

THURSDAY, AUG. 20, 2009 (2009 ELCA Churchwide Assembly)

1) Pr. JoAnn Post, Concordia, Manchester, Conn.



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We have spent enormous amounts of time discussing, debating and despairing difficult matters that have come before the Churchwide Assembly. As the lines at microphones grow longer, and the voting members grow more restless, it is tempting to strangle the discussion, to close debate, to flee the scene. But when, today, we turned to the matter of full communion with the United Methodist Church, no one grumbled about long lines of speakers. Instead, we welcomed each speaker who brought words of hope, stories of glad memories, reminders of mission. It was a cool drink of water in what has sometimes been a desert of despair. It was a welcome hand to a body whose hearts and hands have been closed. UMC Bishop Palmer preached mid-day, bringing us to our knees in repentance and to our feet in delight. While much divides us in the ELCA, it is remarkable that we have been most united when we looked outside ourselves to concerns for mission and ministry. As Bishop Palmer said, we are at our best and most faithful when our deeds match our creeds. Today, they do -- our deeds done in hopeful unity affirm our belief that God creates and calls us into community. Community for the sake of the neighbor. What a blessed day this has been.

2) Quote of the Day --

"Please don't leave (the ELCA)." (A plea from a voting member at the beginning of today's session, addressed to those at the assembly who voted yesterday against approval of the human sexuality social statement.)