



THE KING'S BANNER



Christ the King Lutheran Church, Houston, Texas
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America
God's work. Our hands.

ctkelc.org

Volume 76, Number 05
May 2023

Bread for the World Offering of Letters

Sunday, May 7

After each worship service

Christ the King Courtyard, Rice Village campus

The Justice Advocacy Ministry Team invites you to advocate for justice after each worship service on Sunday, May 7. There will be a Bread for the World Offering of Letters on behalf of the 2023 Farm Bill, as well as several other justice topics for which you can advocate. Stop by the tables after worship and raise your voice for justice! [See page 13](#)



Dr. John Boles presents *Seven Virginians: The Men Who Shaped Our Republic*

Thursday, May 4,
7:00pm, Christ the King
parish hall (Rice Village)

Come hear John talk
about his 20th book
written for a general

audience and surprisingly relevant for our time. *Seven Virginians* may be purchased at your favorite bookstore and John will be happy to sign copies at the reception.

Summer Book Reviews on Sundays

Our summer book reviews are a beloved tradition as an educational offering on Sunday mornings during the summer months. All interested in presenting a book are invited to contact Pr. Rodriguez at sergiorodriguez@ctkelc.org with title, author, and your Sunday availability. We particularly welcome books that explore religious, moral, or ethical concerns within society and the world.

houston
food
bank



Saturday,
May 13

8:00 a.m. - noon

For information,
contact ctkhfb@gmail.com [See page 6](#)

PENTECOST PICNIC

MAY 28

Come celebrate the Holy Spirit and join us for our Pentecost Picnic on Sunday, May 28 at 12:15pm in the courtyard. Lunch will include fried chicken and potato salad. You are invited to bring additional side dishes or desserts to share. Donations will be gratefully received. All are welcome! Bring your picnic blanket and lawn chair, wear RED, and don your causal picnic attire.



BACH
SOCIETY
HOUSTON

Bach Vespers for Leipzig

Sunday, June 4, 6:00pm

Christ the King Church, Rice Village nave

The Bach Choir presents Bach Vespers before traveling to BachFest in Leipzig, Germany.

Senior Pastor Call Process: *Projected Conclusion*

This month, our Call Committee and Congregation Council expect to provide all members of Christ the King Lutheran Church with the name of and information about their proposed candidate to serve as our next Senior Pastor. Be on the lookout for more details by email and online.

Join our Sunday Forum on Sunday, May 21 for the Call Committee's final report and plan to be present for a meet-and-greet with the candidate on May 28 at 9:30am and for an expected Congregation Assembly to vote on this call after the 11:00am service that same day, Pentecost Sunday.

Congregational Vote on Sunday, May 7

9:30-10:15am & 12:15-1:00pm, parish hall

*Reconciling in Christ and
Welcome Statement*

[See page 3](#)



Dear faithful people of Christ the King Evangelical Lutheran Church:

May 2023 is going to be a very consequential month for us at Christ the King Lutheran Church. Among other events, I am certain that by the time you read this article, all of us will know the identity of the Call Committee's nominee for our next senior pastor. We will also know the date this month for our congregation's vote on this call and have at the very least a draft timeline for the beginning of our ministry together with that candidate. By the end of this month, Carole and I, with you, will be able to plan for me to move from serving you at Christ's Table to serving Christ alongside you from our seat in the pews. Anticipating all of this, over the next few Banner issues, I want to share with you what I hope we've learned about our mission and ministry together. So, first...

Ministers the people of Christ the King Lutheran Church.

At the suggestion of a long-time member, I added these words to our bulletins, but as far as I can tell, this statement is historically true. However, the reality of our Covid experience resulted in more and more of this congregation's ministry and ministry decisions devolving to our staff. The upside of this is that the staff, for a long while the only people who could be present on the campus, did an incredible job of keeping things going and providing the necessary means to make worship available and hold the congregation together. As we've come out of that crisis, much of this "crisis-management mode" has continued even as we all have been able to gather and work together again. The downside is that many of us forgot that much of what the staff was deciding and doing is really our responsibility, or better, our communal privilege. Together we have the honor of proclaiming Christ to one another as well as to all those around us.

Over this past year, one of my goals has been to move decision-making back into the hands of those we have elected to do our decision-making. As a result, we are more and more able to answer one of your perennial questions "who decided this?" with the appropriate answer: the congregation council.

