The 8th ELCA Social Statement Educational Forum:
Lutheran Ideas About Health Care and Healing

The eighth installment of our monthly Educational Forums on the ELCA social statements will occur in the sanctuary following worship on May 4, 2025. This forum, led by Vicar Jackson, will focus on the ELCA's social statement, *Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor*. Published in 2003, this statement guides our engagement with issues concerning human health, healing, and health care. Last month, we strived to figure out together how we are called to be stewards of the Earth. Similarly, this month, we will continue to learn more about how we are called to live and act as Lutherans in a complex world.

You can find the social statement on the environment for free at https://www.elca.org/faith/faith-and-society/social-statements/health-care. We would love for you to have read the document before the educational forum. This one is a bit on the long side at nearly 30 pages. However, should time prove limited, you can read a short 2-page introduction to the social statement or a slightly longer 3-page summary. You can also find these resources at the link listed above. If you have trouble printing them or finding them online, please contact the church office. Copies will also be available in the church office if you would rather get them that way.

We hope to see you there!

Vicar Jackson will lead his final educational forum on the ELCA social statements on June 1, 2025. The topic will be on human sexuality. You can find these resources at https://www.elca.org/faith/faith-and-society/social-statements/human-sexuality

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From the Pastor's Desk

Dear Saints,

Greetings in the name of our crucified, risen, and ascended Lord and coming Savior Jesus Christ!

Recently, we marked the passing of Pope Francis, a leader admired worldwide for his deep compassion and unwavering commitment to uplifting those on the margins of society. In his lifetime, Pope Francis demonstrated that true leadership lies not in power, but in empathy and in a relentless desire to make those who suffer feel valued, heard, and worthy of care. As our presiding bishop, the Rev. Elizabeth A. Eaton, poignantly shared in her letter to the Church, "Pope Francis will go down in history as the first Jesuit bishop of Rome and the first from the Americas. His papacy will be remembered for his compassionate approach to complex social issues, and his clear concern about the rise of right-wing populism worldwide and its impact on the most vulnerable."

Like Pope Francis, we are called to be intentionally compassionate followers of Jesus Christ. In these challenging times, it's easy to become so overwhelmed by personal struggles that we lose sight of the vulnerable and the suffering around us. But this is not the compassion or empathy that Christ modeled for us. We are invited to look beyond our own concerns and respond to the needs of others with the love and grace that Christ embodied.

In Matthew 6:33, Jesus reminds us: *"But more than anything else, put God's work first...Then the other things will be yours as well"* (CEV). Instead of becoming paralyzed by the things we cannot control, let us focus on those areas where we can make a difference. We are empowered to show up for our neighbors, especially those who need us the most. In doing so, we offer a different vision of America—one that stands in stark contrast to the divisiveness and fear that often prevail in the public discourse.

For over two years now, we have had the privilege of hosting two Ukrainian families—nine individuals in total—on our property. In the face of ongoing uncertainty, these families continue to navigate the overwhelming fear of what may lie ahead. Their lives have been marked by loss, upheaval, and the anxiety of an unknown future. As a community, we have the opportunity to provide them with a steady presence, offering comfort and assurance during this difficult chapter.

But our work is far from over. The Ukrainian Refugee Ministry, which has been a beacon of hope for these families, is in urgent need of renewed support. The financial assistance that once sustained this ministry has dwindled in recent years, and now, more than ever, we must reaffirm our commitment to these vulnerable individuals.

This is our moment to act—to choose compassion over fear, love over hate, courage over weakness, and hope over despair. By renewing our financial support for the Ukrainian Refugee Ministry, we not only provide immediate relief to those in need, but we also stand in solidarity with all who are suffering. Together, we can offer the promise of better days and a future filled with peace.

Let us be the hands and feet of Christ, showing up for our neighbors when they need us most. This is our calling. Let us answer it with love.

