

# THE MESSENGER



*From the Pastor's desk...*



I watched the musical “Hamilton” recently. It was very well done; I highly recommend it. I was reminded of high school history lessons about the American Revolution and founding of our country. One of the issues at the time of the revolution was slavery. Slavery played an important part in the economy of the United States from the very beginning. The success of our fledgling country was partially built by the slave labor of people with black and brown skin. Racial inequality has been a part of our national conversation from the very beginning. Racial inequality remains an issue for us today. This is an important issue for Christians to address because Jesus summed up the commandments this way, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.” (Luke 10:27) In our confirmation vows we promise to, “serve all people, following the example of Jesus, and strive for justice and peace in all the earth.” (ELW p.236)

The killings of Ahmaud Arbery, Breonna Taylor, Dreasjon (Sean) Reed, and George Floyd this past spring, and the deaths of Civil Rights leaders John Lewis, the Rev. C.T. Vivian, and Charles Evers this past July, highlight the continuing need for education and awareness about racial inequality. I have had recent conversations with members of our community that have moved me to write about this issue.

To start, I want to clarify the difference between racism and bigotry. Racism is the systemic preference of one group of people over another. In our culture, Caucasian identity is given deference over other racial identities. Bigotry is the personal feeling of superiority over a person of another racial identity and acting on that feeling. The terms racism and bigotry get used interchangeably in our language, but if we recognize racism as a systemic issue and bigotry as a personal feeling and action, I believe we can advance the discussion. You do not need to be a bigot to participate in racism, sometimes even unknowingly. I believe that when we recognize our own participation in systemic racism, we can more easily address the causes of racial inequity and injustice.

Next, I would like to address white privilege. This is identifying the specific ways that systemic racism benefits white people. For example, white privilege is being able to assume that most of the people you or your children study in history classes and textbooks will be of the same race as you are, or that your failures will not be attributed to your race, or that you will be given credit for your success without attributing it to affirmative action. Naming white privilege is not racism against white people, as has been suggested to me, because the purpose of naming white privilege is to describe the advantages afforded to white people, not to suppress opportunities of white people. Systemic racism suppresses the opportunities of black and brown people. Naming white privilege helps white people see what has been invisible to them so that they can help address systemic racism.

Many white people reject white privilege because they don't feel privileged, especially those living in poverty. Others reject the feelings of guilt and shame, saying, “I didn't own slaves, I'm not a racist.” Drawing attention to white privilege is not saying that all white people are racist or bigots. It is not saying that all white people are successful and all black and brown people are not. It does help us understand how systemic racism gives deference to white cultural norms and suppresses black cultural norms.

In the wake of the recent events in our country, ELCA Bishop Eaton has called for the church to recommit itself to working for justice and peace for all people and to especially pay attention to how systemic racism affects our society, culture, and our church. Bishop Tesch has formed a Commission for Racial Equity and Justice in our Northwestern Minnesota Synod. If you are interested in the work of this commission, please contact me or Bishop Tesch for further information. If you would like to discuss anything that I have shared in this letter, please contact me, 218-891-4632.

I pray we continue to live out our call to be God's people working for justice and peace in all the earth. God's peace be with all of you in these last days of summer.

-Pastor Karen

July 23, 2020



# Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Dear Siblings in Christ,

Here's a puzzle. See if you can resolve the contradictions in these statements by two of the most admired thinkers of our Christian faith. **St. Paul:** "It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery." (*Galatians 5:1*) "Be subject to one another out of reverence for Christ." (*Ephesians 5:21*) **And Martin Luther:** "The Christian is the perfectly free lord of all, subject to none. The Christian is the perfectly dutiful servant of all, subject to all." (*The Treatise on Christian Liberty*)

It sounds like a debate happening in public right now over the wearing of masks, doesn't it? Is it about personal freedom or about public health? St. Paul and Martin Luther answer, "Yes!" The contradiction is only resolved in the one place where all of our contradictions find resolution – in the Body of Jesus Christ. He freely laid his body down for love of sinners like you and me. Jesus "did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; but emptied himself, by taking the form of a servant." (*Philippians 2:7-8*)

On July 22<sup>nd</sup>, Governor Walz instituted an [Executive Order](#) requiring the wearing of masks in public indoor spaces, including churches beginning tomorrow, Saturday, July 25th. He also reiterated all the guidelines with which we are all familiar: physical distancing from people not from the same household, frequent hand washing, sanitizing frequently touched surfaces, refraining from the high-risk activity of public singing, etc. A variety of detailed instructions for following these guidelines are [available on our website](#). A good place to start is [this 21-question document](#).