I remind us all: when the Congregation meets in assembly, our corporate task is to set policy (policy includes budget,

for the budget sets the policy for our mission in any given year.). The congregation council's responsibility is to see that the policies are followed and make decisions with limited policy adjustments between meetings of the congregation. The staff, in turn, is responsible for carrying out day-to-day decision-making based on these policies and to enlist other members on our communal ministry and, in some cases, be the ones to carry out specific ministries assigned to them. It's important that we reinforce this "flow."

In this regard, we (the whole congregation) really need more of you to step up and be the "ministers" once again. We need members of working committees -- communications, congregational life, and care -- to name but a few. Are you able to minister in this way? Please offer yourself for any of these by speaking to a member of the staff or council. This is a better way to staff these needed leadership groups than having the staff or council members go to "the usual suspects."

Likewise, the mission of Christ the King Church needs many more "worship enablers." We need bell ringers (especially on Saturday evenings). We need acolytes (adults who act as examples, as well as youth and children who want to learn and do). Ushers (we're often short-handed here.) Assisting Ministers (who, among other tasks, write our weekly intercessions and who stand with the presiding minister at Christ's Table.) We speak often about re-introducing the chorus to sing at our early morning liturgy. If you're able, please let Cantor Ben Kerswell or any of the above-mentioned leaders know.

It would be a great gift to our life together with our new senior pastor if we all examined ourselves and offered ourselves to joyfully do these and other such tasks as Christ's ministers in this place.

Ministers --- the people of Christ the King Lutheran Church.

I urge you, by the time our new senior pastor arrives, let's make that more than just a pious hope. Together, let's make this a joy-filled truth!

Next month: **The ministry of the staff.**

Peace and Joy --- and Courage,
Amandus J. Derr
Interim Senior Pastor



Sunday Forum
Sundays at 9:30 a.m.
Rice Village Campus basement
classroom and online

Look for the Zoom link in the Sunday
e-blast or contact ctk@ctkelc.org.

May 7: Congregational Vote

Between 9:30-10:15am and 12:15-1:00pm, the Congregation Council will conduct a congregational vote in the parish hall on adopting our proposed Welcome Statement and becoming a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) Congregation. You must attend in-person and sign in to vote. The vote is the culmination of more than a full year of preparation and discernment and is an important step in the life of our congregation. For information regarding RIC, please visit: reconcilingworks.org

Proposed Welcome Statement:

Called by the Holy Spirit, we are committed to welcoming and celebrating all people, inclusive of culture, age, race or ethnicity, gender identity and expression, sexual orientation, ability, economic status, or family structure. We are committed to the work of racial equity and justice within and through our community that we all may be transformed to be fully the body of Christ in our world. We invite you to worship with us, receive Christ's gift of Holy Communion with us, share your own story with us, and serve with us as we strive to live into God's universal embrace in Jesus Christ.

May 14: Making all things new: a walkthrough of our new website

Join Rachel McWhirter and members of the technology committee as they guide us through the ins and outs of our new website.

May 21: Conversation with the Call Committee

Join the Call Committee for this forum on the anticipated conclusion of the call process to fill the role of Senior Pastor of Christ the King Lutheran Church.

May 28: Meet and Greet the Senior Pastor Candidate

WEEKDAY ADULT FAITH FORMATION

Lectio Divina

Mondays at noon, online

Lectio Divina (Sacred Reading) is a Christian contemplative practice in which one reads a small passage of scripture, trusting in God's presence and relevance in daily experience. Attend as you are able, but please register with Beverly at beverlydavis@ctkelc.org.

The Life and Times of Paul with Dr. Howard Jones

Wednesdays at 10:00am

West Campus In-Person

Dr. Jones guides the group in understanding Paul's letters from a 1st century perspective.

The Book of Ruth with Pastor Mandy Derr

Thursdays, 3:00pm on Zoom

Zoom link: <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/81892157026?pwd=V1U2K0JEbm9HL0E3azJhUUl3alFUdz09>

Friday Morning Bible Study with Pastor Mandy Derr

Fridays, 10:00am

Rice Village campus

In-person in the second-floor council room and online

The group that meets on-site begins gathering for fellowship at 10:00am with online participants joining at 10:15am for an in-depth study of First Corinthians. Email Cheryl at cherylgaspard@ctkelc.org to receive the weekly readings and the zoom link.