In Christ's service,

Pastor Orin

Renewed by the Spirit

2025 Central States Synod Assembly

June 5-7, 2025

Embassy Suites

Olathe, KS

Our delegates are Terry Michael and Vickie Donnell

From the Desk of Council President

Greetings Messiah ELCA family,

You're probably still soaring high after our wonderful Easter and Lenten Season as I am. As a parishioner of Messiah for many years I can't recall a more impactful Easter Season, from the Lenten dinners followed by the impactful services to help us prepare for Easter to the climactic Easter service. I am sure you were just as moved by the Good Friday service as I was which put us in the perfect frame of mind for Easter Resurrection Sunday. We are all grateful to our brothers and sisters that made the Easter Season so moving. Whether it was the beautifully decorated sanctuary, the musical offerings, the welcoming shepherds, the inspirational homilies and readings, or the social gatherings before and after services it all came together to create a wonderfully impactful lasting impression. I don't know about you but I can say with great confidence that this was one of the most meaningful Easter seasons I have experienced in years. Once again thank you to everyone that contributed to make it so.

So many wonderful things to share with you all about what your council is discussing and working on to make Messiah a wonderful place to be part of. Here are some of the highlights.

- The long range planning committee continues to work on a plan to put us in a stronger financial position by developing a plan to pay off our building loan prior to May, 2026.
- We are looking for four members of the congregation to answer the call to serve on the Staff Support and Personnel committee as we have some long standing members that are retiring from the committee. If you would like more information as to what that would entail please contact a council member or Jean Bardy who heads that committee.
- Be on the lookout for a volunteer recognition luncheon that will be taking place in June. We love our volunteers! Now we can show them that love.
- A sizable grant was received by the Council of Churches of the Ozarks. This grant was designated to help maintain the Lighthouse program.
- There will be several graduations coming up in a short time. We are collecting that information so we can be sure to recognize those individuals in a positive way as they start the next chapter in their lives with our blessings.

The council will be meeting again on April 27th in the church office. Also, the property committee met after services on that same day. I look forward to updating you in next month's Spirit about all the progress we have made towards our goals that we developed in our council retreat as those will be revisited in our next council meeting so that we can always keep focused on making your worship experience and our impact on our community the best it can be. As always if you have any suggestions or topics you would like addressed please feel free to reach out to myself, any council member or our pastor so that we can continue to improve.

Thank you for being part of my church family. Much love to all.
Frank Noto
Council President

Thank You

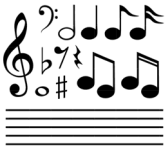
I would just like to say “Thank You” to all of the welcoming faces who work in the office. You dedicate your time and all your hard work does not go unnoticed. Each of you have helped with answering the phones, greeting guest and members, the picture project, mailing out the spirit, helping me get through Holy week, along many other things that helps keep the office going.

“Sometimes the smallest things take up the most room in our heart”

Leisa Rushton
Office Administrator

Announcements

May 2	Marilyn Boston Studio Spring Piano Recital
May 3	Messiah/Messiah Lighthouse Day Care Garage Sale
May 4	Senior Recognition Sunday
May 10	Messiah Church Work Day
May 18	Teacher Appreciation
May 18	Church Council Meeting
May 26	Seminole-Holland Neighborhood Assoc. General Meeting
May 28	Seminole-Holland Neighborhood Assoc. Pot Luck Dinner

Summer Hymn Sing

We are thrilled to announce that on the weekend of June 21/22 Messiah will host a Hymn-Sing at regular worship. Consider this an invitation to submit your favorite hymns. You can turn in your selection to the office or sign up on a sheet in the narthex. The deadline for turning in hymns is Sunday, May 25 (Memorial Day Weekend).

You can also submit your request by using the link below:

https://docs.google.com/forms/d/e/1FAIpQLSer8JJkVQ3w1sILGJcP9BJ4BrNqO-LrtPZ5ZB9-TXXYko5Emg/viewform?usp=sharing

Library Spotlight

As you know, our book signing for Angie Myers had to be postponed as Angie was ill Easter Sunday. However, it will be rescheduled soon. Please watch the Midweek Messenger for details. 'Rabbit's Easter Surprise' sells for $15 (soft cover) and $20 (hard cover) with 25% of the profits going to Vacation Bible School. Thank you for understanding the delay and we will let you know as soon as the new date is set.

New Member Inquiry

If you are interested in learning more about what it is to be Lutheran, we will be having a new member class on June 1 at 4 p.m. in the church fellowship hall.

