

THE MESSENGER, AUGUST, 2026

*Claimed by Christ, Gathered
for Worship, Sent to Serve*



Pastor's Ponderings

Similarly, Slow Church is more than a consumerist experience. It goes beyond just offering people a safe haven on Sunday morning from the storms of fast life. Slow Church is a way of being authentically connected as coproducers to a Story that is as big as the planet (bigger) and as intimate as our own backyards. —Slow Church, by C. Christopher Smith and John Pattison

With our August council meeting, we will wrap up our reading together of *Slow Church: Cultivating Community in the Patient Way of Jesus*. This book has challenged us to think more locally, that we are a congregation set in our context with a particular call to cultivate community in our place and to nurture the ecology of our place. So often, churches focus on efficiency, quantity, and relevancy. Slow Church has invited us to slow down and to think in terms of ethics, ecology, and economy.

In prioritizing quality over quantity, in focusing on living out our identity instead of fitting into a cookie-cutter mold, in remembering that we exist for the world, we engage one another and our neighborhood in the unrushed, patient way of Jesus. Amidst the frenetic pace of our world, the church can model a different way that doesn't see life through the lens of success and failure, attraction and retention. We are called to be God's people in and for our time and place!

That is who we are Concordia! God's people who gather for worship to reinforce who and what we are for! God's people who pray and work for the well-being of our neighbors in all we do! God's people who slow down to worship and serve and invite others to do the same! I am thankful for who we are as Concordia together!

Pastor Jeff



Worship Schedule

Sunday, August 2 Tenth Sunday after Pentecost

First Lesson: Isaiah 55:1-5
 Psalm 145:8-9, 14-21
 Second Lesson: Romans 9:1-5
 Holy Gospel: Matthew 14:13-21

Sunday, August 9 Eleventh Sunday after Pentecost

First Lesson: 1 Kings 19:9-18
 Psalm 85:8-13
 Second Lesson: Romans 10:5-15
 Holy Gospel: Matthew 14:22-33

Sunday, August 16 Twelfth Sunday after Pentecost

First Lesson: Isaiah 56:1, 6-8
 Psalm 67
 Second Lesson: Romans 11:1-2a, 29-32
 Holy Gospel: Matthew 15:10-28

Sunday, August 23 Thirteenth Sunday after Pentecost

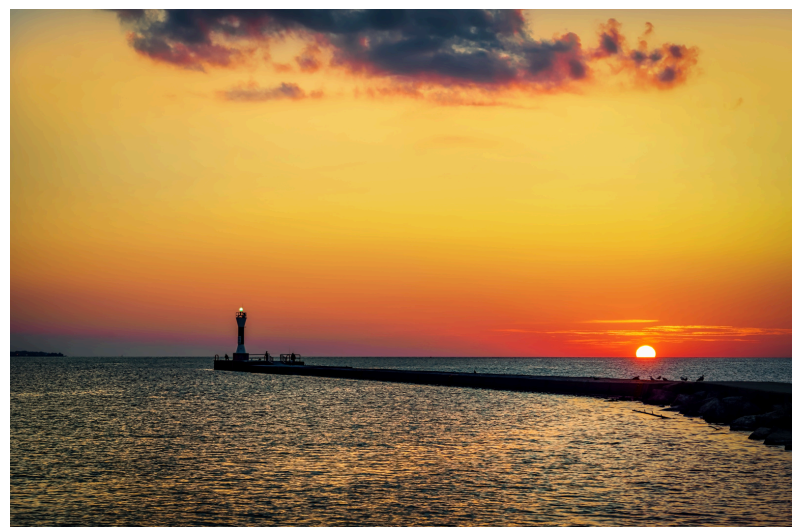
First Lesson: Isaiah 51:1-6
 Psalm 138
 Second Lesson: Romans 12:1-8
 Holy Gospel: Matthew 16:13-20

Sunday, August 30 Fourteenth Sunday after Pentecost

First Lesson: Jeremiah 15:15-21
 Psalm 26:1-8
 Second Lesson: Romans 12:9-21
 Holy Gospel: Matthew 16:21-28



Joyful Voices Rehearsals:
 Tuesday, August 4 and Tuesday,
 August 18 @ 6 p.m.