Pray the Ecumenical Prayer Cycle

Tuesdays at 8:15am on Facebook

The World Council of Churches Ecumenical Prayer Cycle takes us through every region of the world over the course of a year. Pray with us every Tuesday at 8:15am online through Facebook live with Deacon Ben Remmert. This month we will be praying for:

May 2: Afghanistan, Kazakhstan, Kyrgyzstan, Mongolia, Tajikistan, Turkmenistan, Uzbekistan

May 9: India, Pakistan, Sri Lanka

May 16: Bangladesh, Bhutan, Nepal

May 22: Indian Ocean Islands: Comoros, Madagascar, Maldives, Mauritius, Seychelles

May 29: Angola, Mozambique

More details can be found here: <https://www.oikoumene.org/resources/prayer-cycle>.

MAY Mission Offering



Feeding Hunger, Fostering Hope, Furthering Success

Christian Community Service Center is a community-based nonprofit organization serving central and southwest Houston. With a coalition of 39 churches, volunteers and donors, they unite in a mission to serve the poor, hungry, disabled, and otherwise needy while respecting their religious, ethnic or cultural differences. CCSC was created out of faith, and founded in the belief that we are called to help all God's children heart to heart and hand in hand.

CCSC serves as our congregation's Food Pantry, Clothing Closet, and Emergency Services for members and neighbors in need.

BASIC NEEDS CCSC provides crisis relief for people struggling to make ends meet. The two locations at Emergency Services Central and Emergency Services-Southwest offer food, hygiene items, and financial assistance for rent, utilities, and limited medical needs. In 2022:

23,135 Nutritious food packages were provided to families facing hunger and food insecurity.

1,013 Households received rent or utility assistance, helping clients avoid homelessness and substandard living conditions.

184 People received assistance for eyeglasses, dental services or prescription medications.

5,603 Pounds of fresh fruits and vegetables were harvested for clients from the CCSC Garden.

YOUTH SERVICES CCSC supports the needs of vulnerable children and their families. Back To School promotes academic readiness and Jingle Bell Express

addresses play, literacy and hunger. The Louise J. Moran Vision Care Program* serves underprivileged students with vision screenings and glasses.

6,326 Students started the academic year with new school supplies and clothing.

2,476 Children received new toys and books for Christmas;

955 Families received a grocery gift card to address hunger.

2,575 Students received vision screening.

484 Students received new prescription glasses. (Offered only during fall semester in 2021 due to the pandemic.)

EMPLOYMENT PROGRAMS CCSC equips job seekers to build financial stability and brighter futures. JobNet prepares motivated job seekers through classes and coaching. Martha's Way and the Professional Home Caregiver Training Program cultivate talented entrepreneurs through hands-on vocational training and business skills development.

258 Job seekers gained valuable skills through workshops, computer training, computer lab access, and personalized job search assistance.

161 Entrepreneurs participated in a 42-hour residential housekeeping training program and 86% graduated; 108 job leads were shared with graduates.

63 Aspiring home caregivers completed a 45+ hour training covering technical and communication skills and business development.

75 clients pursued personalized strategies for success with CCSC's Success Coach or Financial Coach.

In CCSC's first quarter newsletter, President & CEO Michelle Shonbeck wrote:

Recently I received a nice handwritten thank you note from a client who wanted to share how our staff and volunteers helped her:

*"I want to let you know how much I appreciate CCSC's \$600 assistance toward my rent as well as JobNet volunteer **Kathy Collins**, who helped me polish up my resume... I am grateful for the support and encouragement I've received at CCSC..."*

Thank you notes are almost a lost art, which is why they make such an impact. Kathy and all our staff and volunteers are deeply committed to meeting our clients where they are, addressing their immediate needs, and then working with them (if needed) to address longer-term matters such as employment or financial security.

Our May Mission Offerings will benefit our two social service agencies that serve specific regions around each campus. As part of the church coalitions for both CCSC and MAM, this is one way we support ours and their ministries.

