

**Lutheran Episcopal Advocacy Ministry of New Jersey**  
**Weekly Witness | March 28, 2018**

*Good God, do Easter! Here and among these families, here in all our places of brutality.  
Move our Easter grief now—without too much innocence—to your Sunday joy.*  
—Walter Brueggemann, Grieving Our Lost Children, [\*Prayers for a Privileged People\*](#)

This Sunday we hear the Easter narrative according to the Gospel of John. We follow Mary as she mourns the loss of her teacher, mentor, and friend; as she seeks to honor his life but finds him missing from the tomb in which he was lain; and as she reacts with confusion and then joy when Jesus finds her and flips all of the narratives she had known. Through Mary's experience, we are reminded that Jesus finds us in our mourning and loss, our confusion and pain, and in our joy.

Like Mary, we all have experiences of not knowing and not seeing how life could ever come out of the death that surrounds us. We may be in that place of despair now. Yet, whether we actively anticipate his arrival or are caught off-guard, Jesus appears and he makes himself known to us. Whether through the feet of the hundreds of thousands who gathered last Saturday to say violence will not be the final word, or through the legislation that is moving through the New Jersey statehouse in favor of better lives for our neighbors, God is doing Easter.

Pastor Nadia Bolz-Weber writes of our need to keep calling on Jesus when our world is breaking in her book [\*Accidental Saints: Finding God in All the Wrong People\*](#). She writes,

“And to say ‘Lord have mercy, Christ have mercy, Lord have mercy’ is to lay our hope in the redeeming work of the God of Easter as though our lives depended on it. Because they do. It means that we are an Easter people, a people who know that resurrection, especially in and among the least likely people and places, is the way that God redeems even the biggest messes we make.”

God works through our neighbors, young and old; through the sinful process of democracy; through the imperfect and messy legislative battles; through the powerful and emotional voices of teenagers; and through the faithful women who are ignored by all those around them but to whom God brings the good news.

### NEWS FROM TRENTON

Many bills were voted on and passed through on Monday. This is good news! Thank you for your public witness, your prayers, your calls, and your continued commitment to putting your faith in action.

- Six gun violence prevention bills passed through the Assembly with bipartisan support and will now move to the Senate. [Read more about each of the bills here.](#)
- The bill for pay equity in New Jersey is now on Senator Murphy's desk and we expect him to sign it. [More here.](#)
- The Assembly advanced a bill that would require employers to provide paid sick leave for full- and part-time workers. It now moves to the Senate (so continue to call your state senators to say you are in support!). [You can read about that bill here.](#)
- A package of four bills seeking to expand school meal programs and more accurately track district participation passed through the Senate with unanimous or near unanimous support. [Read more on why these bills are necessary here.](#)