Worship Matters:
“Making the Most of Ordinary Time”

It is a time that is not marked by festivals and events; rather it celebrates the normal, day-in, day-out life of being the church. It is a time when we grapple with the nuts and bolts of our faith as Jesus both teaches us and shows us how to live. It is about being exactly where we are, and trying to live our faith in that moment. Ordinary Time tests our commitment and develops our spiritual life. God is here, present in the midst of the ordinary time, walking alongside us, just waiting for us to realize it . . .

Our scripture readings in this season describe God’s relationship with us as it unfolded then, and as it continues now and into the future. The Gospel of Matthew alternates stories about Jesus’ preaching and teaching with stories about Jesus’ powerful deeds (miracles). July brought us a series of three Sundays of Jesus’ teaching in parables, and August begins with a series of three Sundays where our Gospel tells of Jesus’ miracles.

August 2 - The feeding of the 5000 (a miracle recorded in all four Gospels).
God takes our “not enough” and turns it into “more than enough.”

August 9 – Jesus calms the storm and saves Peter.
A wonderful reminder of God’s presence in the midst of storms and faith overcoming fear.

August 16 – Healing the Canaanite woman’s daughter.
The mission and ministry of Jesus is expanded as a Canaanite woman comes to Jesus in faith seeking healing for her daughter. We don’t have to look far to be challenged by God’s desire to have us welcome others and to represent the unconditional love of Christ to those around us.

Toward the end of the month, following this summer’s teachings, miracles, and scenes from Jesus’ life . . . Matthew brings us to a climactic point as Jesus ‘calls the question.’

August 23 - “Who do you say that I am?”
Peter answers, “You are the Messiah, the Son of the living God.” The verses that follow are among the most studied and debated in the New Testament. (Historically they have been central to issues of authority of the episcopacy and of the Bishop of Rome.)

“ . . . and on this rock I will build my church . . . “ It is a holy and sacred thing, this church that the Lord began with Peter, and that we are a part of today. We pray today to bear witness to that with lives built on the foundation of Jesus Christ.

Outdoor Worship



June 28
July 19
August 16

JUNE,2026 FINANCIAL REPORT

<u>JUNE,2026 FINANCIALS</u>	<u>ACTUAL</u>	<u>BUDGETED</u>	<u>YEAR TO DATE 2026</u>
INCOME	\$19,985.00	\$13,683.67	\$84,436.05
EXPENSES	\$14,154.78	\$14,761.83	\$87,264.46
NET	\$5,380.22	(\$1,078.17)	(\$2,828.41)

Concordia Announcements

Concordia families will begin building a new relationship in the coming year. This opportunity is an outcome from the synod trip Pastor Jeff, Greg Grunwald, and Bryan Anderson participated in at the southern border last winter. While on this journey, the group visited Manos Amigas De Anapra Mission, located on the Mexican side of the border. Manos Amigas is a registered non-profit. The mission provides a free library, school scholarships, after school programming, child care, three weeks of vacation Bible school, medical assistance for families, resources for elderly, and a bean/rice project. Each of the programs delivers hands-on support to impoverished families. During a recent phone conversation with a delightful woman named Estela, a major driving force at the mission for over 20 years, a list of the mission's needs was shared. These needs are many and meeting them is vital to the program. This is where Concordia has the opportunity to make a connection.

Throughout the coming school year, Sunday School, family activities and parts of congregational life will focus on recognizing our own diverse cultural backgrounds, as well as, exploring Mexican culture, with the goal to better know and understand our neighbors, all while celebrating our kinship as members of God's family! Concordia's younger members will be given the chance to become an ongoing "Pal" to a group of students at the mission. It is similar to becoming pen pals.

