



The Elim Scribe

MAKING A DIFFERENCE.... by Pr. Bruce Kolasch

Sometimes we feel that we are impotent—not able to make a difference in the world. This, in the face of a social climate that is tumultuous to say the least, is discouraging. Yet, be assured that, small and powerless as we might feel, God has called and chosen us to be people of grace and hope, freedom and forgiveness in our homes, families, communities and world. As a member congregation of the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, we strive to strengthen and equip ourselves and our members to know and follow Jesus in such a way that we make a difference in our world. We do that by living our faith out loud, by working for social justice and by proclaiming Jesus as God’s plan of salvation for all people. We do that by drawing lines that include all people. We don’t draw lines to exclude others.

But, you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, God’s own people, in order that you may proclaim the mighty acts of Him who called you out of darkness into His marvelous light. Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.”
(1 Peter 2:9 & 10)

VICAR'S VOICE - by Vicar Lisa Mensinger

As a Vicar (a.k.a., pastor-with-training-wheels), I thought that I should begin to understand who else uses the church building at Elim during the week, and so I met the people who attend Alcoholics Anonymous, Monday through Friday at noon. Acts 2:42 came to mind as I sat on a metal chair and read from the Big Book. “They devoted themselves to the apostle’s teachings, and to **fellowship** (greek, *koinonia*), to the breaking of bread and prayers.” I was amazed by the ways that God shows up among the people there.

On Thursdays, I experience *koinonia* (fellowship) in a deep and profound way. In the basement of the church, God is present in the painful stories of loss, broken relationships, and every day struggles of fighting addiction. *Koinonia* is alive when we say each other’s name out loud in unison. Hearing a group of strangers, say my name “Vicar Lisa” made me feel like I belong and that I was among the fellowship of believers that truly know that to surrender to our powerlessness is to win against the resistance that keeps us from being truly happy. We all have some form of addiction (work, fame, substance, praise, wealth, power, you fill in the blank), and to admit that we are powerless is the beginning of truly allowing God, the Almighty Creator, to shape our lives in the way God intended us to be. We need *koinonia* to help remind us that we are all made in God’s image.

Richard Rohr, in *Breathing Under Water: Spirituality and the Twelve Steps*, summarizes the connection between Jesus and the Twelve Steps in this way:

“We suffer to get well.
We surrender to win.
We die to live.
We give it away to keep it.”

Koinonia creates this truth, and God is in the “We.” God is the mercy, compassion and grace that we yearn for to fill the “God-hole” in our daily lives. Please join me in praying for all who suffer from addictions and mental illness.

FROM THE ELCA ...

• SANCTUARY DENOMINATION

Voting members of the 2019 ELCA Churchwide Assembly approved a memorial declaring the ELCA a sanctuary denomination. The ELCA is the first North American denomination to declare itself a sanctuary church body - committed to serving and supporting migrant children and families in communities across the country. The practice of sanctuary may look different, but welcoming people is not a political issue - it is a matter of faith. For talking points, videos, posters and educational resources: [ELCA.org/SanctuaryChurch](https://www.elca.org/SanctuaryChurch).

• STRIVE FOR JUSTICE AND PEACE

In 1994, the ELCA Church Council adopted the social statement message, “Community Violence” which speaks to the complex and pervasive nature of violence and the church’s call to address its root causes. Now, 25 years later, this social message is still relevant. This church acknowledges that it’s made up of people who have been victims of violence, who have perpetrated violence and who work to protect against it. While this presents challenges that are as complex as the matter of violence itself, the church is guided by the healing power found in relationship together and in Christ to respond to its roles as peacemakers and justice-seekers. Read the article in the August issue of “Living Lutheran” for more.

VACATION BIBLE SCHOOL

Elim's 2019 "resurrection" of VBS was a resounding success with the children who attended. They learned a lot about the cultures and animals of Africa, specifically the country of Zambia. Each of the four Mondays, they sang songs of praise and danced their enthusiasm, watched video stories of specific children from Zambia, played games on the church lawn (many involving water!), studied bible stories, made crafts (such as paper beads) and enjoyed a dinner featuring kid favorites like hot dogs, pizza, and sloppy joes.

We plan to continue the program next year with a larger group of children, including neighbors not affiliated directly with Elim.

A big thanks goes to leaders Bruce and Reba Kiger-Kolasch, Holly Bender, Lisa Mensinger, and Lydia Lee. Watch for information next spring and refer friends and family to our next VBS!



Thanks to all who provided school supplies for Catholic Community Services, Elim's Backpack Blessing, and "God's Work, Our Hands" Sunday. Our own students, as well as students in other areas of Ogden, benefitted from your generosity, as did New Bridge School, where extra supplies were donated.

God's Work, Our Hands

We will partner with Ascension Lutheran Church again to perform service projects on "God's Work; Our Hands" Sunday (9/8/19.) After worship at Ascension, there will be teams cleaning up the Ogden River Parkway and the Wildlife Rehabilitation Center, as well as assembling school supplies for children in the Family Promise program.

Multicultural Moses: Re-examining an Icon
by Karlene Widner

The story of the burning bush is familiar, but it contains often-overlooked nuances. Moses is often seen as a "hero" although God instructed Moses in the way to proceed with his life. Moses had experiences with the Hebrew culture which were different from what was familiar. He had to embrace a struggle rather than overcome it; he also had to learn to experience God.

At the burning bush, God pointed out Moses' heritage in the words, "I am the God of your ancestors, the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob." [Exodus 3:6] - emphasizing the complexity of Moses' background of two cultures - Hebrew and Egyptian. Egyptian privilege led him to expect justice, but Hebrew marginality led him to witness justice.

He was often an outsider to both cultures. But, as he became acquainted with God, he gradually became the man God intended him to be.

In the encounter at the bush, God reminded Moses of the holiness of the place, and He instructed him on appropriate behavior. Moses had feelings of inadequacy, but God called him to go against what he knew and his past and turn to helping the Israelites. So Moses followed God.

For more details, see <https://amandambuvi.com/2019/08/12/multicultural-moses-reexamining-an-icon/> & <https://www.baslibrary.org/biblical-archaeology-review/>.

UPCOMING EVENTS:

September 8 - "God's Work, Our Hands" Sunday; 9:30 am worship; Ascension Lutheran.

September 29 - Interfaith Concert; 7 pm; Ogden LDS Tabernacle.

October 6 - Animal Blessing; noon; Elim Lutheran.

Youth Activities

In September, the youth will make a trip to Soda Science in Layton; date, yet to be decided. October's activity is still to be chosen. Contact Paul Nahley Valenches for further information.



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ELIM LUTHERAN CHURCH