***As a brother in Christ and as your Synod's pastor, I call upon each of you not to view this as an occasion to fight for personal liberty but as an opportunity to use your liberty for love. We choose to follow these guidelines as a proven and effective way of loving our neighbors by slowing or preventing the spread of COVID-19! In doing so we will be following Jesus.***

This continues to be a long and difficult road, with some tough decisions coming, especially around school. There is barely a flicker at the end of the tunnel with a few potential vaccines in human trials. (We are grateful for the vocations of researchers and medical professionals.) But we don't just sit and wait. We are creatively hearing and sharing the Gospel. We are daily dwelling in God's Word and coming to God in daily prayer. We are connected via video technologies, the phone, mail, tv and radio as well as small, safe indoor gatherings and larger, safe outdoor ones. When we come to the end of this, we will be a stronger, more resilient, more connected, and more faithful church.

The church was made for this! People need the message of God's love for us in Christ Jesus now, more than ever! Thank you for your faithfulness in ministry and your generosity of time, talent and money that keeps ministry happening. We really are "church together."

In Christ our Brother,

Pastor Bill Tesch

Bishop of the NWMN Synod of the ELCA





## Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Dear Friends in Christ

March 25, 2020

As you know Fisher resurfaced its streets this past year. That provided an opportunity for us to tar our parking lot at a reduced rate. We did and we believe it was a good decision, this past Sunday our lot was free of ice and dry making entrance to the church safer and more pleasant. The opportunity arose quickly, therefore a larger appeal was difficult to do prior to completion. While we were successful in the appeal, we feel greater participation would have been attained had there been more time. Approximately 90% of the costs were covered through special member contributions, the rest coming from budget reserves.

Due to several factors, it is possible that budget concerns could be an issue in 2020. However, we as members have ownership of a wonderful facility that was built in 1999 and on its 20<sup>th</sup> birthday is in need of some maintenance. Over the years we have improved the heating system, sound system and various other small issues as they arose. Were you to stand on the driveway entrance to the church and look at the roof you can see there is a need for shingles. There are numerous areas where the underlayment is showing through. Fortunately, we have not had a major leak, but it is inevitable. Therefore, we are being proactive and asking for bids to replace the shingles with an appropriate replacement. There is a probability that we will have to do some additional ventilation as well and we will explore the possibility of a steel roof. Steel roofs have come a long way in the last few years and are more aesthetically pleasing than in the past. Should a steel roof be more appealing we will ask for input from the congregation before entering into a contract. We estimate the cost to be around \$40,000.00 and do not have the reserves necessary to undertake this without your significant financial support.

At this time, we would ask for your special help to fund the needs of our building maintenance. When you make your special contribution to the Fisher Lutheran Church please designate on the memo or envelope that its destined for the building fund. We are very aware that your circumstances may vary due to the current Covid 19 threat we are all concerned about. Prayerfully, we hope that all Dear to you are safe and your personal situation is stable. This unforeseeable event will impact us all to some degree, but failure to complete this project could cost us significantly more if not addressed soon! This appeal will be ongoing until such time we have funded the project completely. Your contribution is necessary and would be greatly appreciated!

Paul Rutherford, Council President-  
Trenne-

Pastor Karen Young

Jared Solheim Chairman Property Committee-

Bruce Newhouse- David Radi- Ken Miller- John McDonald



# PARISH NEWS

Dear Friends of Pathways,

This summer Pathways Lutheran Outdoor Ministries is placing a special emphasis on upgrading facilities at Camp Emmaus. Unable to provide normal summer programs, we are maximizing our resources to spruce up the girls' bath house, renovate the retreat center, and build a large maintenance shop and storage area. These projects will significantly enhance the value and appeal of Camp Emmaus.