Estela shared three specific areas of need: school supplies, Spanish or bilingual books for grades K-6, and medical supplies. Starting in August, there will be a donation box for school supplies in the narthex. Supplies requested are: folders, wide ruled paper and spiral notebooks, pencils, pens, erasers, pencil sharpeners, scissors, glue/glue sticks, markers, colored pencils, and pencil bags. Please NO crayons—they melt. The school drive will end September 20. Information and collection of medical supplies will begin after the first of the year. Book donations will be welcomed August through May 3, in the narthex.

It is the hope that members from Concordia will be able to drive to the border, deliver the donations, see the mission, and connect with the people. Ideas for the timing and how this trip might look are being explored. It would most likely be a minimum 10 day commitment. Watch for more information later this year..

Concordia Announcements (cont.)

Our pie baking for the CHUM Rhubarb Festival was a howling success! Thank you to each and every pie baker, rhubarb chopper, crust crimper, crop picker, stalk washer, rhubarb gardener and everyone else involved in any way.

As you may have heard, our project resulted in our congregational donation of 21 pies destined to help our brothers and sisters in need throughout the Duluth community. We had two pie making sessions in Concordia's kitchen on June 11 & 12, when the pies were carefully filled, crimped, boxed and put into Concordia's freezer. The frozen pies were baked and delivered on the evening of June 26 and when we returned the day of the Festival, not one of Concordia's pies remained to be sold! They were all snatched up by eager rhubarb fans before noon! The pictures prove the wonderful results!

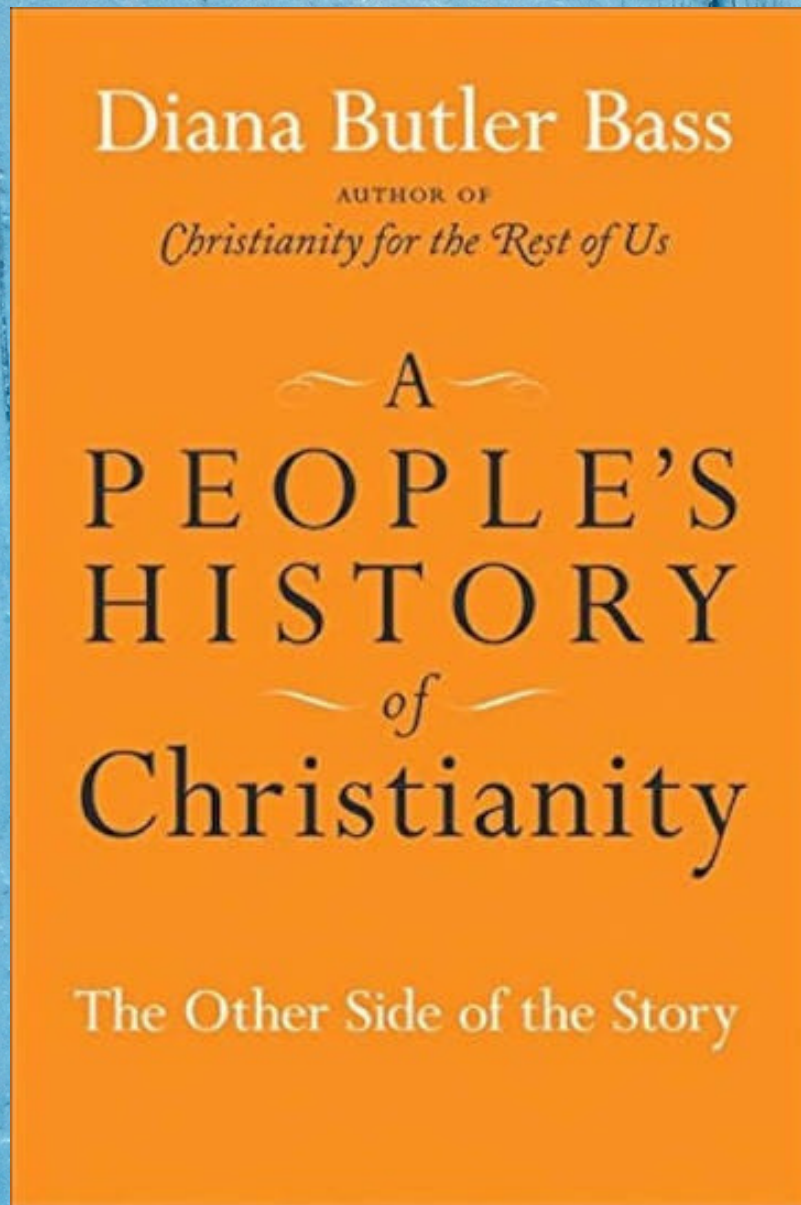
The Rhubarb Festival brought in over \$79,000 in gross sales -- up more than 10% over last year & above 2026 budget goals. The bake sale alone topped \$46,000! All told the Rhubarb Festival went through 5,000 pounds of rhubarb!!

