

ELCA

# Women <sup>of the</sup> ELCA

Presented by Helen Sheahan, SCSW Women of the ELCA Vice President  
& Rev. Cindy Crane, LOPPW Director

# Engaging with the news and government as people of faith: Are we Building or Tearing Apart Community with Social Media?

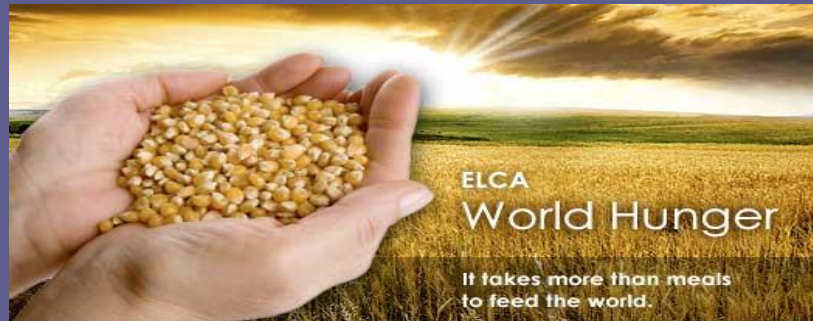


Pizzagate conspiracy theory

# LOPPW Is...



Part of the ELCA Advocacy Network, & State Public Policy Office.



(Helen intro and how workshop emerged on slide 2  
Cindy slide introduce slide 3 ourselves and how this  
workshop emerged. This won't appear on the final  
slide presentation).

# Let's Explore these Questions

- Why bother to engage with the news and government?
- To whom do we listen?  
How do we discern the news?
- How do I respond to social media and the news as a person of faith?

# Why bother....

Why do we listen to or watch the news?

Do you engage with government?

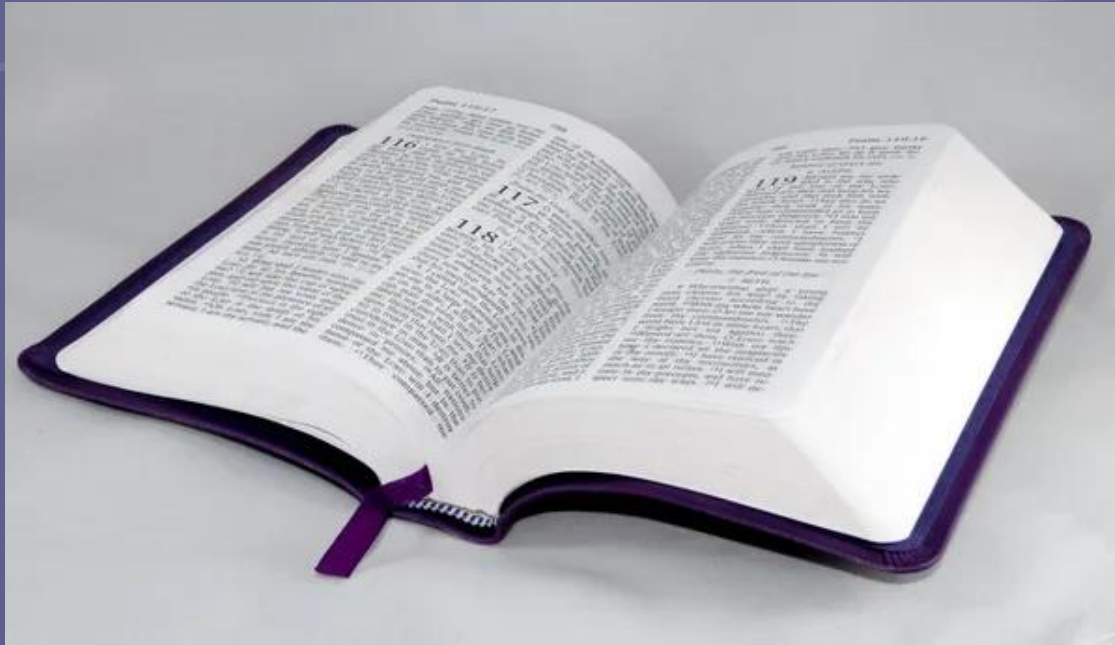
If so, How & Why do you engage with government?

# Justice

What is justice?

How many times is it used in  
the Bible?

# Justice & the Bible



Justice used 214 times

Other related words such as unjust, justly, and unjust are used 155 times.



We are called to speak up for justice but we don't all agree.

We may even struggle to agree on the truth of a problem reported.



# Our History - Martin Luther

**Martin Luther** cared about interacting with government and society.

Luther talked and wrote about -

- Government Authority
- Unjust Lending and other Business Practices
- Conscientious Objectors (before the term was invented)
- Partnership with God in a Struggle between Good and Evil - "God's work. Our hands."