The Board of Directors has approved construction of a 32x48 foot storage garage and maintenance center at Camp Emmaus. The former 20x24 foot maintenance garage has been transformed into a gathering space in the retreat center. The new facility would provide winter storage for vehicle, lawn and garden equipment, building materials and a variety of items benefitting from indoor shelter. Within the garage we are planning a 16x32 foot heated maintenance shop with woodworking and mechanical tools. During the summer a large section of the storage area will be available for indoor gatherings, inviting campers to an enclosed area for art and crafts.

With volunteer help for construction of the building in August 2020, we estimate the cost to be \$40,000. That will include clearing the site, pouring a slab (already completed), erecting pre-fabricated walls and trusses with roofing, siding, windows, and garage doors. Electricity will be furnished and indoor construction will be completed for the heated shop area.

By the middle of June we have received \$16,000 in cash along with commitments for serious discounts in pre-built wall, trusses, roofing and electrical materials, totaling over \$10,000. Through appeals to congregational mission and endowment funds, we hope to raise an additional \$14,000 for this capital project.

With this request we invite you to consider a gift to Pathways Lutheran Outdoor Ministries in the amount of \$500.00. It is our goal to be good stewards of the property and programs which carry forward the mission of Pathways, striving to give children life-shaping experiences in faith formation.

Thank you for your prayerful consideration of this summer's capital project for Pathways. For further questions, please contact me at 218-227-5107 or [director@pathwaysbiblecamps.org](mailto:director@pathwaysbiblecamps.org).

Serving with joy,  
Chris Anderson, Pathways CEO

# Priorities of Pathways



**POP!**



## ***Camp Transformation***

**We are focusing on improving our facilities to make camp an even greater experience in 2021!**

### **This includes:**

- New Maintenance Building**
- Staff Building Remodel**
- Girls' Bathhouse Project**
- Suspension Bridge Repair**
- Chapel Updates**
- Cabin Maintenance**

## ***Pass It On Program***

**Pathways staff will be connecting with campers, families, churches, and communities online.**

### **This includes:**

- campfire worships**
- song festivals**
- nature walks**
- video encounters**
- counselor testimonials**
- prayer sessions**
- +55 Bible study**

### **New Resources for churches:**

- Special Music**
- Children's Messages**
- Video Nature Hikes**
- Camp Highlights**

## ***Sustaining Our Future***

**Together we will be prioritizing the importance of our mission and ministry for years to come.**

### **Ways to Connect include:**

- Work Projects**
- Camp Tours**
- Volunteer Opportunities**
- Camp Store Merchandise**
- Supporting our Mission**



After much prayer and consideration, we have decided to postpone next summer's ELCA Youth Gathering to 2022 due to the COVID-19 pandemic.

The 2022 ELCA Youth Gathering will be held July 24-28, 2022, in Minneapolis, with the two pre-events, the Multicultural Youth Leadership Event (MYLE) and the tAble, scheduled for July 21-24, 2022.

To learn more about the postponement and the 2022 Gathering, please visit: [elca.org/YouthGathering/COVID19](https://elca.org/YouthGathering/COVID19).

### Tithe.ly Giving

Online giving is available for both Fisher and Bygland churches through Tithe.ly.

You will find the link on our Parish website.

Fisherbygland.org

### Addresses for mail in offerings

**Fisher:** 209 2nd St. S. Fisher, MN 56723

**Bygland:** 27004 State Hwy. 220 SW Fisher, MN 56723



**PRAY**

For the harvest.

Matthew 9:37-38

## Council highlights

**Byglund Council met June 10. We had devotions, received reports from the secretary, treasurer, and pastor, and attended to the following items of business:**

- We will have new renters in the parsonage beginning August 1, Josh and Candace Mailhot.
- Brandt Roofing update
- Plans for worship, including drive-in style worship and returning to worship in the building.
- Our land rent contract is up for renewal this year.
- Building maintenance

**Fisher Council met June 17. Devotions and reports were followed with the following business items:**

- The council voted to support Pathways ministry with a \$1000 gift for summer ministry, since they will not be hosting youth Bible Camp in person this summer. They are providing camp experiences online free of charge.
- The parsonage committee reported new renters, Josh and Candace Mailhot.
- Summer worship plans were discussed in light of Covid 19.
- Sunday School is exploring options for fall. No VBS this summer.
- The stewardship committee will meet to discuss receiving gifts for the church.
- Jon and Lisa Ross and their family have removed their membership from Fisher Lutheran and Jon Ross has resigned from the council. The council will need to appoint a replacement until the next annual meeting.

