

To Serve All People Following the Example of Jesus

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)

Serve all people. What an overwhelming thought. Serve all people following the example of Jesus. It may seem impossible. Yet following the example of Jesus is precisely what it means to live out our baptism.

We struggle with this though. ALL people is so overwhelming. There is so much need. There are only so many resources, time, projects.

One of my colleagues has their confirmation class list everything they hear people talk about at church. Usually it is things like: decreased worship attendance, meetings, money. Then they make a list of the things they hear people talk about at school. Usually it is things like: stress of academic performance, anxiety over the future, fear of gun violence, drugs, sex, parents.

But isn’t that the very problem? Connecting our faith life to our every day life? How do we connect the two in a meaningful way that grows our faith as we serve all people following the example of Jesus?

This past week, the ELCA Churchwide Assembly took some bold steps following the example of Jesus. The fallout, even from our own, continues in conversations based on hearsay rather than fact. As leaders, how do we help people engage in conversation based on facts? How do we allow people to share their fears and anxiety? How do we set boundaries for appropriate conversation and difference of opinions?

It’s a big task but one to which we have been called. I encourage you to spend time reading the Churchwide Assembly summary report and the memorials that were passed. Educate yourself on these issues so that you can focus on factual conversations. Find ways to get your people outside of the church walls – outside of themselves.

God is calling us to this time and place. How will you serve all people following the example of Jesus?

Be sure to check out the resources for August and September. 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