



## REGION 1 HAMMER & DANCE

June 3, 2020

United for Ministry in the Days of COVID-19.

The Social Service Agencies  
and Synods of Region 1.

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**G**eorge Floyd was murdered by police May 25, 2020. Except, of course, nobody uses the word "murdered." [What we read in the newspaper is,](#)

*"An independent autopsy says Floyd died of "asphyxiation from sustained pressure" when his neck and back were compressed by Minneapolis police officers during his arrest last week. The pressure cut off blood flow to his brain, that autopsy determined.*

*But the medical examiner's office, in its report also released Monday, said that the cause of death is "cardiopulmonary arrest complicating law enforcement subdual, restraint, and neck compression." Cardiopulmonary arrest means Floyd's heart failed."*

Mr. Floyd's death was a disaster, a manmade disaster. The plight of African Americans in the country is a disaster, but nobody calls it that. What we have is a "cardiopulmonary arrest complicating law enforcement's ... neck compression." I'm not even sure what that means. It sounds, though, as if Mr. Floyd's death got in the way of his arrest. Really?

Disasters impact society. They allow us to pull together or cause us to push apart. Sometimes we can't function at all as our humanity seems to drain away. There must be a better way. But if not, let justice roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream. **"Alas for you who desire the day of the Lord!"** says the prophet.



**Aces Up!** Lutheran Disaster Response is grateful for your partnership in distributing aid during these days of COVID-19 need. Here is what we've been up to!



**"The NWIM Synod** has awarded 15 ministry grants, many addressing food insecurity. Everything from food pantries, community gardens and free meals, to feeding school kids and filling Little Community Food boxes. There are also housing ministries, childcare centers serving essential worker families, and special assistance such as counseling, hygiene and education services, day programs at shelters on the Yakima Reservation and rent for lost jobs/wages. One ministry provides housing and assistance to single moms with kids while mom gets her education.

It has been hard to read about all the need out there in the grant requests. And also a blessing to hear about how so many of our congregations and all our people step up to serve those in need in their communities! The NWIM synod council has approved a special appropriation from our SHARE Endowment to support more relief and outreach ministries as well as provide funds for congregations needing technology updates to have an online presence for the foreseeable future (meaning during COVID and beyond!).

**Mary Morrow**  
**Director for Evangelical Mission**  
Northwest Intermountain Synod



**The Oregon Synod is asking:** "What if we could **GROW** connection during this time and **ACT** together to relieve pressure in our communities?"

In order to reflect dignity and relieve pressure, the Oregon Synod (ELCA) and the NW Conference of the United Methodist Church (UMC) are partnering to encourage local congregations to join with one another and community-based organizations, like schools and social organizations, to offer grocery gift cards and other food or financial assistance to families most impacted during these times. Congregations raise funds and the local community organization who has direct relationship with the families works to get the assistance to where it is needed most. So far:



**The United Methodist Church** has committed \$100,000 in matching grants to local congregations.



**The Oregon Synod** has dedicated its \$20,000 LDR grant to this join project



**The Presbytery of the Cascades** is also offering \$100,000 in grants to local congregations.

**The NWWA Synod** is using their LDR Grant for the purchase of personal protective equipment and costs associated with changes in how ministries interact with people as they provide services. Following the application process, 13 ministries were awarded grants. Here's a sampling:



**Gift of Grace, Seattle**

"During the COVID-19 pandemic, Gift of Grace has deepened our relationships with the Seattle Housing and Resource Effort (S.H.A.R.E.) who are the most vulnerable members of our congregational community. We have been working to make our church shelter space as safe and hospitable as possible."



**Northlake, Kenmore**

Northlake Lutheran has two projects they are planning to expand:

- a little free pantry
- a "neighbors helping neighbors" fund



**Pointe of Grace, Mukilteo**

"We have a plot of land on the property which we are actively converting to Community Garden spaces for families in need to grow their own food this summer. Despite rain last weekend, we got out and doubled the capacity of the gardening tenant plots. We had a dozen members show up to help dig, till, weed, cut back and remove blackberries ..."



**Luther Memorial & Compass Broadview**

In March of 2019, Compass Broadview opened its doors on property that had formerly belonged to Luther Memorial Lutheran Church and welcomed home 59 families. From the time that this

ministry project was a dream and even more so today, Luther Memorial has been committed to supporting, nurturing, and being in relationship with their new neighbors at Compass Broadview.



**Luther's Table, Seattle**

"Luther's Table and their partners stepped up in a big way in order to provide for the increased demand at our family shelter which now requires evening meals. They have pivoted as their cafe was closed due to state restrictions and carefully trained 4 staff/volunteers to prepare (standing 6ft apart) and deliver to our shelter and others in need."





