

COMMUNITY LEARNING PLATFORM – *“technology serving humanity, not the other way around”*

Two Ministers’ Council members, Rev. Rachel McGuire and Rev. Katie Jo Suddaby, say they are currently “neck-deep in the development of a piece of technology that they hope will transform seminary education.”

It’s part online-library, part micro-learning buffet, and part social network builder. And it goes by the humble name Community Learning Platform. The technology for the CLP has been Rev. Rachel’s brainchild for many years. Just recently, her alma mater, Colgate Rochester Crozer Divinity School, recognized its potential for shaping theological education and hired her as their Director for New Models.

“The Community Learning Platform is about solving meaningful problems for pastors and justice workers and Christian educators,” says Rachel, “We want to provide immediately useful knowledge at whatever level of engagement the person is ready for. So, it’s technology serving humanity, not the other way around.”

If a person has only a few minutes, there’s a library of “kernels” -brief, content-rich lessons in the form of how-to videos, audio clips, or resource-lists created by experts out in the field. If you want to go deeper on a subject, there are articles, lectures, books, and even whole seminary courses- some free and some paid. Uniquely, the content is contributed by living authors and experts, so the opportunity exists to ask them questions, attend in-person workshops, or collaborate on projects with content-contributors or other Platform-users within the network.

Rev. Katie Jo Suddaby serves as Expert Wrangler for the Platform. “I’m filling the Platform with content,” she says, “All across the world, there are people doing innovative ministry to fit their context. These are experts too busy *doing* the work to teach it at a seminary. When the Community Learning Platform launches, it will make the grassroots brilliance of these people available to a way bigger audience.”

The Community Learning Platform is set to launch next fall. If you have content you think others could learn from, you can contact Rev. Katie Jo at katiejosuddaby@gmail.com. Or, if you belong to a learning community, church, or institution who could benefit from this type of online learning tool, contact Rev. Rachel at rmcguire@crcls.edu. In the meantime, keep Rachel, Katie Jo, and their team in prayer as they imagine, build, and polish their “Platform with a Purpose.”