MAY Mission Offering



West Campus: Memorial Assistance Ministries (MAM)

Our Christ the King West Campus (formerly Memorial Drive Lutheran Church) has supported Memorial Assistance Ministries since its beginning. For nearly 40 years, MAM has helped members and families in the West Houston area become stable through several programs:

- Financial assistance and empowerment
- Personal resource development
- Disaster relief

They help to build a stronger workforce through providing:

- Employment services
- Literacy advance service
- Immigration legal services

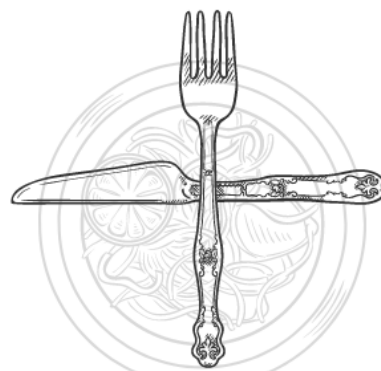
They help develop healthy individuals and communities through:

- Physical and mental health services
- Supportive community programs
- Community engagement

In 2021, MAM served 16,095 people from 13,081 families.

Tag Sale Thank you!

The annual Tag Sale at Christ the King Church on April 29-30 was a huge success thanks to all our volunteers and those that donated items for our sale! The proceeds will benefit the Pastor Karin Liebster Children's Ministry Fund and the Luther League Fund.



FaithFULL Feeding *at Christ the King*

FaithFULL Feeding at Christ the King

Join us for lunch following worship on May 21 as members of our Food Service Ministry resume "feeding the five thousand a roomful at a time." If you would like to put your culinary skills to use on a "third Sunday of the month" starting next fall, please contact Paul Monroe at paul@metrocup.com.



Easter Sunday at Christ the King West Campus



CHILDREN AND FAMILY MINISTRY

May Dates:

7, 14, 21: Godly Play Classes, 9:30am
27: Playdate at the Playground, 10:00am
28: Pentecost Picnic

Family Playdate at the Playground

Saturday, May 27 at 10:00am

Children and parents are invited to come and play at the playground together on the Rice Campus. We will have beverages and snacks outside on the picnic tables. This event is geared for families with young children, but all are invited to come. Parents, we will discuss plans for the summer and fall programming! For more questions, please contact Deacon Ben Remmert.



Summer Camp Blessing

Sunday, June 7 at 11:00am service

Children and parents are invited on Sunday, June 7 to receive a summer blessing during worship before summer camps and trips begin.



Second Saturday Volunteer Outing at the Houston Food Bank

May 13, 8:00am-noon

At our March outing, Christ the King had a dandy dozen of volunteers lending needed helping hands. We got to utilize our well-honed skills on the scan-a-can project, helping the Houston Food Bank accept thousands upon thousands of pounds of donated food and household goods. **CTK's group of volunteers helped process a total of 19 pallets (12,000 lbs!) of donations** that will soon be distributed to neighbors in need.

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Useful information

Where: Houston Food Bank East Branch
535 Portwall St.
Houston, TX 77029

Attire: Closed-toe shoes, pants, sleeved shirt (short or long sleeves).

Carpool: If needed, it will leave the church parking lot at 7:30 am. Please specify if you wish to carpool so we can be sure to send someone there before heading to the HFB.

Contact and RSVP: Justin and Yuricel at ctkhfb@gmail.com


houstonfoodbank
Filling pantries. Filling lives.

YOUTH AND FAMILY MINISTRY



May Dates:

6:	Slip and Slide Kickball Game, 10:00am
7:	Confirmation Class, 9:30am
7:	Germany Trip Meeting, 12:30pm
14:	Confirmation Sunday, 11:00am
21:	Graduation Milestone Celebration
28:	Pentecost Picnic

Slip and Slide Kickball Game

May 6, 10:00am

Youth are welcome to join us for a game of slip and slide kickball in the back parking lot of our Rice Village campus to kick off the summer. This is an opportunity for youth going on the Germany Trip to get to know each other and welcome the start of our summer programming. All are welcome to come and play.



Confirmation Sunday

May 14, 11:00am

Emily DeVany, Maya Kolb, Will Mallon, James Santana, Charlie Turner, and Kylie Whitefield will affirm their baptism at the worship service on May 14. The congregation (both Rice Village and West Campus) has supported them with prayer and accompaniment during two years of confirmation class while they studied Luther's Small Catechism and the Bible. Come check out their Confirmation projects as our youth express their faith story to the congregation.

Graduates Recognition

May 21

Missed our deadline for this month's Banner? We would still love to hear and celebrate with you. If you are receiving a degree from high school, undergraduate, technological, or graduate programs, we would like to know! Email the church office with details (ctk@ctkelc.org). High school seniors Victoria Allen, Keegan Cook, Sarah DeVany, Christopher Karohl, Carson Sahualla, Luke Schoppe, John Thweatt, and Samuel Vollmers will be celebrating their high school graduations on Sunday, May 21. Learn more about them on our graduation page in this month's King's Banner.

