

# *“Look for the Women”*

A Conversation Guided by  
Pastor Lucille “CeCee” Mills

Women’s History Month

ELCA Coaching  
Being Church  
WEEKLY ONLINE GATHERING FOR ELCA LEADERS  
March 31, 2021

A photograph of a person sitting on a dark, textured couch, reading a newspaper. The person is wearing a dark long-sleeved shirt and light-colored pants. Their legs are crossed, and they are wearing red and white sneakers. The newspaper is open, showing several columns of text and some colorful graphics. The background is dark and out of focus.

# Devotions

## *Exodus 1:15-22*

*Photo by Hannah Busing on Unsplash*



# Opening Prayer

*Photo by Jaclyn Moy on Unsplash*

## *Exodus 1:15-22*

Who are the women in this story?  
What do you understand about them?  
Their motives, desires, thoughts, feelings?

*[Source: Look for the Women: A Virtual Bible Study in Search of Hope]*

The king of Egypt said to the Hebrew midwives, one of whom was named Shiphrah and the other Puah, 'When you act as midwives to the Hebrew women, and see them on the birthstool, if it is a boy, kill him; but if it is a girl, she shall live.' But the midwives feared God; they did not do as the king of Egypt commanded them, but they let the boys live. So the king of Egypt summoned the midwives and said to them, 'Why have you done this, and allowed the boys to live?' The midwives said to Pharaoh, 'Because the Hebrew women are not like the Egyptian women; for they are vigorous and give birth before the midwife comes to them.' So God dealt well with the midwives; and the people multiplied and became very strong. And because the midwives feared God, God gave them families. Then Pharaoh commanded all his people, 'Every boy that is born to the Hebrews you shall throw into the Nile, but you shall let every girl live.'

## *Exodus 1:15-22*

Who are the women in this story?

What do you understand about them?

Their motives, desires, thoughts, feelings?

*[Source: Look for the Women: A Virtual Bible Study in Search of Hope]*

A silhouette of a person sitting on the ground, facing away from the camera towards a bright sunset. The sun is a large, glowing orb in the center of the frame, casting a warm, golden light across the sky and the person's silhouette. The person's hair is long and dark. The text "Look for the Women" is written in a white, cursive script across the middle of the image, partially overlapping the person's silhouette and the sunset background.

*Look for the Women*

*Photo by Dingzeyu Li on Unsplash*

# Her Story

*Smithsonian Institute*

*<https://womenshistory.si.edu/book/introduction>*





“Women's contributions to America are largely missing from the traditional American History narrative.

Representation matters. We build our understanding of what's possible from the world around us; what we can't see is hard to imagine.”

*Mary Church Terrell (born Mary Eliza Church; September 23, 1863 – July 24, 1954) was one of the first African-American women to earn a college degree, and became known as a national activist for civil rights and suffrage.*

“In the foreword to *Smithsonian American Women: Remarkable Objects and Stories of Strength, Ingenuity, and Vision from the National Collection*, Jill Lepore recounts going to visit a local kindergarten class that was studying the American Revolution. Each student had chosen an important figure to study.”



*Flora Dodge "Fola" La Follette (September 10, 1882 – February 17, 1970) was a women's suffrage and labor activist from Madison, Wisconsin, United States. Rose Livingston (ca. 1876–December 26, 1975), known as the Angel of Chinatown, was a suffragist who worked to free prostitutes and victims of sexual slavery.*



*Las Soldaderas* were women "fighters" who made significant contributions to both the federal and rebel armies of the Mexican Revolution.

"When I'd asked the names of the people they'd picked, they shouted out, all in a tumble: 'Benjamin Franklin!' 'George Washington!' 'Patrick Henry!' 'Sam Adams!'



“‘Anyone here studying a woman?’ Silence. ‘Why not?’ I asked. And then a very little, very smart girl wearing a Spiderman T-shirt ... called out, ‘Because there were no women then!’ ”



*“Molly Pitcher” - Mary Ludwig Hays was a woman who fought in the American War of Independence at the Battle of Monmouth.*

A photograph of two women standing in the ocean at sunset. The women are in silhouette, facing each other. The sky is a mix of orange, yellow, and blue, with some clouds. The water is dark with some ripples.

*Look for the Women*

“When you’re invisible,  
people assume  
that you’ve done nothing.”

– *Edith P. Mayo, Curator Emeritus, Smithsonian  
National Museum of American History*

# Evolution of Women's History Month

1909 February 23<sup>rd</sup> National Women's Day established by NY City Social Democratic Women's Society

1911 March 19<sup>th</sup> First International Women's Day (for working women)  
observed in Europe, created at the 2<sup>nd</sup> International Socialist Women's Conference

1917 March 8<sup>th</sup> Becomes official International Women's Day

1970 November 22<sup>nd</sup> Rev. Elizabeth Platz ordained (LCA), December Rev. Barbara Andrews ordained (ALC)

1979 March 4<sup>th</sup> Rev. Lydia Rivera Kalb (LCA) ordained, August 26<sup>th</sup> Rev. Earlean Miller ordained (LCA)

