



PRESIDENT'S LETTER
JUNE 2022
CHRISTIAN EDUCATION NETWORK OF THE ELCA

WELCOME, GATHER, SHARE, AND SEND

I want to thank Linda Staats for leading a workshop for the Northwest Intermountain Synod (Eastern Washington and Idaho) on May 14th in Burley, Idaho. This was one of three Regional Gatherings that Linda facilitated for our Synod. We meet at Synod Assembly every other year, and this was the year for Regional Gatherings. The invitation to these gatherings, based on Acts 16: 1-15, was this: Striving to listen to where the Holy Spirit might be leading, acting with courage to follow, and sharing the gospel of Jesus Christ with others. WOW!

The four words above were the order for the day. They are very close to our actions in worship:

Gather, The Word, The Meal, and Sending. If we reflect on these four movements, and the invitation which was used to prepare us for the Regional Gatherings, we have the essence of the many movements and invitations as part of our ministries as faith formation leaders. We listen, we act, we share, and we go where the Holy Spirit is leading. All of this takes courage, prayer, discernment, living out God's call, being in the Body of Christ, and many other qualities and movements.

These invitations and movements have us continually experiencing transitions. We leave the Easter season and enter the Pentecost season, the longest season of the church year. We need a long season to explore and experience the many ways the Holy Spirit is acting in and through us. What is the Spirit up to? The summer and the length of the Pentecost season give us plenty of time to ask this question again and again. I like the four invitations used in the workshop because they help build awareness of the movements and actions of the Holy Spirit.

When we welcome others, we are welcoming them into a community of the Holy Spirit. When we gather around faith practices, we are opening ourselves up to the Holy Spirit. When we share our faith stories and life stories, we are sharing the work of the Spirit. When we send ourselves out, we are doing work in God's name and through the actions of the Spirit. We can give language to the Spirit, but we can never predict where and when and through whom it will show up.

These four words can guide us as we move into summer and look ahead to the fall and to other church seasons and seasons of life. WELCOME, GATHER, SHARE, AND SEND. We are always on the move: looking back and evaluating, planning and preparing, looking forward to new ways of forming faith, and building community along the way. I am thankful we can be in community together as the Christian Education Network.

Diane McGeoch, President
Christian Education Network of the ELCA

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