If you would like more information please talk with Pastor Orin or Vickie Donnell.

WELCA Convention

All Messiah Women

Plan now to attend the 36th Convention of the Central States Women of the ELCA Synodical Organization

June 20-22, 2025

Independence, MO

Registration Packets Available in the Narthex

~Be watching for more information~

Messiah Book Club

Messiah Book Club meets monthly in the library at 2:30-4 p.m. second Thursday of each month

The Lincoln Highway by Amor Towles, published 2021, is a story about four young men journeying from Nebraska to New York City set in 1950s America.

We will be meeting on Thursday, May 22 at 5:30 p.m. at Omo Japanese Soul Food, 2219 W Chesterfield Village.

Let me know if you'd like to attend or if you have questions.. debbiecorlett@sbcglobal.net or text me at 417-848-9426.

Daycare Garage Sale & Work Day

The MLCFDC is having a garage sale at the church on 5/3 from 7am to 3 pm. This sale is to clean out unused equipment from the day care storage shed and the Dollison house.

The Property Committee is planning a workday on 5/10 from 8 am-1pm. If you can assist with this, inform Mark Herron or Colleen Prosser.

Items for the workday may include: spreading mulch, cleaning the kitchen oven hood, remove items from the attic over the kitchen, concrete work, repair of floor around the sanctuary emergency exit, clean debris from roof, and move items marked as junk from the Dollison house to a dumpster.

Mark Herron.
Property Committee Co-chair

Parish Life Committee

Since May is such a busy month with Mother's Day and graduations and end of school year activities, our committee has no special events planned for this month. Please continue to come join us for refreshments and fellowship following worship in the fellowship hall Sunday mornings.

Altar Flower Committee

If you are interested in contributing to the altar flowers, we still have openings in the book throughout the year. Please check with the church office by calling 417-881-2192, stopping by or emailing officemanager@messiahmo.org. The cost per vase is $20.00. If you pay by check please put for altar flowers in the memo section.

Lay Internship

Christian Education

Important dates to put on your calendar

Sunday, May 4 -Senior Recognition Sunday
High School and College seniors will be recognized during the service.
Our high school graduates are Andrew Bartels, Ryan Dillion, Conner Gebken, and Olivia Hartman

College graduates: Marty Bowman, Christina Carlson, Madison Dimmick, Mandi Helmke, and Janelle Joswick.

A cake reception will be held in your honor following the service.

Joshua 1:9: "I have told you to be strong and courageous. Do not be afraid; do not be discouraged, for the Lord your God will be with you wherever you go."

Sunday, May 18 is Teacher Appreciation

Teachers, how a-**"glazing"** are you? Thanks a **"hole"** bunch for teaching. You **"donut"** know how much we appreciate you! During the service on May 18, we would like to acknowledge your commitment to the people of Messiah.

Following the service there will be donuts in the Fellowship Hall. **"Donut"** ever doubt the difference you make.

Sunday, May 18 is last day of Sunday School and Confirmation class until the fall.
Kids will meet for a final time before they break for summer. A celebration of **"DONUT" FORGET-GOD LOVES YOU!!** will take place from 10:45-11:30.

Garden Season

As spring/summer approaches everyone is eager to plant a garden. As your plants to begin to grow, you water, pull the weeds, and tend to them so that they will produce a bounty of good fruits and vegetables. Have you ever thought that is how the church is? You come in as a young Christian, you're being fed the word, weeding out the old and replenishing it with the good from God, so that you may produce the good fruit of the vine.

The fruits of the Spirit are love, joy, peace, forbearance, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness and self control. Galatians 5:22

Philippians 1:11 says: May you always be filled with the fruit of your salvation, the righteous character produced in your life by Jesus Christ for this will bring much glory and praise to God.

Congregational Care

Renewal From Within: Prioritizing Mental Health in the Spring

By Ed Derr, Licensed Professional Counselor, Nationally Certified Counselor, and Sarah Derr

As winter melts away and spring bursts forth with longer days, blooming flowers, and a sense of renewal, it's easy to feel like everything should suddenly be better. The season is often associated with fresh starts – spring cleaning, new goals, and a return to outdoor activities. But for many, the shift can also bring unexpected emotional weight, making spring an essential time to focus on mental health.