Summer Luther League D&D Meetings

Wednesdays at 6:30pm

Youth are invited this summer to join the Deacon for an adventure online through Dungeons and Dragons. Each meeting includes time together adventuring and devotional prayers. No experience needed and dice are provided. If you are interested, please contact Deacon Ben Remmert before our first meeting on Wednesday, June 28.



CTK member, Captain Johnny Longoria of the Texas Parks & Wildlife Commission, gave one of our Luther League's "Fueled by Buc-ee's and Jesus" t-shirts to Arch "Beaver" Aplin III at the January meeting of the TPWD in Austin. Johnny's unit coordinates security for Commission meetings. Aplin is the founder of the truly Texan original Buc-ees and is Chairman of the TPWD. Way to evangelize, Johnny!



MARK YOUR CALENDARS - SUMMER 2023

Lutherhill Camp Registration is open!

*Make sure to register with Christ the King as your congregation to get your spot with our group code: **ctkelchouston!***

Children Trips this 2023 Summer (1st-6th Grade)

Lutherhill Elementary Summer Camp

July 16-22, 2023

Those that have **completed 1st-5th grade** will spend a whole week at Lutherhill discovering all the joys camp has to offer with Deacon Ben Remmert! Alpha Campers (1st Graders) are at camp from July 17-20 and Youngin's (2nd-3rd Graders) and Yearling's (4th-6th Graders) are at camp from July 17-22. Cost breakdowns are below.

Alpha (1st Grade) Program Cost: \$375

**Young'ns (2nd-3rd Grade) and Yearling's (4th-6th Grade)
Program Cost: \$650**



Youth Trips this 2023 Summer (7th-12th Grade)

Lutherhill Jr. High Adventure Camp

July 16-21, 2023

Those that have **completed 6th-8th grade** can experience a week at Lutherhill's Adventure program. Learn from cabin Bible studies and camp-wide worships, challenge yourself on the high ropes course, enjoy afternoon activities and daily All Camp activities, grow in community with fellow junior high students, spend a night cooking over open fires and sleeping in the tree houses and hanging village.

Program Cost: \$650

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Lutherhill Day Camp is Coming to Rice Campus on June 12-16, 2023!

Lutherhill Staff and Luther League youth are leading Day Camp at Christ the King this upcoming summer! From 7:30am until 6:00pm, children (ages 5 to 11) will learn bible stories through worship, games, snacks, science experiments, drama, and crafts throughout the day. This is always a highlight of the summer, so be sure and register!



Who Can Attend: Those that have finished pre-K through 6th Grade by May 2023 (ages 4-10)

Costs: \$100.00 (Before Camp- \$25.00 & After Camp- \$25.00)

Register: Register online at www.ctkelc.org.

Lutherhill Day Camp Staff Applications are Out

This summer we need middle and high school students to serve on our Summer 2023 Day Camp Staff as support staff, paid staff, and camp manager. Applications can be found online at www.ctkelc.org or at Christ the King Church.

LUTHERHILL RETREATS AND NEWS



Open Camp Day is June 3rd!

Gather your family and friends together and head to Lutherhill for the day to help us kick off our summer of AMEN! Open Camp Day is a FREE event. Bring your family and friends out to experience an action-packed day of camp in just a few hours:

10am - Camp Opens

11am - Camp-style Worship

12pm - Hamburger Lunch

1pm-4pm - Camp Activities Open: Ropes Course, Pool, Pond, Arts & Crafts and more!

RSVP to office@lutherhill.org, call us at (979) 217-1954, or on Lutherhill Ministry Facebook page! (RSVPs are appreciated but not required.) We can't wait to see you!

Grateful for our Gardeners



Our thanks go to Vicki Gorman, and Elizabeth and Tor Kragas for their "refresh" of the Columbarium Garden and church grounds—just in time for Easter!



Congratulations to our Congregation's Post-Grads



Valentine Boving graduated with her PHD in December 2022 from Our Lady of the Lake University (OLLU) in Leadership Studies. Her dissertation was titled "*The Difference in University-Level Engineering Students' Use*

of the Full Range Model of Leadership Behaviors Before and After Creativity Training". Because OLLU does not have an engineering college, Valentine recruited engineering students from Houston Christian University, University of Texas – San Antonio, Texas State University, and Texas A&M.



