

Wave of Prayer 4—April 17, 2022

There are so many conflicts in the world. There is so much suffering. The war in Ukraine continues, causing massive destruction and death in the thousands. Tensions in the Middle East are high as Palestinian and Israeli attacks and deaths are on the rise in recent weeks during Ramadan.

- **God, as we celebrate Easter, we remember and feel the pain and grief of the world. May conflicts be resolved. May suffering be lessened. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

The U.N. estimates that 10% of people in the world, including in the United States, face food insecurity. That's more than 700 million people. In some countries, like Afghanistan, South Sudan, Somalia, Ethiopia, Syria, and Yemen, conflicts have caused severe humanitarian crises. The war in Ukraine is now leading to even greater hunger as the supply of grain from the Ukraine diminishes and the cost of food and fuel increases. In some cases, it is difficult to get food aid to the people who need it.

- **God, as we eat festively this Easter, we pray for those who are hungry. We pray for justice, believing that there is enough food in the world for all. Thank you for those who are working to end global hunger. May their work continue until no one is hungry. Loving God, we offer you our prayer.**

There are challenges in education near and far. Covid-19 has caused a teacher shortage in the United States. In Minneapolis, teachers went on strike in March, asking for limited class size, additional mental health support for students, and increased wages for teachers. On March 23 in Afghanistan, the Taliban put limits on the education of girls, banning Afghani girls from education beyond Grade Six.

- **God, we pray that all children may have the right to a quality education. May education open doors for young people and people of all ages. May equity and justice be realized. Lord, in your mercy, hear our prayer.**

As racism continues to cause injustice and even death, there are growing moves towards racial justice. On March 29, the Emmett Till Antilynching Act was signed into law, making it a federal hate crime to kill or cause serious bodily injury to someone based on bias. On April 7, Ketanji Brown Jackson was confirmed by the Senate to become the first Black woman on the U.S. Supreme Court.

- **God, we thank you for these signs of hope that racial justice is an achievable goal. May we continue to learn how to be anti-racists for the cause of justice in our own country and throughout the world. Loving God, we offer you our prayer.**

As we celebrate the risen Christ, further signs of hope abound. At Christ Lutheran, the April 10 coffee hour raised awareness about the ELCA Declaration to People of African Descent. At Shalom Mennonite, a Lenten book group studied Howard Thurman's *Jesus and the Disinherited*, discussing the question: What is the significance of the religion of Jesus to people who stand with their backs against the wall? At San Miguel Community Church, volunteers worked the past 3 months with 18 students learning English and electricity, an initiative of Mexican NGO Apoyo, which offers training in an employable trade.

- **God, we thank you this Easter for Jesus, who offered compassion, love, peace, hope, and joy to those around him. May Jesus be our model. We thank you for the small signs of hope we see in our own communities and for the opportunities we have of becoming more aware and more involved. Lord, this Easter, we feel joyful, and we offer you our gratitude.**