

WELCA News

The 31st Annual Women of the ELCA 2018 Synodical Convention was held June 29-30, 2018 at Bethlehem Lutheran Church in St. Cloud, MN. With 157 attending. This year's theme was "Outlaw Christian", the theme verse was I Corinthians 16:13-14: "Keep alert, stand firm in the faith, be courageous, be strong. Let all that you do be done in Love." The theme Hymn was "They Will Know We Are Christians By Our Love." The In-Kind Offering was all kits and quilts, shoes, white socks and lip balm for veterans, cans for Katie and christian literature. There were guest speakers, a musical ventriloquist, informative workshops and ideas about different ways to pray. Ideas included: TRIP-Thanksgiving, Repentance, Intercession and Praise; GUM-God Uses ME; FEAR-Focus, Equip, Act, Remember who is in control.

Phoebe Hospital in Liberia has received their solar panels. The hospital was formed in 1821 by free slaves from the United states and later the government. Now 70% of their electricity is being provided by solar panels. Now they are working on Curran, another Lutheran Hospital in the bush country of Liberia. There are no roads and uphill all the way.

The Bible Study was I Corinthians 16:3-4 that Love is a verb-Do everything in Love. Loving is a sacred trust.

The guest speaker talked on her book, "The Outlaw Christian". She stated that now people feel that grief is shaming and that we should never grieve because it is unfaithful and it should be hidden.

She has three rules that need to be broken. 1. Always apologize for tears. The ancients prayed for tears, Jesus cried and did not apologize. Tears are good, grief is praise of those we have loved. 2. Don't air your dirty laundry in public-put on a happy face the real story needs to be kept secret, vulnerability is a weakness. God of the cross was a vulnerable God. Nothing can bloom if left in the dark. Shame, grace, humiliation is stigma. Jesus shows his to all. His good friend Thomas broke the rules asking Jesus to see the holes rejecting shame and standing by him. It is only shame if we accept others views. Sharing our scars is a way to show resurrection. Thomas was the only friend to ask Jesus. Tell the real story and share your scars. 3. Always speak, do not hide your feelings. The Bible says Lament is a tear put into words. God wants to hear our real story and can handle it with grace, hope and joy and that Love waits for us on both sides of the River.

Thanks for the opportunity to attend.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Harwick