Aimee Elles will graduate on May 14 with a Master of Arts in Diaconal Ministry (MADM) from Wartburg Theological Seminary in Dubuque, Iowa. She is currently completing a Chaplaincy Fellowship through December 2023

with UT MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston. Next up will be ordination as a Deacon this summer and she will be working towards endorsement with the ELCA and becoming a board-certified chaplain with the Association of Professional Chaplains.

**Victoria Allen**

Victoria Allen is graduating from Bellaire High School, where she has been involved in swimming, water polo, and theater. She has narrowed down her college choices, but hasn't yet decided which college she is attending, but it will likely be in Washington, DC or Pennsylvania. Victoria is considering double majoring in History and Education, with a possible minor in Theatre. But, knowing college is a time for exploration, she is keeping her mind open to new ideas.

CLASS OF 2023



HIGH SCHOOL

**Sarah DeVany**

Sarah DeVany will be graduating from Westside High School in June 2023. She was a member of the Westside Wolf Band for all four years of high school. The Wolf Band achieved sweepstakes at UIL Region 23 Marching Band competition and were then awarded a spot to perform at the UIL Area I competition in the fall of 2022. Sarah earned superior ratings on her flute solo performances for UIL Solo & Ensemble contests. She will be continuing her education at Iowa State University focusing on a degree in Engineering, in addition to participating in the band program at the university.

**Keegan Cook**

Keegan Cook is graduating from St. Pius X High School. She plans to attend The University of Texas at Austin majoring in Civil Engineering.

**Christopher Karohl**

After graduating from Episcopal High School this Spring, Christopher Karohl will attend Rhodes College in Memphis, majoring in biology/bio-chemistry/pre-med. While he will sorely miss Houston restaurants, he is looking forward to some good (Nashville) spicy fried chicken.

**Carson Sahualla**

Carson Sahualla is a senior in the class of 2023 at Heights High School. She has grown up coming to CTK with her parents Lucky and Maureen, and the church has been a huge part of her childhood and adolescence. She loves creative arts and fashion and is very excited to be pursuing this passion by attending Parsons at The New School next year to get a BBA in Strategic Design and Management. She hopes to use her degree and education to provide more access to creative works and support innovation. She can't wait to move to New York

and continue to share her belief in the importance of community and love of God that she learned here at CTK.

**John Thweatt**

John Thweatt will be attending Trinity University in August after he graduates from Lamar High School in June. He doesn't have a specific major in mind yet, but is very interested in studying history, philosophy and film, and is looking forward to becoming a strong writer.

**Luke Schoppe**

Luke Schoppe is graduating from Lamar High School in Houston ISD where he has been a member of the band and jazz band throughout his time there. He will be attending Texas State University in the fall. He is not sure what field he wants to study, but looks forward to discovering all of the possibilities. Luke would like to thank his family, his teachers, Deacon Ben, Bob Walp and the Brass Choir, and the congregation of Christ the King Church for their support and encouragement over the years.

**Samuel Vollmers**

Sam Vollmers is happy to be graduating from Michael E. DeBakey High School for Health Professions. College at Texas Tech awaits, and he looks forward to starting the journey to become a physician and helping others. In the meantime, he will be enjoying a well-deserved summer off.



Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

SOCIAL STATEMENTS of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America (ELCA)

We continue this ongoing series highlighting the ELCA's SOCIAL STATEMENTS shared as summaries by Rev. George Brookover.

FOR PEACE IN GOD'S WORLD (Adopted August 1995)

We of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America share with the Church of Jesus Christ in all times and places the calling to be peacemakers.

This statement was prepared and adopted as the 20th century was nearing an end. It had been a tumultuous and violent century. The intent was to motivate ELCA constituents to be examples of people who promoted and worked for peace to be emerging lifestyle in the twenty-first century.

Most importantly, this statement recalls that the basis of the Church's peace-calling is in God's final peace, the peace of God's eternal reign. That calling is to proclaim the Gospel of God's final peace and to work for earthly peace. This statement understands earthly peace to mean relationships among and within nations that are just, harmonious, and free from war. It offers direction as we act to keep and to build earthly peace on the eve of a new millennium.

We are grateful for the legacy of peacemaking given to our church by its predecessor communities.