Our congregation also banded together to contribute 3 fun baskets to the sale including: a beautiful turquoise & white afghan, a twin size quilt & pillow case, hand-made pillow cases, apron & other items in a rhubarb themed fabric, a cozy comfort chicken, slippers, & a good book. Besides all of this, someone will be enjoying a relaxing pedicure at Ave 45! A special thank you to all who contributed! This year there were 63 baskets resulting in \$6,500 as compared to last year's 57 and \$5,752.

As our CHUM leadership team reminds us, Duluth shows up for its neighbors, and this year proved it again! Now we need to put on our thinking caps for the last Saturday in June 2027!



Deeper Things



Starting this Fall!

*Join a book discussion of A People's
History of Christianity by Diana Butler
Bass*

Let Pastor Jeff know if interested!

Let the Prayer Chain members join with you in your prayers and supplications. They are just a phone call away. All prayers are confidential and names or details are not needed. God is aware of all circumstances and waits to hear from you.

Please contact Reba Almquist at 525-6968.

For hospital or other visitations, please contact the office at 728-4229.

Remember in Your Prayers

Please remember the following people who have been hospitalized, under a doctor's care, struggling, or those grieving since our last newsletter: Those affected by natural disasters (*especially the tornado in Wisconsin and the earthquake in Japan*), Max, David and Jen Norlien, Jordan Sauter, Tim Bell, Migrant families, The people of Palestine, Iran, Lebanon, and Ukraine, Rory and Greg Raymond, Those unlawfully detained, Carrie Birdseye-Erickson, Kathleen Murphy Edwards, Baby Finn, The families, the survivors, and communities where mass shootings have occurred, Patti Pearson, Shawn Jamison, Those marginalized for their sexual or gender identity, race, or ability, and Tom Nelson.

Prayer and Visitation Ministry

Please remember those in our congregation who are in nursing homes or are homebound. Please pray for them and consider stopping by for a visit.

Prayer and visitation are important ministries of our congregation.

Benedictine:

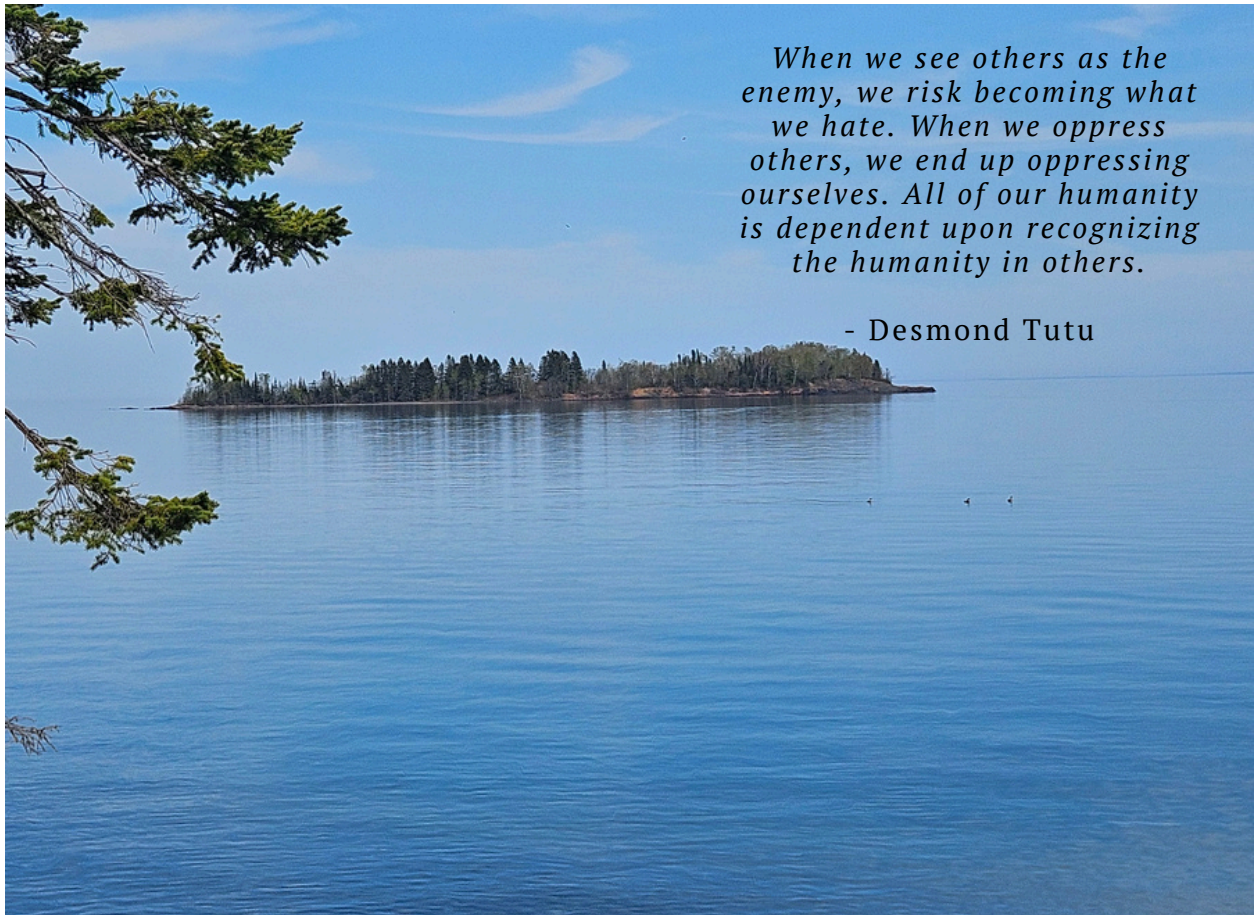
Lorraine Brayden

Sylvia Jamar

Edgewood:

Ethel O' Leary

Pat Tessier



August Birthdays

- 3 Ann Tjepkema
- 5 Mary Broman
Gerald DeMeo
- 6 Shelley Michalicek
- 12 Carmen Norlien
- 16 Chris Bergman
- 29 Timothy Isaacson
- 30 Carter Meints
Ethel O' Leary



If your birthday isn't listed or has the wrong date, please let the office know.



Flower and Sanctuary Candle Sign-up

A nice way to remember a loved one or celebrate a special occasion is to have altar flowers or the sanctuary candle on Sunday morning. The sign-up sheet is in the Narthex for both. Cost for flowers is \$40 and the candle is \$8. Contact the office with any questions.

Please note that when you have altar flowers for worship, you may take them home following worship. The glass vases must stay at church, however.