1980 President Jimmy Carter declared National Women's History Week (Week of March 8<sup>th</sup>)

1985 Rev. Maria Copeland ordained

1987 First Women's History Month

1990 Rev. Ruth Frost and Phyllis Zillhart ordained

1994 Maxine Waters tried to make it a national holiday,  
but it died in committee

2013 Bishop Elizabeth Eaton elected as Presiding Bishop



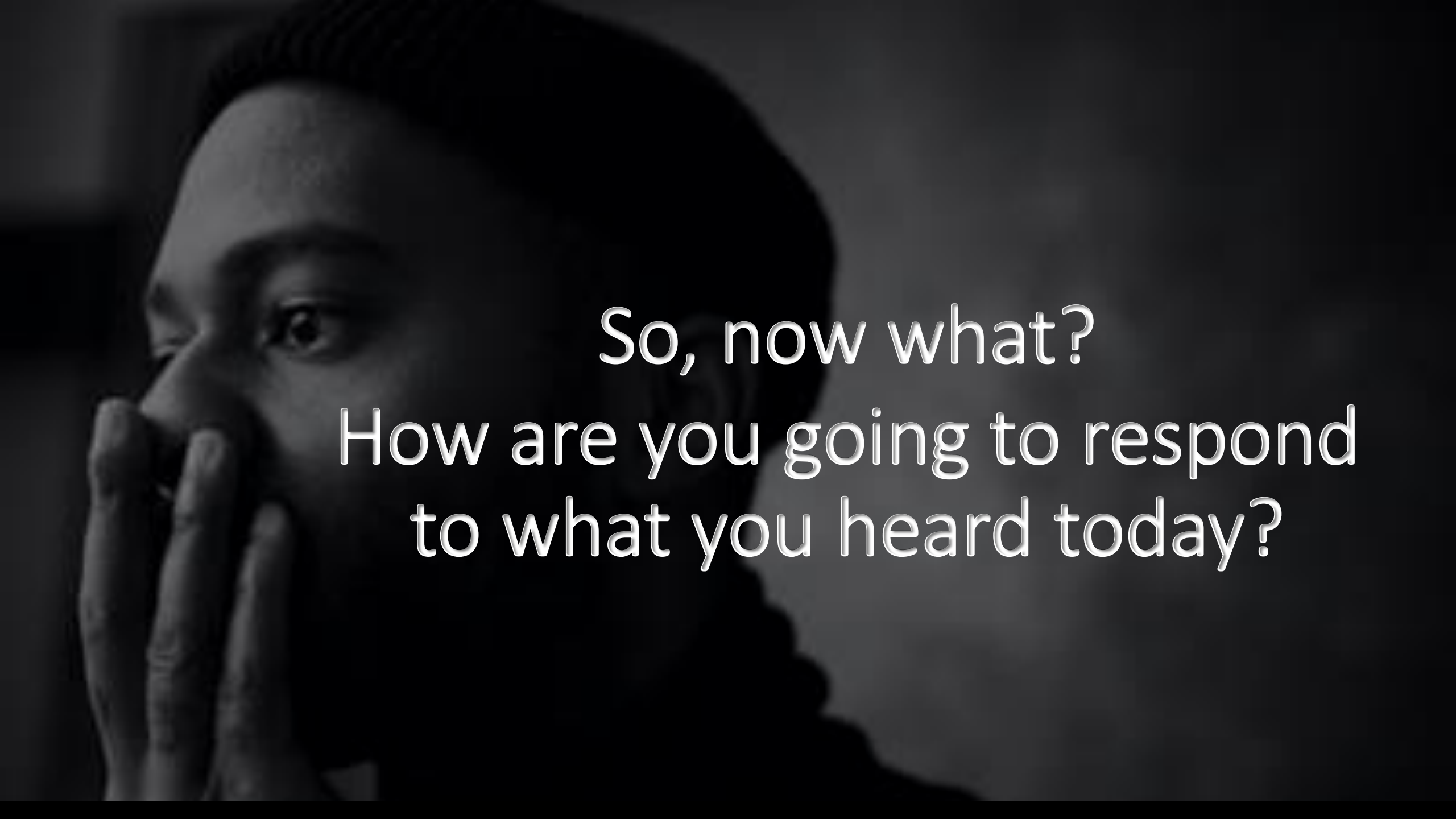
*Elizabeth Platz*



**Rev. Elizabeth Platz**





A black and white photograph of a person's face, partially obscured by their hand covering their mouth. The person has a wide-eyed, surprised, or perhaps shocked expression. The background is dark and out of focus.

So, now what?  
How are you going to respond  
to what you heard today?

# Suggestions for Next steps:

- Look for the women
  - Be an interrupter
    - Dig Deeper
- Thank women now
- Tell the whole story

# RESOURCES

Smithsonian Institute

<https://womenshistory.si.edu/book/introduction>

“Look for the Women: A Virtual Bible Study in Search of Hope” by Karl Anliker Video and Leader Guide can be found online at:  
<https://www.elca.org/Resources/Book-of-Faith#HeinFryChallenge>

**Search for #BecauseOfHerStory on social media**

**Visit website:**

<https://womenshistory.si.edu/herstory>



*Namaste'*

*Look for the Women*