

Lutheran Episcopal Advocacy Ministry of New Jersey
Weekly Witness | October 12, 2018

“What must I do to inherit eternal life?”

This question, posed to Jesus on his journey, opens our Gospel reading from Mark this Sunday (Mark 10:17-31). Though a deep question in itself, the man’s question hints at even deeper ones: What can anyone do in order to inherit anything? And once one inherits something, whether responsibility or monetary wealth or a home or a name, or yes, even eternal life, how is one expected to respond?

Inheritance is not earning or gaining a reward, but rather comes out of being in a family. For those of us who have been baptized, we know we are members of God’s household and will receive our inheritance of eternal life. Like any inheritance, it is a gift given because we are part of a larger family and because someone, in this case Jesus, has died. And though our inheritance comes through no acts of our own, it does invites us to action.

Jesus reminds the man in Mark’s Gospel to follow the commandments. When the man says he has always done so, Jesus takes it one step farther. We hear from Mark, “Jesus, looking at him, loved him and said, ‘You lack one thing; go, sell what you own, and give the money to the poor, and you will have treasure in heaven; then come, follow me.’” Jesus invites the man to join him, to become part of the larger family, and to spend his life not with the possessions he has already accumulated but with people and things that advance the Kingdom of God.

How might we follow Jesus’s invitation? What stands in the way of living into the Body of Christ most fully? Where is God leading us to share the gospel?

ADVOCACY ASK

The Kingdom of God is advanced, for one example, when our sisters and brothers, cousins and friends, can afford to live in a safe home, feed their children, and care for their needs; not through our charity but through fair wages. As family, we are called to challenge structures of wealth, knowing that when all receive just wages the entire community thrives. This issue, of fair wages for all workers, is one that requires our action.

Call or email the legislative leadership today. Urge those in power to advance a bill increasing minimum wage to \$15 an hour for all of our siblings. Let no worker be carved out or forgotten. Tip wage workers, farm workers, and youth workers are part of our family too and need our support.

Speaker Coughlin can be reached at AsmCoughlin@njleg.org or by calling 732-855-7441

Senate President Sweeney can be reached at SenSweeney@njleg.org or by calling (609) 847-3700

Cut and paste this sample email or write your own message:

Dear XXX,

As a person of faith from (name of congregation and town), I am calling upon you to pass legislation that would gradually increase the New Jersey minimum wage to \$15.00 by 2023. I insists that you do not carve out any workers. In this high cost state, all New Jerseyans must to be paid a fair wage, most especially farm workers, tip workers and youth workers. Further, this bill must be passed by the end of the year, so that this increase can begin to raise low wage workers pay in 2019.

Sincerely,

Name and address