We confess that too often we have fallen short in our responsibility for peace. We pray for forgiveness, and for

the faith that in love acts for earthly peace. We dedicate ourselves anew to pray and to work for peace in God's world.

THE GOD OF PEACE The biblical narrative reveals God's resolve for peace. God created all things and gives unity, order, and purpose to a world of different creatures. All humans are created in the image of God (Genesis 1:27), made for life in community—with God, with others, and with the rest of creation. God's promise is fulfilled in Jesus Christ. Rejected by humans, Jesus was confirmed by God who raised him from the dead in the power of the Holy Spirit, so that "on earth" there might be "peace" (Luke 2:14). In bringing this peace,

- *Jesus taught love for one's enemies;*
- *he reached out to the oppressed, downtrodden, and rejected of the earth;*
- *he prayed for his enemies while himself being rejected on the cross;*
- *above all, through Jesus' violent death, God redeemed the world, "for...while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son" (Romans 5:10)*

There are 10 "resolutions" for action steps at the conclusion of this Social Statement. Readers are encouraged to click on the link to gain access to all 24 pages of the document; including the "resolutions."

<https://www.elca.org/Faith/Faith-and-Society/Social-Statements/Peace>.

NAVIGATING DIFFICULT CONVERSATIONS

Interactive Workshop Led by Pastor Beth Halvorsen
Saturday, June 24, at Christ the King Rice Village Campus

9:00am-noon

Difficult conversations are . . . well, difficult. Situations vary greatly, ranging from personal relationships to larger systems surrounding us. However, the question remains. When emotions are stirred up and thinking becomes hyper-focused or muddled, what do we do? How do we handle ourselves so that we figure out how to honor ourselves, see others, and glorify God? It is not easy, but there is hope.

Though Pastor Halvorsen will build upon some concepts from her doctoral work (Centered Flexibility, the Virtue Lens), the workshop will be more experiential. We will:

- have fun with "recipes for drama"
- reflect on the stories we tell ourselves
- rethink options and experiment with them
- integrate learnings and share insights

Our goal will be to find three things that will impact us in present and future difficult conversations. In the process, maybe we will indeed sense that God is somehow involved and that a stronger community is being created.



Advocate for Justice Every Week

Each week, the Justice Advocacy Ministry Team highlights a different justice issue, and offers all CTK members the opportunity to advocate using their smartphone. Look for the sign in the narthex or the courtyard highlighting the justice issue, with the QR code that you can use to access the e-advocacy opportunity. Miss a Sunday? We also post this justice advocacy opportunity on CTK's Facebook page. Speak for justice every week!

Churchwide Assembly Justice Look-Back: Nuclear Weapons

At churchwide assembly in August of 2022, a memorial was passed calling for the ELCA to reaffirm this church's unequivocal rejection of nuclear war and support the ELCA's continued advocacy for (1) agreements among the leading nuclear powers to reduce their strategic and tactical nuclear stockpiles, (2) negotiation of a renewed Nuclear Nonproliferation Treaty, and (3) efforts that move toward the elimination of nuclear weapon. To learn more, see this link: <https://www.elca.org/Resources/Churchwide-Assembly>.

The Work of the ELCA: New Congregations

Through ELCA New Congregations, we are employing innovative models for starting new congregations: reaching out in areas experiencing rapid population growth, connecting to changing communities, and engaging diverse socio-economic groups, ethnic and multicultural communities, as well as emerging young populations. Learn more at: <https://www.elca.org/Our-Work/Congregations-and-Synods/New-Congregations>.

Justice Advocacy Opportunity *Smorgasbord*

There are a number of active justice advocacy requests from a variety of organizations. Speak up for justice today!

Protect Sacred Indigenous Lands — A mining company wants to destroy Oak Flat, the Apache sacred religious site. Oak Flat is part of the Tonto National Forest, an area of incredible desert and forest eco-systems. Join other Christians in asking Congress and the Administration to leave Oak Flat alone: <https://secure.everyaction.com/rAjsi9313E6jQutagv7YZA2>.

Global Nutrition — After steadily declining for a decade, global hunger is on the rise. Malnutrition is the leading risk factor for death among children globally, accounting for 45 percent of all child deaths. Join other Christians in asking Congress to robustly fund global nutrition: <https://go.bread.org/page/50577/action/1>.