Equal Exchange Coffee Donations

Equal Exchange coffee donations needed for church coffee supply. Coffee funds are running low. Donation envelopes are available in the narthex information rack. Place an envelope with any donation amount in the offering plate with note "Equal Exchange coffee fund."





Safe Bay

Wish List

The Chum Wish List is where we keep what we need most for each program.

For non-food, in-kind donation drop-offs:

21 W 1st Street, Duluth, MN 55802
Monday-Friday, 8AM-4PM

For food, in-kind donation drop-offs:
120 N 1st Avenue W (Chum Food Shelf),
Duluth, MN 55802

Monday-Friday, 7AM-3PM
(Door in the alley is labeled for food
drop offs with a door bell)

For mailing (except for Amazon
deliveries), address to:
102 W 2nd Street, Duluth, MN 55802

For Amazon deliveries, address to:
21 W 1st Street, Duluth, MN 55802
We do not accept miscellaneous
clothing items; kindly take
miscellaneous clothing items to the
Damiano Center

or the Salvation Army. Thank you so
much for partnering with us and
supporting our mission!

Check out our **Amazon Wishlist** to
have items sent straight to those in
need.

**There are copies of the wishlist in
the narthex, on the table where the
newsletters are.**

The 2026 Safe Bay season will begin on Friday, May 1, at 6 pm at the Vineyard Church. Safe Bay has been a wildly successful program that was first hosted at the Damiano for two years. Last year, with the shelter moving into the Damiano, Safe Bay needed a new location. The Vineyard Church, located on Arrowhead Road, offered to partner with Chum by providing their back parking lot as a safe, secure, and comfortable place for people to park and sleep overnight. We are extremely grateful to Vineyard for this continued support and partnership this season.

Last year, we had 164 guests stay with us. 100 of them stayed 2 or more nights. Of our regular guests, 20% found housing, with many others finding other resources and being able to work on their own stability thanks to the rest and resources offered by Safe Bay. As we open this new season, we are always looking for volunteers who want to support the program through their presence. Safe Bay is always in need of \$20 fuel-only gift cards to offer as incentives to guests who stay at Safe Bay for 5 of the 7 nights in a given week and meet with an outreach worker.

A focus group of clients provided feedback at the end of the 2025 season. One participant, who had stayed with Safe Bay at the Damiano, "I love the peaceful, quiet place. Downtown there was a lot of noise at night but out here there isn't much at all. And it is great to have a quiet place to rest." This is again thanks to the support of the partner congregations and their gifts to the general operating budget of Chum, individuals who support Safe Bay and similar programs with their gifts, or by buying a pie at Rhubarb fest, the Vineyard Church for offering such a wonderful location, and the volunteers who make Safe Bay feel like a home. What you give makes a difference in the lives of so many individuals and for that we are grateful.



The Real-World Environmental and Human Costs of the Choices We Make

1. Since 2016, Google Tech company has released annual reports documenting its environmental record in the race to build more AI infrastructure. Yet, while investing aggressively in clean energy, its newest environmental report shows that its **electricity, water use, and greenhouse gas emissions all climbed to record levels last year**. Google's data centers are becoming more efficient, but the company's AI infrastructure is growing even faster. The report states that while they remain committed to not lowering environmental standards, electricity demand jumped **37% in 2025 (3.5 times higher than in 2019)**, Greenhouse gas emissions rose **18%, largely driven by manufacturing AI hardware, including chips and servers**, and water consumption climbed **34% to 10.9 billion gallons, more than double 2021 levels**. Meanwhile, a new report from energy and climate solutions advisory company Carbon Direct finds that **cancellations of U.S. AI data center projects (46 projects in 20 states) quadrupled last year and have accelerated further in 2026**.