**The Joint meeting of the Fisher and Byglund Councils was held at Fisher Lutheran on June 24. Pastor Karen led devotions which were followed by the Secretary's report, the Treasurer's report, and the Pastor's report. The following business was discussed:**

- Protocol for in-person worship and a Covid 19 Preparedness Plan
- Parsonage repairs and updates in preparation for the new renters.
- Review of the 2020 Compensation Guidelines – no change from the 2019 guidelines
- Purchase of technology equipment

**All three meetings adjourned with the Lord's Prayer.  
Byglund Council will meet Wednesday, August 12, 7:30 pm  
Fisher Council will meet Wednesday, August 17, 7:30 pm**

**All members of Fisher and Byglund Churches may get detailed copies of the meeting minutes, contact Jami Olson at the parish office to request a copy, 218-891-4632.**

# Join the LWR 75,000 More! Face Mask Challenge

**Not all heroes wear capes. Some make face masks.**

Many people in developing countries don't have the option of social distancing or frequent handwashing to slow the spread of COVID-19. The U.S. Centers for Disease Control and Prevention now says cloth face masks, along with hand washing and social distancing may help reduce transmission.

We need your help to sew cloth face masks to help us reach men, women and children in vulnerable communities.

After all, Lutheran World Relief was founded 75 years ago to help neighbors around the globe who were suffering during World War II. What will be our generation's legacy during this time of crisis?

In April of this year, LWR issued the 75,000 Face Mask Challenge. Our generous community reached our first goal of 75,000 masks in record time. Let's make 75,000 *More!*

Please join the 75,000 More! Face Mask Challenge and help us send cloth masks to vulnerable communities in developing countries that are bracing for a spike in COVID-19 cases.

The cloth mask you sew in your living room will provide love and protection to a neighbor in need halfway around the world. Can you make 25? 50? 75?

Instructions for mask making have been included on a separate page. A video is available on [www.lwr.org/masks](http://www.lwr.org/masks)

Don't sew? Your generous financial donations can help to rush masks around the world. Please consider giving a gift at [lwr.org/masks](http://lwr.org/masks) or at

Lutheran World Relief

PO Box 17061

Baltimore, MD

21297-1061 [800.597.5972](tel:800.597.5972)



## SUPPLIES FOR 1 MASK:

One (1) 8" x 14" piece of cotton fabric

Two (2) 2" x 34" strips

Thread & sewing machine

## PREPARE THE MASK:

- On 8" x 14" piece, right sides together, sew  $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam, creating tube.
- Turn right sides out, press seam and fabric.
- Make 3 pleats, approx. 1" each in size, using steam or pins to hold. Mask will be approx. 3" – 3.5" width.
- Sew  $\frac{1}{4}$ " seam on each side of mask, securing pleats. Trim seam allowance.

## PREPARE THE TIES:

- Fold in half and press (1"). Open tie back up.
- Fold each edge in to meet middle ( $\frac{1}{2}$ ") and press.
- Fold in half again, securing raw edges inside and press.

Each tie will be approx.  $\frac{1}{2}$ " width.

# How to Make a face Mask with Ties

## ASSEMBLY:

- Align center of tie with side of mask, open tie so edge of mask fits snugly inside. Pin.
- Sew tie to mask, Seam will be very short, get as close as a able while still catching all fabric. You are just attaching the mask to the tie at this point, not sewing the whole tie yet.
- Repeat for other tie on other side of mask.
- Sew down edges of tie, securing raw edges inside. Seam is very short. You will stitch over where mask is already attached. This is good because it helps reinforce.
- Repeat for other tie on other side of mask.
- Clip any stray fabric.

