



# Light

February 2010 • Vol. 60/Issue 2

## The Kingdom Of God: A Lenten Journey Into The Teachings Of Jesus

*It helps, now and then, to step back  
and take the long view.*

*The kingdom is not only beyond our efforts,  
it is beyond our vision.*

*We accomplish in our lifetime only a tiny fraction of  
The magnificent enterprise that is God's work.*

*Nothing we do is complete,  
Which is another way of saying  
That the kingdom always lies beyond us*

*No statement says all that could be said.  
No prayer fully expresses our faith.  
No confession brings perfection...  
No set of goals and objective includes everything.*

*This is what we are about:  
We plant seeds that one day will grow.  
We water seeds already planted,  
Knowing that they hold future promise.  
We lay foundation that will need further development.  
We provide yeast that produces effects beyond our capabilities.*

*We cannot do everything  
And there is a sense of liberation in realizing that.  
This enables us to do something,*

(continued on page 2)

“The Kingdom of God..” continued from front page

*And to do it very well.  
It may be incomplete, but it is a beginning, a step along the way,  
An opportunity for God’s grace to enter and do the rest.*

*We may never see the end results...  
We are prophets of a future not our own.*

This is a poem entitled “ *A Future Not Our Own.*” Archbishop Oscar Romero of El Salvador, who was assassinated for speaking up for God’s Kingdom and for Justice in 1980, wrote this poem.

Oscar Romero is one of my greatest heroes. He was a priest, a liberation theologian, a man of great wisdom, insight, and truth. Romero held a deep believe that the kingdom of God was alive and well in the world. This is amazing to me because he was consistently seeing his friends, family, and parishioners killed. There was rarely a day that went by where he wasn’t called to mark the murder of another loved one with a funeral mass.

Romero held fast that the church was the kingdom of God on earth. The church was the hope for change, revolution, and liberation. In his last sermon before his assignation Romero says “The great task of Christians must be to absorb the spirit of God’s kingdom and, with souls filled with the kingdom of God, to work on the projects of history.

It’s fine to be organized in popular groups; it’s all right to form political parties; it’s all right to take part in the government. It’s fine as long as you are a Christian who carries the reflection of the kingdom of God and tries to establish it where you are working, and as long as you are not being used to further worldly ambitions. This is the great duty of the people of today. My dear Christians, I have always told you, and I will repeat, that the true liberators of our people must come from us Christians, from the people of God. Any historical plan that’s not based on -the dignity of the human being, the love of God, the kingdom of Christ among people-will be a fleeting project. Your project, however, will grow in stability the more it reflects the eternal design of God. It will be a solution of the common good of the people every time, if it meets the needs of the people.... Now I invite you to look at things through the eyes of the church, which is trying to be the kingdom of God on earth...”

This Lenten season we are going to engage Jesus’ teachings about the kingdom of God. Jesus teaches about the kingdom more than any other topic. We will be studying what Jesus says about the kingdom in worship and in our weekly Lenten soup suppers. Please join us as we seek to be citizens, liberators, and wonderers in the kingdom of God.

Peace and Hope,

Pastor Rustin



The new 2010 school year is treating us well. Our preschool families are looking forward to another Parents Night Out on Friday, February 5. Thank you to Genise Burgess and her Mission & Ministry Team for organizing and supervising this event.

The preschool is about to begin another fundraiser. Beginning the week of February 14, we will be selling See's Candy. Delivery of these yummy treats will be here just in time for Easter. Need a chocolate bunny or two? Feel like taking a box of chocolates to a friend or relative? Be sure to pre-order your Easter candy through the preschool. Orders and payments are due no later than Friday, February 26.

Last month's Parent Potluck was canceled due to stormy weather. We have rescheduled the event for Thursday, February 18 at 6:30pm. Michael Pobanz, Ph.D. will be speaking about "Stranger Danger". If you are interested to join us, please speak to Director Stefani.

Our classroom renovations have begun. Thank you for all your support and encouragement to open an 18-24 month old toddler classroom to the community. Our hope is to have the classroom open within the next couple of months. We are working with a tight budget, generous volunteers, and waiting for state licensing to expand our capacity. Keep a look out for our new banner on Burbank Blvd. inviting young children to our center!

