in his view gave far more than the major donors. Jesus doesn't see her simply as an object of compassion or charity. She, like the widow of Zarephath who shares her last bit of food with Elijah, does something of great importance.

Readings

- [1 Kings 17:8-16](#) - *God feeds Elijah and the widow at Zarephath*
- [Psalm 146](#) - *The Lord lifts up those who are bowed down. (Ps. 146:8)*
- [Hebrews 9:24-28](#) - *The once for all sacrifice of Christ*
- [Mark 12:38-44](#) - *A widow's generosity reveals the hypocrisy of the scribes*

Be Not Afraid

How would you live if you were not afraid? Fear is used by politicians to gain our votes, by the media to get our attention, by advertising firms to sell us what we don't need, and by TV evangelists to get our donations. What fears are used against us? One is scarcity, the fear that we won't have enough or won't get our share. Our false belief that having more money and "stuff" will save us binds us as slaves. In many cases, having less can free us to live by faith.

The writer of Hebrews 11:1 states, "Now faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen." Normally, we read forward from this verse, but the word "Now" is a clue that we should look back. Hebrews 10:39 says, "But we are not among those who shrink back and so are lost, but among those who have faith and so are saved." Who shrinks back? Those who are afraid. Who are saved? By implication, those who do not shrink back and are not afraid. So fear is not only a faith issue but an issue of our salvation. And is that not what we would expect? What more do we need to be saved from than our worst fears? What good is a

savior who does not help us confront our fears? As noted above, our fears are the handles that marketers, politicians, and supervisors often use to control us and bend us to their plans and desires.

But like the pain that warns us of injury and nausea that tells us we are becoming ill, our fear has a positive use: it lets us know our vulnerability, and it tells us what we truly value and truly trust. "We walk by faith, not by sight" (2 Cor. 5:7). The powers and principalities promise us what we can see. Where do we put our true faith and trust?

November Advocacy Update

ELCA Advocacy Office, Washington, D.C.

2018 NOVEMBER ELECTION UPDATE: Election Day is Tuesday, Nov. 6, and it is a critical time to get out and vote! Voting is a first step toward faithful civic participation - a deliberate process of naming our faith values, then acting on them through our vote. Be sure to visit elca.org/votes and the [ELCA Facebook page](#) for more resources, Bible studies, shareable graphics and tools in the lead up to Election Day.

INDEFINITE CHILDREN DETENTION, FLORES: On Sept. 7, the administration proposed a regulation change that will undermine existing child protection standards for immigrant children and the standards set by the courts in the 1997 Flores Agreement. While the agreement outlines that children are not safe in detention facilities and should not be detained for longer than 20 days, the proposed regulation allows the Department of Homeland Security (DHS) to **keep children in detention indefinitely**, despite the psychological and physical toll. ELCA Advocacy [shared an action alert in October](#), encouraging advocates to submit comments and share their perspectives on the rule. The current deadline for submitting comments is Nov. 6.

GLOBAL FOOD SECURITY ACT, SIGNED BY PRESIDENT: Earlier last month, the Global Food Security Reauthorization Act unanimously passed in both the House and Senate. Its passage extends congressional authorization for Feed the Future, a U.S. government initiative charged with combating chronic hunger and food insecurity around the world.

Globally, 815 million people suffer from chronic hunger; the majority of whom are women. Approximately 45 percent of deaths of children under the age of 5 are

caused by malnutrition. Through initiatives like Feed the Future, participating countries have been able to increase agricultural and nutritional investments. As a result, farmers can feed their families and communities and contribute to their countries' economic growth. [ELCA Advocacy sent a message to advocates](#) who took action on the bill, celebrating the extension following its passage in October.

Balance between continuity and innovation in LWF Strategy 2019-2024

(LWI) - On the 501st anniversary of the Reformation, the Lutheran World Federation (LWF) is launching its [new strategy: "With Passion for the Church and for the World."](#) Balancing continuity and innovation, the new strategy identifies key priorities for the communion of churches in the coming years. LWF General Secretary Rev. Dr Martin Junge spoke to Lutheran World Information (LWI) about the new strategy, answering questions about how the Lutheran churches are working together for a just, peaceful and reconciled world. To learn more go to: <https://www.lutheranworld.org/news/living-and-working-together-churches-ongoing-reformation>

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 http://www.mtselca.org/assembly/
Aug 5-10, 2019	ELCA Churchwide Assembly, at the Wisconsin Center, Milwaukee, Wisc.	For more information visit https://www.elca.org/churchwideassembly

An Invitation from HealthierChurch.org

What is your church doing in the community? What is your community doing for its churches? What could we do? What could we do together that would make a difference? Think about it...

If you want to have a voice in designing the future of your community, join us on December 2 at Lutheran Church of the Resurrection, 15050 S Central, Oak Forest, IL 60452. . We will begin with a light lunch at 1:00 PM. Register now by sending your name to: info@healthierchurch.org

Visit <http://www.healthierchurch.org/> to learn more.