PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN IN UTAH FALL GATHERING

SEPTEMBER 20-21. 2019, VALLEY COMMUNITY CHURCH, RICHFIELD

MINUTES

Theme: Loving Conversations about Racism

 The Fall Gathering opened at Valley Community Presbyterian Church, Richfield, with an ice breaker by Sally Hoffelmeyer-Katz that had all attendees seeking other women who shared characteristics. Following a dinner of homemade lasagna, salad, and ice cream sundaes, by the ladies of Richfield, Marilynn Collins opened the theme with a diversity activity that asked participants to step forward or backward as they answered questions relating to white privilege in US society. We then settled in the sanctuary and Sally led a devotional focusing on nature and how we all need to show up. Verlane Seiler recognized five first timers: Ruth Broughton (American Fork), Candy Vila (Mt. Olympus), Kim Dunn (Valley), Darcey Tindol (Valley) and June Scott (Denver).

Loyda Kyremes presented a video documentary on the Doctrine of Discovery, a decision by the Catholic church adopted by all colonizing nations, that native peoples who were not Christian could not own land. The PCUSA is asking all its congregations to openly repudiate the doctrine, invite local Native leaders to attend events and receive apologies. Loyda shared histories and her personal and family story of racism and exclusion in Utah. When told “you’re just like us,” she reminds us that she is not. “What are you leaving out that’s important to me,” she asks.

June Scott, PW Synod Racial Ethnic Member at Large, from Denver, shared experiences from Big Tent, a national PCUSA conference that she attended this summer. She focused on workshops she attended on racism, implicit bias and conscious bias, race as a social construct, white supremacy, and saddening statistics of incarceration by race. She shared a short video and the story of two sisters, who look to be of different races and their experiences with the checker.

Homework was to review the minutes of the Spring Gathering at pwutah.org. The evening was closed with prayer and extinguishing of the Christ Candle, by Nancy Holve at 8:50 pm.

Saturday morning the Gathering opened with a duet by Jane and Dana from Cedar City, then a short hymn sing, with Sylvia Sharman as accompanist. Jane McCoy opened the day’s theme with a devotional based on the book of Job. God is available to us, no matter where or when.

Carol Day, Moderator, opened the business meeting.

* The minutes of the Spring Gathering were Approved as corrected.
* Lynn Erickson offered the financial report, as printed in the program and reminded participants that the Thank Offering is due to her by December 10, the same time as the fourth quarter payments. She brought Thank Offering boxes for everyone to use. Special thanks are offered to all in Utah for generosity in donating to the USAME trip; our donations kept the trip costs in the black.

Income year to date $6,929.78

Expenses year to date $7,337.33

Total funds in checking and savings $8729.36

Designated funds $4,029.53

Available funds $4,699.83

* Loreen Heil reported that the Search Committee is still looking for a Capitol Networker. She Nominated Aloha Whitney to be Newsletter Editor. Aloha was elected by unanimous vote and was installed by Carol Day, using an Horizons liturgy.

Announcements: The Churchwide Gathering will be in St. Louis, Missouri in August 2021. Loyda asked that PWP leaders make certain that all Utah attendees are included in preparations and that an effort is made to to have at least one Utah get together at the Gathering so there are no loners.

 Thousands of pillowcases were made for the special Puerto Rico Together in Service project. No more are needed, but cash is till needed for PCUSA projects of recovery.

 We Will Speak Out, the domestic violence emphasis promotion, proposed and approved by the Rocky Mountain Synod at the last business meeting, was presented at the Rocky Mountains Synod gathering, and an article advocating for education will be in the September Horizons.

 A PW trip to South Korea is in the planning stages. It is quite expensive, and participation is limited.

 Scholarships are available to the 2020 UN Conference on the Status of Women, which takes place in New York in early March.

 Community of Grace will host the 2020 Spring Gathering, April 17 & 18. The theme will be from the USAME trip: Great Women of Courage and Faith

 Trinity will host the 2020 Fall Gathering, September 18 & 19

 Cedar City will host the 2021 Spring Gathering

All Saints Episcopal Church in Salt Lake City is sponsoring workshops on gun violence

All PW groups are encouraged to use the “Cultivating PW” promotional materials; instructions are on the PW website

Synod PW Coordinating Team members are being sought. A Moderator, Treasurer and Search Committee member are needed for the new class, to be elected in January. If you are interested in leadership at the Synod level, speak to Lynn Erickson or Marilynn Collins. Similar leaders are also being sought for the National PW Board of Directors. Speak to Marilynn if you are interested.

Thanks were offered to those who came early to help set up for the Gathering and do some garden pruning around the front of the church.

Loyda shared that she is offering an educational piece on PW at the next Presbytery meeting, October 12, at Wasatch PC. PW members are encouraged to attend the meeting and show the commissioners who we are.

The business meeting was closed with prayer and al adjourned to the fellowship Hall for a break; snacks provided by First Presbyterian PW of Ogden.

Following the break, all settled in the sanctuary for a workshop by June Scott. She shared a TED talk “Understanding My Privilege” and described the invisible package of unearned benefits, white privilege, and implicit bias. Everyone was invited to take the Harvard implicit bias test on racial bias.

Attendees were then divided into four small groups to listen to a scenario and answer questions related to prejudice, invisible bias, making people fit our images, and turning prejudices into monsters that guide our lives.

A delicious sandwich lunch was provided by Wasatch Presbyterian Church.

Following lunch Rev Nancy Holve led us in worship around the theme of Love one Another and Be Transformed. Community of Grace attendees ushered. The offering collected was designated for the Central Utah Food Sharing program. The Gathering ended with the benediction at the end of worship at 2:30 pm.

Displays present throughout the Gathering: used book sale for Martinpur School, Horizons, Mission/Justice and Peace, scrapbooks, Thank Offering banks, and PW print resources.

Marilynn Collins, Secretary

Attendance: 35 registered: 32 attended, including one scholarship and one guest.

Special offering for Central Utah Food Sharing $431

Martinpur books $21

Cents-Ability $11.94

Leat Coin $7.06