Augusta Victoria Hospital — Augusta Victoria Hospital (AVH), operated by the Lutheran World Federation in East Jerusalem, is the only hospital to provide radiation therapy for cancer patients in the Palestinian territories & the only medical facility in the West Bank offering pediatric kidney dialysis. AVH faces ongoing cash flow problems & has received vital support from the U.S. Agency for International Development (USAID) in recent years. Join other Lutherans in urging Congress to give priority to the East Jerusalem Hospital Network in this year's foreign assistance appropriations bill: <https://support.elca.org/site/Advocacy?cmd=display&page=UserAction&id=1606>.

Homeless & Affordable Housing Programs — The ELCA states "Housing is a fundamental human right." Rising rent costs and inflation particularly impact new prospective homeowners, renters, older Americans & many others in rural & tribal communities. For hunger and nutrition, access to healthcare, educational outcomes, workforce development and more, housing is a vital baseline. Join other Lutherans in urging Congress to support funding for homelessness & affordable housing programs: <https://support.elca.org/site/Advocacy?cmd=display&page=UserAction&id=1602>.

Support National Marine Sanctuaries — Marine sanctuaries in the ocean are designated to provide refuge to God's marine creation. Join other Christians in advocating for the improvement of the National Marine Sanctuary System: <https://secure.everyaction.com/P9kc6SJmwU-IWQzCh5x0Yg2>.

End Family Detention for Good — The government is considering re-instating detention of immigrant families at the U.S. southern border. There is a well-documented history of abuse in such detention centers, and experts agree that detention is extremely harmful, particularly to children. Join other Lutherans in advocating to end family detention for good: <https://lutheranimmigrationrefugeeservice.quorum.us/campaign/46496/>.

Bread for the World Offering of Letters

May 7, in the Rice Village courtyard following both services

Join us in advocating for the passage of the 2023 Farm Bill on Sunday, May 7. You will be able to handwrite your own letter using the sample provided, sign a preprinted letter, or advocate electronically using a QR code and your cell phone. The impact of the farm bill is significant. It not only affects the agriculture and food sectors—it can play a huge role in ending food insecurity and hunger in the U.S. and save the lives of millions abroad. We hope to send at least 30 letters to our senators and representatives. Our voices make a difference. Please join us!



Federal Incentives for Energy Efficiency and Renewables: Why They Matter to People of Faith

Sunday, May 7, 3:30pm CT, online

The Inflation Reduction Act and the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law are investing billions of dollars to build clean energy sources, electrify school buses, cap orphaned wells, and much more. There are many incentives to invest in energy efficiency improvements and renewable energy. Lisa Brenskelle, Houston Climate Communication Coordinator for Texas Interfaith Power & Light (and Christ the King Creation Care Team Lead) and Rebecca McIlwain, Community

Outreach Coordinator with Texas Climate Jobs Project, will give an overview of the available federal grants/incentives and talk about what you can do to ensure the money is invested in a way that makes the most impact. Register for this event on www.eventbrite.com at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/federal-incentives-for-energy-efficiency-and-renewables-tickets-608800277017>. Contact: Lisa Brenskelle at brenskelle@aol.com.

Guided Prayer Walk in the Park

Saturday, May 13, 9:00am

Hermann Park

Houston, TX

Connect with God as revealed through creation at Hermann Park in this guided prayer walk, using the park's beautiful natural setting to stimulate prayer and reflection. This event is for a small group and advance registration is required. Meeting location will be sent prior to the event. Register on www.eventbrite.com at:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/guided-prayer-walk-in-the-park-tickets-60810858667>. Contact: Lisa Brenskelle at brenskelle@aol.com.

Sunday Evening Conversations on Creation Continue...

The CTK Creation Care Team invites you to a monthly environmental education web meeting series whose theme in 2023 is Interconnection.

Interconnection & Resilience Sunday, May 21, 6:00pm central, online

Steve Stelzer, Program Director for Houston's Green Building Resource Center, provides a tour through a wealth of resources available to aid you in building resilience and living a more sustainable lifestyle. Register on www.eventbrite.com at <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/interconnection-resilience-tickets-609589678137>. Contact: Lisa Brenskelle at brenskelle@aol.com.



On April 22-23, Christ the King Church commemorated our 20th anniversary as a Community of Hope training center with an Affirmation of Vocation, Blessing of the Hands and Celebration. Community of Hope International is a Christian community united in prayer, shaped by Benedictine spirituality, and equipped for service in pastoral care ministries.



PALM SUNDAY





HOLY WEEK/EASTER 2023

