

**Lutheran Episcopal Advocacy Ministry of New Jersey**  
**Weekly Witness | March 8, 2018**

*And just as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, so must the Son of Man be lifted up, that whoever believes in him may have eternal life.*

*For God so loved the world that he gave his only Son, so that everyone who believes in him may not perish but may have eternal life.*

*Indeed, God did not send the Son into the world to condemn the world, but in order that the world might be saved through him. Those who believe in him are not condemned; but those who do not believe are condemned already, because they have not believed in the name of the only Son of God. And this is the judgement, that the light has come into the world, and people loved darkness rather than light because their deeds were evil. For all who do evil hate the light and do not come to the light, so that their deeds may not be exposed. But those who do what is true come to the light, so that it may be clearly seen that their deeds have been done in God. —John 3:14-21*

During this Lenten season we confess the sins that we have done and left undone; those times we have spoken impulsively and done harm, and those times when we have failed to speak at all. In recent weeks a lot has been said about violence in our nation. There is much to repent. Our collective voice is being drawn to the light of peace, toward a future with nonviolent schools, churches, neighborhoods, and communities. It is a process of communal lament in our hearts and conversations. And it is a time in which God's light is leaking into our darkness, breaking into politics as usual, helping to expose a collective sin. A sin that names the human desire to protect oneself, to rely on self for all worldly security, rather than depend on God's vision of the peaceable kingdom defined by love.

In John's gospel reading this week, judgment is disclosed in and through the crisis that is created when we encounter the living Christ. We are either drawn to the light, and have our deeds exposed and forgiven so that we might embrace God's love and vision, or flee the light in our fear and brokenness. (David Lose, "[Love or Justice?](#)")

Jesus professes in John 3:16 that God loves this corrupt world so much that God is willing to give God's only Son to save it. This is an individual invitation and corporate proclamation to live into God's vision for the world, a peaceable world. A world that is rooted in God's love and justice.

Join LEAMNJ and your siblings in Christ this week as we accept this invitation to repent and live into God's love and justice.

## **UPCOMING EVENTS**

### **Loving Our Neighbor: Doing Advocacy Locally: Saturday, March 10**

Join LEAMNJ to learn more about criminal justice reform, particularly solitary confinement, in New Jersey this Saturday in Cherry Hill. For more information and to register, [click here](#).

### **An End to Gun Violence Lament: Wednesday, March 14**

[Diocese of Newark](#), [St. Luke's Episcopal Church](#) (Montclair) will be open all day for prayer with Eucharist at 7 pm.

[Diocese of New Jersey](#), [Trinity Episcopal Cathedral](#) (Trenton) will hold a service of prayer and fasting from 6am to 6pm.

### **March for Our Lives: Saturday, March 24**

Register to march with LEAMNJ in Washington, DC at [learnj.org/march-for-our-lives](http://learnj.org/march-for-our-lives). More information and links to local marches also on the website.

## **STATE LEGISLATURE UPDATES**

Equal Pay Bill is moving through the State House! It was passed this past week out of the labor committee with bipartisan support.

Paid Sick Day legislation has moved to the judiciary committee this week with bipartisan support. Mark your calendars to join us for Lobby Day on March 26th at the state house (More information to come)!

Read more about the gun violence prevention bills that are moving through the legislature [here](#).