Reminder...the preschool will be closed to observe President's Day on Monday, February 15. Take a moment to check out the preschool section of the new website. It's continuously being updated. You can find information about our staff and the school calendar for the year. Another feature we are excited to share is tuition payments online.

God bless,

*Stefani Ernst*

### **A Word of Thanks:**

## **One Church Many Voices**

*I cannot say enough thanks to all of you who spoke during the last month. Your words and shared lives have forever changed our community. Thank you for your openness, your transparency, and your willingness to allow you struggle to encounter each of our lives. It is in moments like these that we can most clearly see the hand of God in our lives. As your shared your struggle and your faith journey each of us were able to see the interaction of God in our own lives.*

*I am already waiting in anticipation of the 5 people who will share their stories next year and the multitude of others who will share parts of their stories all throughout 2010.*

*Thank you!*

*Pastor Rustin*





## Lenten Soup Suppers

Wednesday's at 6:30

Feb. 24th, Mar. 3rd, 10th, 17th, & 24th  
Childcare will be provided.

Each week we will  
share homemade soup, and  
spend about an hour in  
discussion and study.

### NEW WAYS TO GIVE

One of Bethel's goals is to make giving of your time, gifts, and money as accessible as possible.

So we have created a way to give online.

Go to the link below and click on "give & serve"

[www.bethelencino.org](http://www.bethelencino.org)

## GOOD THINGS

by Sherry Sternosky Shirk

With a new year comes all sorts of new resolutions. One thing I am continually trying to do is learn new things. There are many classes you can take for a small price (or even free). Last year I began taking cake decorating classes at Michaels. I have always baked and always wanted to take this class to learn more about decorating, but the timing never worked out until last year. They were having a special for 1/2 off classes so I started w/ course 1 and loved it and went right into courses 2 & 3. Since then I have made many cakes for friends and have now started to turn it into a small business and have started making cakes for kids birthday parties in the neighborhood. When I started the class I only wanted to learn how to decorate cakes for my son's birthday parties, but now I love it and enjoy the creativity of making cakes and cupcakes for other people.

There are many different classes offered in the LA area. With a small amount of research you can find whatever it is that peaks your interest.

Whatever your hobbies, may you learn a lot in 2010.

## The Kingdom As...

Jesus often spoke in parables. More often than not, when Jesus spoke or gave a message he was sharing about the kingdom of God. Over the next few months we are going to be looking at how to engage the kingdom parables of Jesus, and how these parables have the power to change our existence. Join us as we seek the kingdom as...

**February 7**

**Introduction to the Kingdom:  
It's not about me**

**February 14**

**Kingdom as Family** (Mark 3: 31-35)

**February 21**

**Kingdom as Seed** (Matthew 13: 31-32)

**February 28**

**Kingdom as Garden** (Mark 4:1-9)

**March 7**

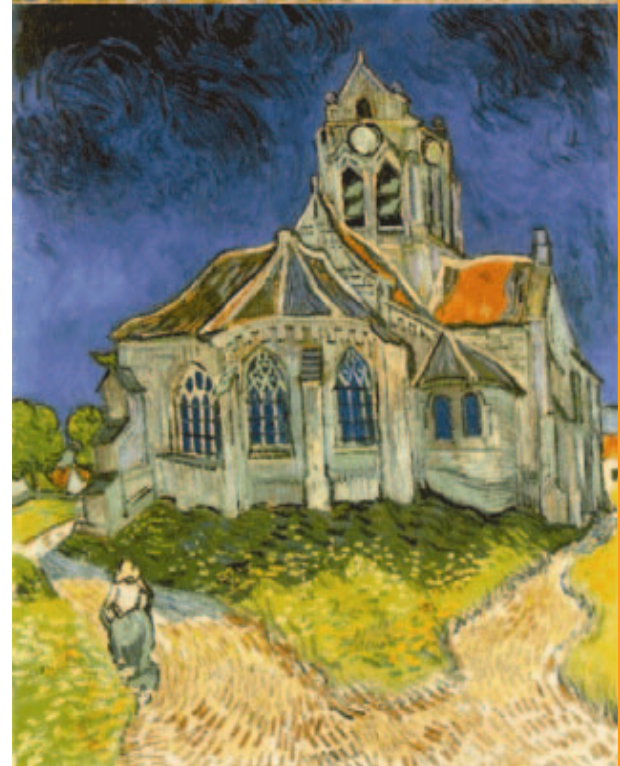
**Kingdom as Feast** (Luke 14: 15-24)