2. Minnesota meteorologist Paul Douglas reports that federal staffing cuts to the local National Weather Service offices last year have resulted in the **failure to launch twice-daily weather balloons** from 15-20 western U.S. cities that provide the upper air data/fuel that powers weather model engines. Douglas fears that "gaps in upper air data impact our ability to predict where severe T-storms are likely, and when." Minnesota relies on facilities in North and South Dakota, and Nebraska, all of which have been affected by the cuts, to measure the upper atmosphere's temperature, pressure, wind speed and other key data points. Minnesota's two federal stations in Chanhassen and Duluth continue to deploy their morning weather balloons daily, which is crucial considering that since April, the state has experienced **more than 150 severe weather events, including 17 that produced tornadoes**, signifying an especially active start to its storm season.

3. The push to build out and diversify energy networks is going to continue long after the Iran War ends, with China poised to have a leading role in producing wind turbines, high-voltage cables, transformers, solar panels, batteries, software to manage energy flows and more, according to analysts from Wood Mackenzie, a global energy consulting firm. Meanwhile, 18 state attorneys general (including Minnesota's) claimed victory in a mid-June appeals court decision that denied federal anti-wind policies from barring new wind projects across the nation. Wind power is cheap and getting cheaper in Minnesota, which has an abundance of good land for wind turbines. Wind power is one of Minnesota's big success stories, accounting for about **60% of our renewable generation capacity**. Combined with solar and rapidly advancing battery storage technology, wind is putting Minnesota on the path to transition to a **100% carbon-free electricity sector by 2040**. It can also be used to produce "green" ammonia for agriculture and industry.

4. What you eat matters - not only to your own health, but that of the planet's. While more greenhouse gas emissions (GHG) come from the energy, industrial, buildings, and transportation sectors, **the production of food globally creates 25% of GHG and uses nearly 70% of the world's fresh water**. Research at the Harvard T.H.Chan School of Public Health finds that beef is a "triple whammy" for emissions, partly due to the methane produced in the rumen of cattle, and partly due to producing the soy and grains that are fed to them. Expanding consumption of red meat around the world means cutting down forests and plowing them into prairies to produce more grains for cattle to eat, releasing even more of the CO₂ that is increasing temperatures that lead to **permafrost melting, to shrinking Arctic ice caps, and to even more CO₂ from increased air conditioning**. A plant-based diet (unless it is high in refined starches and added sugars) not only emits the fewest GHG, but it uses the least cropland, irrigation water, and nitrogen-based fertilizer. A diet of **fruits and vegetables (1/2 your plate), whole grains, nuts and legumes (1/4 your plate) and a modest amount of animal-based foods** is healthy, sustainable and affordable.

From Green Blades Rising Newsletter, by Laura Raedeke, Eco Faith Network NE MN Team,
Lutheran Church of the Cross, Nisswa, MN, Northeastern Minnesota Synod

Bishop Curry Statement on SCOTUS Immigration Decisions

Beloved in Christ,
Grace and peace be with you in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.
Today, I write with a heavy heart.

Recently, the Supreme Court issued a decision that will allow this administration to proceed with terminating Temporary Protected Status (TPS) for more than 330,000 people from Haiti and 3,800 from Syria, many of whom have lived in this country for decades. They are not strangers. They are part of the fabric of our whole society. The termination of TPS threatens to separate families, destabilize local economies and force people to return to countries where they may face severe humanitarian crises, violence and threats to their very lives.

This ruling comes amid a series of changes in U.S. policy that have increasingly restricted legal pathways for immigrants and those seeking protection. Last week the Supreme Court upheld a policy allowing individuals to be blocked from applying for asylum at the U.S. border. At the same time, we are witnessing the deportation of people with pending asylum claims after perfunctory mass hearings — often without access to legal representation. The refugee resettlement program, once a sign of this nation's commitment to welcome, remains largely closed to most nationalities and races, with a narrow exception for white South Africans.

