

To Proclaim the Good News of God in Christ Through Word and Deed

From elca.org/faithpractices...

The Faith Practices Initiative of the ELCA urges members of this church to “put their faith into practice” by living out the promises contained in the liturgy for the Affirmation of Baptism. In that promise, we pledge as members of the body of Christ through baptism to:

- *live among God’s faithful people*
- *hear the word of God and share in the Lord’s supper*
- *proclaim the good news of God in Christ through word and deed*
- *serve all people following the example of Jesus*
- *strive for justice and peace in all the earth*

(Evangelical Lutheran Worship, p. 236)

I was listening to an audio presentation on preaching. The speaker challenged the listener to “close the deal”. We are good at talking about the Bible but we often fail to apply it to our everyday lives.

We are good at teaching the easy Bible stories. Noah’s ark is fun with the animals but we skim over the fact that everyone else dies. We parade on Palm Sunday and celebrate the resurrection, but we avoid the gruesomeness of the cross.

In teaching a class on *Exploring Our Lutheran Liturgy* (based on the book by Dennis R. Fakes), I pointed out that our building has no crucifixes except in my office. I was asked, “Why would we want that when we have lots of pretty crosses?” But isn’t that the point? There is no resurrection without the crucifixion. There is no celebration without the sadness.

St. Francis of Assisi once said, “Preach the Gospel at all times. When necessary, use words.” Rev. Katherine A. Finegan, Northern Great Lakes Synod, says today we need to use words. It is no longer enough to just show our faith but we must also tell our faith.

One of the ways we proclaim is by simply sharing with family and friends how God is working in our lives. How God gives us hope in the midst of trials and life in the midst of death.

As educators, leaders and ministers, how do we help our people learn a vocabulary to share their faith? How do we help dispel the image of beating people over the head with our Bibles? How do we teach people to guide their conversations to proclaim God’s goodness, mercy and love in simple, everyday language?

Be sure to check out the resources for June and July. Join in the conversation on Facebook. And, if you have resources to share, please drop us a note.

Blessings on your journey!
Pastor Juli Lejman-Guy, President