FALL GATHERING OF PRESBYTERIAN WOMEN IN UTAH

SEPTEMBER 18, 2021, VIA ZOOM

“Lifting up our sisters: Protect, Celebrate, empower”

Attendees: 25 participants, including Moderator Verlane Siler, Vice Moderator Loyda Kyremes, Secretary Marilynn Collins, and Pastoral Resource coordinator Rev. Catherine Tobey.

The meeting opened at 9:30 am with informal social time among Zoom participants. The formal meeting opened at 9:50 am with prayer and lighting of the Christ Candle by Moderator Verlane Seiler. Verlane recognized Utah’s indigenous peoples and their homeland.

Mary Hargis introduced our speaker, Anand “Nandi” Dyal-Chand, retired university professor and educator who is now working with women in India to teach them life skills and broaden their educational opportunities. He founded a school in Bhokar, a city in rural India, and now leads the not-for-profit foundation American Endowment for Education in India (AEEI), from his home in Beaumont, CA. His email contact for those wishing to schedule him as a speaker is: [aadyalchand@gmail.com](mailto:Email%3Aaadyalchand@gmail.com).

The work of AEEI is to empower and educate unmarried adolescent women through life skills, counseling, and schooling. These women are often married by the age of 14 or sold into prostitution, and their life expectancy and infant mortality are very high. Training includes sewing, computer skills, English language, nursing assistance, security, and retail sales experience. They are encouraged to delay marriage until they are 18-19 years old. Counseling is given to fathers and young men to show the economic benefits of delayed marriage, conception, and childbirth. His foundation is currently raising funds for a large training center and dormitory. The offering from today’s gathering will be donated to AEEI.

Following Nandi’s presentation, questions were encouraged. These ranged from availability of contraceptive devices, the involvement of government, training in budgeting/banking, and self defense. Self defense training is not encouraged because that would alienate the men they are trying to attract as husbands. They do not want to be regarded as independent, because they will marry ultimately and become part of the strong patriarchal system. They will be charged with caring for their husband’s family so nursing skills are important. The presentation ended at 10:55 am and a break was given.

BUSINESS MEETING

The business meeting was begun at 11:10 am.

Minutes of the Spring Gathering were approved as printed in the fall newsletter. Sally presented an updated Treasurer’s report. The Treasurer’s Report was approved as printed in the bulletin.

First time attendees were recognized: Linda Duffy (Mt. Olympus) and Judy Drew (Wasatch), and baby Danielle Tobey.

Mary Hargis presented the report of the Search Committee. Candidates are being sought for the Secretary, Capital Networker, Horizons, and Newsletter editor positions to be elected next spring. And a Treasurer is still being sought.

Carol Day presented an update on the Synod and Churchwide PW news. The 2022 Synod Gathering will be held in Heber City, UT on July 15-17. Information is in the bulletin. The Churchwide Gathering was held on Zoom and was well done. Sally Hoffelmeyer-Katz is now serving on the national Board of Directors as Synod of the Rocky Mountains Representative. She reported she is already overwhelmed.

The 2021-22 calendar was printed in the bulletin. 2022 pledges are due to Verlane by November 15. Thank Offering is due to Sally by December 1. Annual reports are due January 5. The winter Coordinating Team meeting will be February 5 in Springville. The PW Utah Spring Gathering is scheduled for Cedar City on April 22-23.

The business meeting was adjourned at 11:30 am. A short break was given before the worship service. Worship was led by Rev. Catherine Tobey. Her message focused on Romans, chapter 12. The Sacrament of Communion was celebrated. The meeting closed with Catherine’s benediction at 12:10 pm.

Following the official closing, social time was available for all participants. We heard of the new PW cookbook being prepared at Mt. Olympus, worship opportunities at several congregations, the death of Suzanne Riley’s mother, the Matthew 25 initiative, and the welcome of a new pastor at Cottonwood.

The official total for the offering collected for American Endowment for Education in India was $585.  In addition to these monies, Sally was notified by that an additional $2,000.00 was sent directly to AEEI following the Gathering.

Marilynn Collins

Secretary