The transition from winter to spring isn't always smooth. After months of shorter days and colder weather, our bodies and minds are still adjusting. While seasonal affective disorder (SAD) is typically associated with winter, some people experience what's known as "springtime SAD," marked by anxiety, restlessness, and disrupted sleep. The pressure to feel energized and happy simply because the sun is out can also be overwhelming.

That's why spring is the perfect moment to check in with yourself mentally and emotionally. Just as we declutter our homes, we can benefit from decluttering our minds – setting aside time to reflect, reset, and recharge. Whether it's starting therapy, journaling, meditating, or simply committing to a daily walk in nature, small acts of self-care can have a lasting impact.

Spring also offers a symbolic reminder that growth is not always linear. Flowers don't bloom overnight; they need time, nourishment, and care – just like our mental health. Practicing patience with ourselves during their period of transition can lead to deeper resilience and self-awareness.

Let this season of renewal be not just about external change, but internal healing. Prioritizing mental well-being this spring isn't a luxury – it's necessity. By nurturing your mental health now, you're planting seeds for a stronger, more balanced future.

To help you get started, check out these resources:

https://www.psychologytoday.com/us/blog/conquering-codependency/202312/routine-reset-daily-habits-for-good-mental-health - daily routines for good mental health

https://www.livinglutheran.org/2022/03/mental-health-and-the-church/ - mental health and the church

https://www.livinglutheran.org/2024/05/five-quotes-from-the-elcas-social-message-on-mental-illness/ - ELCA quotes on mental illness

https://www.springfieldmo.gov/3683/Community-Resources-for-Mental-Health - local mental health resources

https://www.nami.org/ - general mental health resources

Crosslines

On April 3rd Carolyn Gerdes, Mary Anne Johnson, Susan Lane, Martha Morris, Becky Roark, Lisa Melgren, Marilyn Dial, Saundra Carlson, John and Carol Flanders along with volunteers from Grace Methodist Church, served 96 families/185 individuals. Food insecurity numbers continue to rise. There has been a 40% increase in the number of people served compared to this time last year. Canned goods are always welcome and can be put in the wagon. Please check expiration dates before donating. If you are new to Messiah, we also collect water bottles that get filled with laundry detergent. Cash donations are always needed. Just mark "Crosslines" on an envelope and put in the offering plate.

May Flowers

	3/4	10/11	17/18	24/25	31/6-01
Vase 1	Rex Johnson	Michael & Nancy Hoeman	Vic & Peggy Shelton	Vic & Peggy Shelton	
Vase 2	Tom Wiswall & Bonnie Luder	Tom Wiswall & Bonnie Luder	Vic & Peggy Shelton	Tom Wiswall & Bonnie Luder	

Flower Vase Costs

Cost per vase is $20. Please make checks payable to Messiah Lutheran Church, and then in the memo line, write "Altar Flowers" and the date for which you are paying. If you are using an offering envelope, you will find a line for "Altar Flowers" and the amount.

www.messiahmo.org

messiah@messiahmo.org

MessiahMOELCA

MESSIAH LUTHERAN CHURCH, ELCA

925 E. Seminole, Springfield, MO 65807

MessiahMoELCA

417-881-2192

Messiah Lutheran Church
925 E. Seminole Street
Springfield, MO 65807

**Return Address Requested*

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U.S. Postage
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Springfield, MO
Permit 1339

He restores my soul, He leads me in the paths of righteousness, for His name's sake. *Psalms 23:3*

May Scripture Readings

Date	First Reading	Psalm	Second Reading	Gospel
5/4	Acts 9:1-6 [7-20]	30	Revelation 5:11-14	John 21:1-19
11/12	Acts 9:36-43	23	Revelation 7:9-17	John 10: 22-30
17/18	Acts 11:1-18	148	Revelation 21:1-6	John 13:31-35
24/25	Acts 16:9-15	67	Revelation 21:10, 22—22:5	John 14:23-29
31/01	Acts 16:16-34	97	Revelation 22:12-14, 16-17, 20-21	John 17:20-26

Mark Your Calendars

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