# Ponder how the media and news has changed in your lifetime

- ❖ Many TV & Radio stations & internet
- ❖ News available 24/7
- ❖ FCC Fairness Doctrine & Personal Attack Rule are no more
- ❖ Finding Common Ground is harder
- ❖ Advertising now determines “truth” because of clicks and money
- ❖ Artificial Intelligence and Algorithms

# Purpose of Media

What are some of the possible purposes of media and news today?

- ★ To inform
- ★ To entertain
- ★ To sell something or an idea
- ★ To make money - click and bait to increase viewer numbers
- ★ To manipulate us to take action

What are some tools to help us respond in a healthy way to these purposes?

# Techniques and Ways to respond to media

- ❖ Use the skills of Media Literacy
  - ask questions about what you heard, saw, or read
- ❖ Be aware of the manipulation factor or one sidedness of the message - take the opportunity to evaluate your feelings and ideas on the topic

# How to find different messages on media

Listen to or watch or read

- ❖ different types of sources (audio, visual, paper)
- ❖ differently leaning experts or speakers
  - \*Legal experts
  - \*Financial experts
  - \*Historical experts
  - \*Business experts
  - \* TED talks
  - \*Podcasts
- ❖ different perspectives and opinions within the realm of respected journalism

# Before you re-share that tweet, or tell a friend about that surprising headline you saw, ask yourself three questions:

**1 Where's it from?**  
Look for the source and be careful of fake copycat websites.



**2 What's missing?**  
Do the headline and article match? Are other news organizations talking about it?



**3 How do you feel?**  
If a headline or article sparks an intense emotion like fear, anger, or vindication, be watchful. That's a common tactic from someone trying to manipulate you, not from someone trying to spread reputable news.



# Constructive Ways to Share or Express Your Opinion

- ❖ Take time to Evaluate the information before you post or repost or “share” it
- ❖ Join discussion groups about issues\*
- ❖ Attend educational sessions about issues\*  
\*These can be church based groups
- ❖ Write or call or email your representatives - federal, state, county, city officials
- ❖ Research candidates' positions & Vote
- ❖ Listen & talk to & value the opinions of others

# Tools for difficult conversations

- “Talking Together as Christians about Tough Social Issues”
- “Talking Together as Christians Cross-Culturally”
- Braver Angels



# What's in the news?



Wisconsin Supreme Court  
Elections: Feb. 21 and April 4



State & Federal Budget

# What else?

Turn off social media notifications

Turn off social media & the news

Take a social media or news sabbatical

Have daily tech free time as a family -  
especially during mealtime

Limit social media & news time to 2 hours  
per day (based on research)

Other suggestions?

# How can we deal with real news that is negative?

Be aware of how it is affecting your mood & energy level

Actions that may lift your mood/energy level

- . Find Hope by reading the Bible
- . Read a Devotional or inspirational author
- . Show gratitude, such as in a daily journal
- . Meditation
- . Cultivate a sense of humor
- . Spend time in nature
- . Spend more time with people with whom you feel happy or bring you "up"
- . Respond with action that creates social change

March 21  
9:30 a.m. CT

First UM Church  
Madison, WI

# Wisconsin Interfaith Day of Advocacy

#WIForClimate23



# Youth Advocacy Retreat

April 14-16, 2023 Holiday Inn West - Madison, WI



## DATES

April 14-16, 2023



## LOCATION

Holiday Inn West  
1109 Fourier Dr.  
Madison, WI 53717

## REGISTRATION INFORMATION

\* 9th-12th Grade & Adult Leaders

<https://www.loppw.org/resources/youth-advocacy/>



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## WHAT TO EXPECT

- Chat about faith + social justice
- Awesome guest speakers
- Share stories and experiences
- Ideas for action & change
- Worship with Rachel Kurtz

## COST

\$75 per participant



Hosted by the  
WI and Upper  
MI ELCA Synods  
& the LOPPW

# Stay in Touch & Resources!

- Like us on Facebook – Search LOPPW
- Check out our resources online at [www.loppw.org](http://www.loppw.org)
- Sign up for Action Alerts.
- Ask about other trainings.

# Resource on Social Statements

[www.loppw.org](http://www.loppw.org) Resources, Reflections & Tools - Advocacy Ministry

## Called into the World: Devotions on the ELCA Social Statements



**Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
God's work. Our hands.

# Advocacy Ministry Resource

[www.loppw.org](http://www.loppw.org) Resources, Reflections & Tools - Advocacy Ministry

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Evangelical Lutheran Church in America  
God's work. Our hands.

## *Our Church Our World* *Partnering with God's Mission*



*Steps to Building your Congregation and its Voice in our Communities*



ELCA Future Church design affirmed by  
ELCA Church Council

16.2 million Americans are living in  
poverty.

[Read More](#)

[Read More](#)

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# END - Handouts

There is a Bibliography of resources - documentaries, articles, Bible studies

There is a sign up sheet if you want to receive Action Alerts from LOPPW or if you want to receive this Power Point via email

Thank you for attending this workshop.

# Closing

“You will know the truth and the truth will set you free.” John 8:32