**June 8, 2018 (AM)**

We jumped into the 2nd day with the lively music and teaching of the Global Music Educators. We learned new songs then used as part of the opening worship service led by Ann Rundquist of the Gathering Table in Kansas City, and Kevin Beebe of The Bridge Coffee House and Fair Trade Marketplace in Saint Louis.

Kevin reflected on the idea of being bold in our faith.  What does that look like? Is it loud and confident? Or something different? To help consider this question, he shared his experience of serving in the West Bank. In this dangerous, place he asked the residents how they kept hope?  And he came to understand that by simply living, having relationships, and having children they boldly expressed their faith and hope. Just like Jesus’ birth brought bold hope and faith to our world.

Bishop Gustafson continued the morning session with his message exploring the theme of Hope through Sharing. He reflected on our current reality by sharing some statistical information about our Synod and encouraged us to not dwell on the numbers, but on the message of God’s Hope.  Following the example of Jesus, Bishop encouraged us to share our story and we had a chance to practice with one other person. Then we debriefed amongst our table about what the experience felt like.

The Bishop encouraged us to build into our regular time together (worship) to share “God Sightings”  When we become comfortable sharing our experiences of God with each other, we may just become witnesses to the larger world too.  May the world know we are God’s by our Voice.

Rev. Donna invited all congregations to join together to view our changing culture as an opportunity and refocus energy & resources toward becoming *communities of Jesus that nurture life-changing relationships with God, one another, and the world.*

Each congregation is invited to participate in one of three ways:

* Administer the Congregational Vitality Survey
* Participate in one or more of the workshops that will be held in the coming year.
* Become a Covenant member

Dr. Adam Pryor, Assistant Professor of Religion and Director of Core Education at Bethany College led us in a Bible Study that focused on Evangelism beginning with understanding our own *Ultimate Concern* and recognizing that others’ Ultimate Concern likely will be different. Sharing, Talking and Listening with others regarding each others’ ultimate concern he reminded us to talk and listen beyond the differences.

How do we Evangelize (have these conversations) without knocking on doors. . .

Be Present

Be Vulnerable

Be a Stranger - put ourselves in the position of the other

Gathering Table shared their ministry through descriptions and photos using video.

Business of the Synod followed with reports from Synod Vice President Dennis Allerheiligen, Nominations Committee Chair, Pat Bjuland, and Treasurer Scott Schulte.

**Friday June 8, 2018 (PM)**

Members had the opportunity to work through lunch at a variety of hearings, and conversations with topics including:

* Synod Budget
* Synod Resolutions
* Compensation Guidelines
* Synod Constitution amendments
* Glocal Musician Educators
* The PMA Program

Following lunch, business of the Synod continued with elections of Synod Council positions, ELCA Churchwide positions, and 2019 ELCA Churchwide voting members. Team 500 gave a summary of the year and introduced a video recapping the efforts and successes of Team 500 during 2017. The final order of business for the general session was to discuss and amend the Synod Constitution.

During the remainder of the morning each participant had the opportunity to further explore the theme: *God’s Story, Our Voices* by attending some of the following breakout sessions:

* Detectives of Divinity, Rev. Ruben Duran, ELCA
* Cross Generational Engagement, Linda Staats, ELCA
* Planting Seeds to be the Church, Nancy Mitchell, PMA, Rev. Bill Peterson, & Judy Peterson, PMA
* Evangelizing Through Short Term Missions, Val Staar, ELCA
* Evangelism Begins with B, Rev. Shawn Norris, Rev. Rebecca Boardman, & Rev. Kevin Clark
* Evangelism in the City, Rev. Donna Simon & Tom Gear
* #OurVoice-Inviting Millennials into God’s Story, Chris Miller
* Engaging One Another Missionally to Become a Multicultural Church, CeeCee Mills, ELCA
* Sharing It All: Instagram, Snapchat, Twitter & Jesus, Rev. Laura Smith, Mindy Tillberg, Deacon, and Megan Mong (Wittenburg University ’19)
* Public Mission: Social Action and Advocacy, John Johnson, ELCA
* God’s Story in Many Languages and Many Lands, Rev. Gary Teske
* God’s Story in Creation: This Changes Everything, Rev. Noni Strand

Following a sit down dinner (of cordon bleu, green beans, carrots, wild rice and cherry cheesecake), the Global Music Educators encouraged us to accompany others by considering that three stories are always in play

God’s

Mine

The Other

This message was explored through word and multicultural music.

Interspersed within the music, we celebrated the following anniversaries:

5 Years;

Jennifer M. Jackson

Gena Maria Koeberl

Janai Robinson-Markarov

Rodney E. Thompson

Stephen P. Zeller

10 Years;

Anne Chida, Deacon

Cheryl J. Hoops

Sidney W. Hose, PMA

Michael W. Kern

Phillip Knox, PMA

Shelly G. Klingensmith

Carrie A. McElfresh

Ted J. Mosher

Amy E. Stewart

Shirley Talbot, Deacon

Jeremie A. Vore

15 Years;

Robert "Lee" Bennight

Elvin Crosby

Nate G. Haaland

Ashley E. Huber

Mary R. Hunt, PMA

Kristen E. Koch

Carol Ann Kuhlman, PMA

Kathy Ouellette, PMA

Jerry Reynolds Jr.

Jill V. Seagle

Angie Sundell, PMA

20 Years;

Daryn A. Holdsworth

John R. Kotovsky

Marvin Stuenkel, PMA

Jennifer J. Thomas

25 Years;

Mary K. Arie, Deaconess

30 Years;

Orin W. Cummings

Shawn T. Norris

35 Years;

Elliott E. Anderson

Susan Candea

Timothy P. Carey

Priscilla K. Moore, Deacon

Richard E. Mueller

40 Years;

Phillip E. “Mike” Brown

Roy E. Christell

Linda Daniels-Block

Thomas J. Hallstrom

Francine Lantz

Craig Lantz

Loren D. Mai

Craig L. Nessan

Arthur R. Stull

45 Years;

Michael Brecke

Daniel H. Chong

Kenneth C. Haugk

David A. Paap

Maynard A. Peterson

David H. Swan

James L. Wagner

50 Years;

Larry D. Cross

William O. George

Richard B. Monson

Franklyn J. Pekarek

John E. Schroeppel

Kenneth E. Zindle

55 Years;

Kenneth J. Branch

Herbert N. Johnson, Jr.

60 Years;

John D. Frey

Roger J. Gieschen

Keith W. Klockau

64 Years;

Elwin Bergstraesser

65 Years;

Charles L. Hanson