# LUTHERAN WORLD RELIEF KITS

## LWR School Kits

Education is one of the strongest tools a community has for breaking the cycle of poverty. Ensuring that girls attend school, especially in places where their access is deprioritized, has even stronger results. School Kits contain essential supplies to help children – and in some cases, adults – continue learning in the face of serious obstacles. That learning leads to a better life for them, their families and their communities.



Please consider donating as many of the following items as you would like:

- FOUR 70-sheet notebooks of wide- or college-ruled paper, approximately 8" x 10 ½"; no loose leaf paper
- ONE 30-centimeter ruler, or a ruler with centimeters on one side and inches on the other
- ONE pencil sharpener
- ONE pair of blunt scissors (safety scissors with embedded steel blades work well)
- FIVE unsharpened #2 pencils with erasers; secure together with a rubber band
- FIVE black or blue ballpoint pens (no gel ink); secure together with a rubber band
- ONE box of 16 or 24 crayons
- ONE 2 ½" eraser

## LWR Personal Care Kits

Cleanliness may not actually be next to godliness, but it certainly helps a person feel more human. When families find their homes destroyed, or must flee for their safety, soap and a towel rarely make the cut for what they can carry. Arriving in a refugee camp or other place of safety, they are scared, vulnerable and dirty from the travel. The simple items included in a Personal Care Kit provide much-needed self-care, critical germ fighting, and the chance to regain dignity amidst situations of fear and uncertainty.

Please consider donating any of the following:



- ONE light-weight bath-size towel (between 20" x 40" and 52" x 27"), dark color recommended
- TWO or three bath-size bars of soap equaling 8 to 9 oz., any brand, in original wrapping
- ONE adult-size toothbrush in its original packaging\*
- ONE sturdy comb, remove packaging
- ONE metal nail clippers (attached file optional), remove packaging

\* *Toothbrush multi-packs may be used by sealing an individual toothbrush in a business-size envelope; no plastic bags or wrap*

# Lutheran World Relief and the ELCA partner to fight COVID-19 around the world

By John Rivera

Aug 4, 2020

BALTIMORE— The [Evangelical Lutheran Church in America \(ELCA\)](#), the nation's largest Lutheran body, has worked with Lutheran World Relief to repurpose \$160,000 in project funding to emergency responses to the COVID-19 pandemic in Latin America, Africa and Asia.

In Latin America, the funding will be used for food assistance in Guatemala, El Salvador and Honduras, nations that have been hard-hit by the coronavirus and the resulting economic disruption that is causing increased hunger. In Africa, the support will provide improved water, sanitation and hygiene, along with personal protective equipment, to displaced communities in South Sudan. And a project in Nepal will ensure that quarantine facilities are hygienic and comfortable, and that households economically affected by COVID-19 are able to cultivate their crops and sustain their small-scale businesses.

“Thanks to the flexibility and rapid action of our ELCA partners, Lutheran World Relief has been able to quickly ramp up these emergency responses to COVID-19,” said Daniel Speckhard, LWR president & CEO. “This is so important because COVID-19 is a major threat to the resilience and wellbeing of the communities where we serve. Lives will be saved as a result of this support.”

“The ELCA has a tradition of standing with our global neighbors in good times and in bad. Our partnership with Lutheran World Relief is a reflection of that strong commitment and allows us to deepen and extend it in this time of extreme crisis,” said Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, presiding bishop of the ELCA.

The ELCA and Lutheran World Relief share a long, historical relationship and a mutual commitment to companionship in mission. Through its [ELCA World Hunger](#) program, the ELCA has provided \$1 million in annual support to Lutheran World Relief for projects that serve people and communities various regions around the world, including Latin America, Asia, and Africa.

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*Founded in 1945, [Lutheran World Relief](#) collaborates with local partners to grow inclusive and climate resilient rural economies, reduce poverty, and respond to emergencies and humanitarian crises. Lutheran World Relief works in concert with [Corus International](#), an ensemble of faith-based organizations working together in the world's most fragile settings to deliver the holistic, lasting solutions needed to overcome the interconnected challenges of poverty, health care access and climate change.*