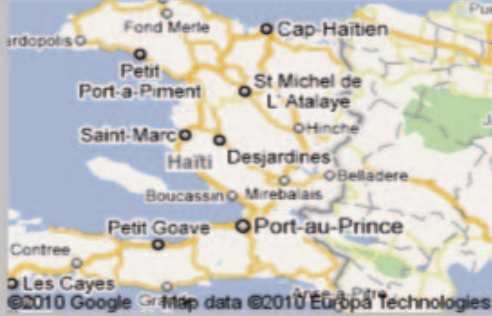
**March 14**

**Kingdom as Pearl** (Matthew 13: 43-45)

**March 21**

**Kingdom Practices**





## THE REPUBLIC OF HAITI

POP: 9,669,000  
 LITERACY: 48%  
 LANGUAGE: CREOLE  
 CAPITAL: PORT AU PRINCE 1,700,000

50% UNEMPLOYMENT  
 75% ABJECT POVERTY  
 INCOME PER YEAR \$310

There is so much need in Haiti due to the recent earthquake. May we **See, Pray, and Act.**

### PRAYERS FOR HAITI:

The Haitian people  
 Those still stuck in buildings  
 Families who have lost loved ones  
 The rescue teams  
 The reporters  
 The doctors & aide workers and canine units  
 Everyone assisting those in need  
 Continued safety from damaged buildings  
 The government of Haiti  
 The governments of all of the countries helping  
 The military  
 The religious leaders  
 Prayers for hope and faith  
 Peace/no outbreaks in violence  
 Those who are hungry and thirsty that their needs will be met  
 The children  
 Those who are waiting to hear news on their loved ones  
 Deep and continual healing

[YouTube - Photo Essay: HAITI - Eight Days After the Earthquake](#)

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9URfly4GVcE>

Here is the link to the video footage from after the earthquake:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=d2LZJ975hJI>

Here is a link to footage from Haiti taken two weeks prior to the earthquake:

<http://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vvRojV-Z1rk>

## Welcome to the ELCA Disaster Response Blog

<http://blogs.elca.org/disasterresponse/haiti>

My name is Megan Bradfield, and I serve as the associate director of international disaster response for the ELCA. Welcome to the ELCA Disaster Response blog!

My colleagues and I will be using this blog as a way to share information with you, for now primarily about the [unfolding relief efforts in Haiti](#) continuing with on-going information on [other disaster response topics](#) from the US and around the world.

In the near future, you will be meet Louis Dorvilier here on the blog. Louis is the director of international disaster response and a native Haitian. He is currently using his expertise to serve his native Haitian community, working on a team from the [Lutheran World Federation](#) and [Action by Churches Together \(ACT\) Alliance](#), which the ELCA is a member of.



*A family in the Haitian village of Dabonne stands in front of the temporary shelter they built following the destruction of their home in a January 12 earthquake. They used old lumber salvaged from the ruins of their previous house. Photo by Paul Jeffrey/ACT.*

Among other things, Louis is working to assess the situation in Haiti, define assets of LWF and other partners, and coordinate plans to restore daily life to those that have been affected by this tragedy.

Last Friday, we sent out an update on the situation in Haiti and how we are currently working there and in the US. ([Click here](#) to see the full report.) Here are a few highlights:

**7.0 magnitude earthquake on January 12<sup>th</sup>**

**6.1 magnitude aftershock on January 20<sup>th</sup>**

**Estimated 100,000 – 200,000 dead**

**Possible 1 million people homeless**

**ELCA mobilizes \$600,000 immediately for LWF, LWR and CWS**

**Lutheran Services Florida Inc. receives \$25,000 for emergency hardship grants**

**More than \$1.6 million confirmed giving received and processed**

I invite you to subscribe to our blog (using the box on the right-hand side of the page), and join us to keep up-to-date on the work of the ELCA.

Keep the people of Haiti and caregivers responding to this disaster in your [prayers](#)!

God's Peace, MB

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# BETHEL ENCINO ELCA

## *Sunday Worship*

*9:00 A.M.*

*Sunday School & Childcare available every Sunday.*

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**Administrator: Lisa Brown**



**Director: Stefani Ernst**

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