

Mission Community/Justice

Minnesota Valley conference had an interesting speaker at their Spring Gathering, He was not one of those speakers that makes you feel all warm and fuzzy inside, or so excited that you won't come down from the high for days. What he did was made you want to cry, question what could be done, and even made people angry. You may ask what this presenter spoke on at the Gathering. It was a subject most of us do not want to discuss and don't even want to think about: Trafficking, Human Trafficking is also known as modern-day slavery. People who are trafficked are coerced, abducted and/or imprisoned for forced labor, often of a sexual nature.

Who would guess that it is here, in Minnesota, and communities close to You? Where is the Justice?

Justice refers to an underlying sense of fairness, right treatment and reciprocity. Various forms of justice include: retributive justice, corrective justice, distributive justice, restorative justice, structural justice, fair or equal treatment under the law and ending oppression based on power differences.

What can you do? Volunteer! Donate! Pray! All of these are good. You should do one or all. But, first read Draft Social Statement on Women and Justice (<https://elca.org/womenandjustice>) The following paragraphs are excerpts from that statement:

The bodies of all people, in their diversity, are gifts of the Creator and are held by God in equal value; indeed, all bodies are temples of the Holy Spirit (I Corinthians 6:19). Paul confirmed this when he described how our particularities are, in Christ, no longer a source of division: "There is no longer Jew or Greek, there is no longer slave or free, there is no longer male and female; for all of you are one in Christ Jesus" (Galatians 3:28). Humans are wondrously diverse in character, experiences, joys, sorrows, passions, and vocations and God intends equity in that diversity. Therefore, people of faith are called to support civil laws and church policies that treat all people equitably.

5) We confess that, as God's people, forgiven in Jesus Christ, we are at the same time liberated and sinful. We are broken, and yet we are made new by grace through faith. This good news is true even as we participate in cultures and societies that are broadly patriarchal and sexist.

The Lutheran Confessions explain sin fundamentally as the self-centered failure to fear and trust God. As a result of this broken trust in God, human relationships also become broken and distorted. Because God's law was given to guide human relationships, anything that breaks and distorts human relationships is sinful and unjust. Sexism and patriarchy are sinful because they foster attitudes and actions that distort relationships, violate God's law, and result in injustice. When we do not ensure the physical and sexual safety of women, girls, and others oppressed by patriarchy, whether in relationships, homes, churches, or anywhere in public, then we sin. When we use derogatory names, we do psychological harm and perpetuate injustice. When we participate in sinful systems of patriarchy and sexism that harm our neighbor, knowingly or unknowingly, we sin.

6) We confess that we are justified by God's grace through faith. This promise frees us from trying to earn God's love or justify ourselves, so that we can do justice, love kindness, and walk humbly with God and our neighbors. A commitment to neighbor justice is key to our understanding of the ministry of Jesus Christ and to our reading of the Scriptures. God's act of redeeming love evokes love in us for others who need justice in all areas of their lives. This call to justice specifically means that we seek equity and justice for women and girls and others who experience oppression due to sexism and patriarchy.

Now do what you can and serve the Lord to find Justice for Women?

Our prayer for you: "May God Bless you, and help you see the injustice in our world and help you to find a way to stop it.

Jane Tongen, Lindy Kaden, Kim Christianson