

From The Bishop

With the whoosh of “information”, the rattling of spears and fear, I invite you to make use of the thoughtful social statements and social messages of our church. They are grounded in scripture, our theology and in our history as Christian Lutherans. We are a denomination that does not require lock-step agreement of our members with our social messages or social statements. Clergy are expected to be able to present the social messages and social statements in an unbiased manner. We’ve wrestled with today’s topics for a long time as a church. None of these statements of messages were written with a particular president or political party in mind. Go to the elca.org website to see the broad range of topics and the date that each was approved. This is a time to sweep off our re-connect with our roots that we might be free to grow as disciples.

Social messages of the ELCA are topical documents adopted by the ELCA Church Council to focus attention and action on timely, pressing matters of social concern to the church and society. They are used to address pressing contemporary concerns in light of the prophetic and compassionate traditions of Scripture and do not establish new teaching or policy. Rather, they build upon previously adopted teaching and policy positions, especially from social statements. www.elca.org/socialmessages

These messages draw attention to specific topics or social concerns that arise from our participation in God’s work in the world, and they encourage moral discernment, thoughtful discussion and action. Each message is reviewed by the Conference of Bishops and adopted by the ELCA Church Council, and expresses the convictions of the leadership of this church.

ELCA social statements are teaching and policy documents that provide broad frameworks to assist us in thinking about and discussing social issues in the context of faith and life. They are meant to help communities and individuals with moral formation, discernment and thoughtful engagement with current social issues as we participate in God’s work in the world. Social statements also set policy for the ELCA and guide its advocacy and work as a publicly engaged church. They result from an extensive process of participation and deliberation and are adopted by a two-thirds vote of an ELCA churchwide assembly. www.elca.org/socialstatements