We are a people shaped by the Word of God, called by the apostle Paul to “welcome one another ... just as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God” (Romans 15:7). As Lutherans, we confess a faith that compels us to welcome and protect the vulnerable, to honor the dignity God gives every human being, and to uphold laws and policies that provide refuge to those fleeing violence, persecution and profound hardship.
In this moment, I invite this church to prayer, lament and action.

As a church, we pray for protection and justice for all TPS holders — from Haiti and Syria, and for the more than 1.3 million people who may be affected by this decision, including those from Venezuela, El Salvador, Myanmar, Ethiopia, Somalia, South Sudan and many other nations. May God's mercy surround them and sustain them in the days ahead.

As a church, we pray for the churches, ministries and leaders of the ELCA who walk alongside immigrant communities through accompaniment, advocacy and immigration services. May they be granted wisdom, strength and courage for the work to which God has called them.

As a church, we lament the dehumanization of immigrants through rhetoric rooted in racism, white supremacy, xenophobia and fear — particularly against Black and Brown immigrants. We reject the spread of lies and conspiracy theories that falsely accuse these communities of harm. And we recommit ourselves to speaking truth, honoring dignity and recognizing every person as made in the image of God.

As a church, we call on the administration to do what is just — to extend TPS protections where conditions remain dangerous and unstable, and to support comprehensive immigration reform that reflects both justice and mercy, offering welcome to those who seek safety within our borders.

And I ask each of you, faithful people of God, to continue the work of love: through prayer, through advocacy, through accompaniment and through faithful witness in your communities.

Beloved, in times like these, it is easy to grow weary. But we are not alone. The God who calls us is faithful. The risen Christ invites us forward. The presence of the Spirit fills us with the power and courage to act.
Together, we walk the way of Jesus — with courage, with compassion and with hope.
May the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, guard your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus.
Amen.

In Christ,

The Rev. Yehiel Curry
Presiding Bishop
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

I invite you to connect with AMMPARO, our church's strategy for accompanying migrants with protection, advocacy, representation and opportunities, to support accompaniment with immigrants and those forcibly displaced. And you may engage through an Action Alert on TPS through ELCA Witness in Society.

ONLINE POVERTY SIMULATION

What kinds of decisions does a family in poverty face?
How do families balance their needs and the
expectations of our culture?

Scan the QR code
to find out, and feel
free to share!



Created by Lutheran Advocacy-MN and the Hunger
Justice, & Rural Life Committee of the NE MN Synod

Pastor: Rev. Jeffery Davis
Cantor: Jennifer Dums
Joyful Voices Pianist: Patti Martenson
Sunday School Teachers: Rachelle Anderson,
Bryan Anderson, Bridget Bohn, and Marcia
DeMeo-Morse.
Office Duties: Carmen Norlien
Custodial Duties: David Haavik
Treasurer: Mark Morse

Church Council Members

Trevor Christensen, President
Delores Grunwald
Ashley Hoppe
Makenzie Morse
Mark Morse, Treasurer
Dan Norlien

Committees

Building & Grounds: Trevor Christensen
Social Justice: Pastor Jeff
Stewardship: Pastor Jeff
Worship & Music: Lynne Erickson, Mary Johnson,
and Patti Martenson

Ministries

Altar Guild: Reba Almquist
Bridges To Christ: Ann Edwards
Caring Ministry: Jane Wedin
Quilters: Lynn Carlson and Ann Edwards

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vary from week to week.

CHUM

David and Jane Wedin

Conference and Synod Assemblies

Carmen Norlien

Lutheran Campus Ministry Duluth Board

Patti Martenson

NE Minnesota Synod Youth Board

Margaret Roeser

Union Gospel Mission

Lois Witchall

Voyageurs Lutheran Ministry

Bridget Bohn



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Concordia Lutheran Church. Items for the
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August 18th. Please email your items,
corrections, questions, or comments to
duluthconcordia@gmail.com

We reserve the right to edit your items.
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