**The Montana Synod** is dividing up their LDR fund between nine different ministries. While most are congregation-based ministries, the [Missoula Interfaith Collaborative](#) (MIC) is a cooperative ministry. MIC's 'Broad-Based Community Organizing' ministry is a diverse network of 35 faith community, neighborhood groups, unions and nonprofits with a special outreach to the most marginalized. COVID-19 has tested the patterns of this ministry, but leaders have quickly created localized neighborhood systems to coordinate communication and support systems. Thirty faith communities and community organizations have developed Call Teams connecting over 5,000 people to keep the outreach to vulnerable individuals alive and active. Ten new centers for childcare and/or place for people who are sick with no support might go and been created. Other synod grants going to congregational based ministry focus primarily on food.

**Rev. Peggy Paugh Leuzinger**  
**Director for Evangelical Mission**  
 Montana Synod



**The Alaska Synod** has made application to LDR for funds to refurbish and upgrade the parsonage of Thornton Memorial Lutheran Church in Wales, AK. The congregation is currently served by a Synod Authorized Lay Minister so the parsonage is not currently in use. The goal and desire would be to make



the parsonage available for people who might become ill with COVID-19 as the community has no other appropriate medical facility.



**Lutheran Social Services of Alaska** continues to work with food and housing insecurity issues. They handle over \$400,000 in charity for rental assistance in addition to a \$1,000,000 grant from the mayor of Anchorage for local assistance. An LDR grant has not been sought at this point.

**Rev. Lisa Smith Fiegel**  
**Director for Evangelical Mission**  
 Alaska Synod

**Alan Budahl**  
 Executive Director  
 Lutheran Social Services of Alaska



**The SWWA Synod** has divided their grant between 19 ministries all working to **replenish, provide, and deliver** food and other essential supplies. Funding distributions varied based on need & opportunity to serve populations of the most marginalized, taking into consideration size, scope and location of programs.



## Just Foolin' Around

Playing cards as we know them today have an interesting history. From the French we get ♥♦♠ and ♣, but other 14<sup>th</sup> and 15<sup>th</sup> century decks featured a variety of stars, roses, acorns, and other suit symbols.

Playing cards also carry a unique political/spiritual framing from the Middle Ages. Kings and queens on cards of the past were often associated with actual royalty. And the court varied. The "Jack" of today may have been a knight, or a page - or both. Many old decks featured four face cards, not just three. And what about the Joker? He didn't show up until the mid to late 1800s. The Joker is a "trionfi" (Italian) or "triumph" card - a trump. He had great power in nothingness. Interesting!

Now, imagine a deck of cards with four suits, Ace through King. The suit symbols are cups, coins, swords and wands. Give this deck *four* face cards: King, Queen, Knight and Page, and then add, not a Joker, but a "Fool" and 21 other trump cards. This is Tarot.

The real difference between Tarot and today's standard "Bicycle" deck is not in the suits or the royalty. The difference is story. The 22 trump cards of Tarot - The Fool, the Empress, the Magician, Pope, Hermit, Moon, etc. - all carry the hopes, dreams, and fears of the Middle Ages. Christian spirituality abounds in this deck. So do Astrology, numerology and other questionable means of divination. But cards are just cards, and the stories these cards carry speak to people still.

In the face of George Floyd's murder, riots around the country, and anxieties fanned by pent up fears from COVID-19, what is our message, what is our action? As Christian leaders we are fools for Christ. We are not wise, or strong, or clear in the ways of the world. Persecuted we endure. Reviled we bless. What now?

Let me examine these tea leaves with you. From the Tarot, a single card. Let me do a reading. When the Tarot speaks more truth than a man standing before a church, with his Bible in hand, what then do we say? It is interesting that both the Tarot and that Bible give the same answer to that question. **Dave Brauer-Rieke**



### The Fool

***"We are fools for the sake of Christ, but you are wise in Christ. We are weak, but you are strong. ... When reviled, we bless; when persecuted, we endure."***

*1 Cor. 4:10-12 NRSV*

The Tarot understands 'The Fool' to be each one of us. As the zero card *The Fool* marks the beginning of the journey, the first step, our naivete and whimsy. Historically *The Fool* is always accompanied by a dog, sometimes tagging along playfully by your side, and sometimes pulling at your pant legs, urging caution.

'The Fool' here (from a 2018 deck designed by *Ciro Marchetti*) looks a bit more skeptical and cautious than most. Something has caught his eye. Even his dog sees it. With a traditional *Fool's* card in hand, our *Fool* may be contemplating the journey ahead. Or, perhaps, those who have gone before.

What are you contemplating?  
What do you see? What is your woundedness, and where does your journey lead?