



Northeastern Ohio Synod Evangelical Lutheran Church in America

God's work. Our hands.

Lutheran Center • 1890 Bailey Road • Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio 44221

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**If a new Hymns for the Church Year is issued between Unified mailings, we publish it in the weekly e-news and on the synod website:
<https://neos-elca.org/hymns-for-the-church-year/>*

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UNIFIED NEWSLETTER

October 1, 2020

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Next Unified Publication: Dec 1

Deadline for articles: Nov 23

The e-Unified is sent to all E-news subscribers, and published on the Synod's web site, www.neos-elca.org six times/year; submission deadlines are announced in each issue. Between e-Unified issues, the weekly E-news keeps you updated with news, events, and announcements. If you would like to begin receiving the E-news and our other electronic mailings you may sign-up on our website. Simply go to www.neos-elca.org and click on Unified Newsletter; from there click on *Join Our Electronic Mailings* to sign-up. If you have articles or notices to publish in the Unified, please contact Marilyn Matevia at the Synod office, mmatevia@neos-elca.org

Please note: The Lutheran Center continues to operate under modified hours. Office Administrator **Sony Gilroy** (330-929-9022, ext. 21) is in the synod office on **Mondays and Wednesdays from 9:00 a.m. until 2:00 p.m.** and Resource Specialist Karen **Kaufman** (330-929-9020) is in the Resource Center on **Tuesdays and Thursdays from 8:00 a.m. until 4:00 p.m.** Essential individual appointments may still be held at the participant's discretion, but ALL group meetings will be held electronically. The pastoral team and support team will be working remotely except for those days and times listed above and you will have electronic access to any pastor or support team member via email and voicemail. All pastoral staff visits to congregations are cancelled until further notice.

The pastoral team continues recording weekly sermons for your use during this time. They are available on the Northeastern Ohio Synod YouTube channel, [NEOSynod](https://www.youtube.com/channel/UCNEOSynod). Please refer to our [COVID-19: Updates & Resources for Congregations](#) page on the website for helpful information. We will continue to update our website and social media sites as new information becomes available.

2020 Assembly Update. The Northeastern Ohio Synod's first "remote" assembly took place September 11-12. Rev. Dr. Laura Barbins was elected bishop on the fifth ballot. Our thanks to all of the candidates who stood for election to the office of the bishop: Rev. Lisa Arledge, Rev. Dr. Laura Barbins, Rev. Karl Biermann, Rev. Sherman Bishop, Rev. Robert Cheyney, Rev. Angela Freeman-Riley, Rev. Jeff Goggins, Rev. Kristina Heise, Rev. Kevin Maxey, Rev. Dr. Bruce Roth, and Rev. Diana Thompson.

The following individuals were elected to **Synod Council by acclamation** (unopposed): Rev. Steven Bond - Cleveland East; Susan Frantz - Cleveland West; Rev. Chelsea Spencer - Eastern; Richard Brenneman - Richland-Ashland; Kevin Kampfer - Southern; Sarah Roth - At-Large Youth.

Continued...

Elected to **Synod Council by majority vote**: Rev. Kristina Heise - Akron-Wooster; Susan Moseley - Canton-Massillon; Paul Gochmour - Cleveland East; Chelsea Veigel - At Large-Young Adult. Elected **Secretary of the Northeastern Ohio Synod** by majority vote: Matthew Beery. Elected to the synod **Discipline Committee by acclamation** (unopposed): Rev. Jon Paulus, Rev. Randy O'Donnell, and Edward Burns. Elected to the synod **Discipline Committee by majority vote**: Sandra Humphrey. The following individuals were elected to the synod **Consultation Committee by acclamation**: Rev. Chuck Knerem and Chuck Mosberger.

We are especially grateful to the team of volunteers who made the Assembly possible:

Assembly Planning Committee: Jane Koch (chair), Tim Barrage, Larry Fenton, Rev. Jimmy Madsen, John Sleasman

Assembly Help Desk: Stephanie Woods, Rachel Nunez, Lesli Eisenhart, Rev. William Weidenbach, Rev. Jim Steingass

Audio-Visual at Assembly: Tim Barrage, Mason Shamp

Bishop Election Committee: Rev. David Anderson (chair), Deacon Ruth Anderson, Katy Gill, Rev. Leonard Killings, Rev. Katie Jacob, Jasmine Steighner, Jonathan Stufft

Credentialing Committee: Erin O'Neill, Dr. Lito Belardo, Gayle Adamek

Nominating Committee: Rev. Seth Bridger, Scott Daniels, Sheila Kidd, Tim Kruger, Rev. Karen Liddy, Rev. Lucas McSurley, and Krista Smith

Officers: David Lenz (Secretary), Bryan Penrose (Vice President), John Sleasman (Treasurer)

Reference and Counsel Committee: Rev. Shelley Nelson-Bridger and Gail Goldsworth

Worship Committee: Ruth Anderson, Donna Fagerhaug, Pastor Matthew Groenke, Pastor Brad Ross, Pastor Angela Storer, Pastor Jimmy Madsen

Zoom Floor Recognition: Roger Long, Rev. Julianne Smith, Stu Smith, Kevin Kampfer

ABBREVIATED SYNOD CALENDER

You can find updated synod events on the website calendar page, along with more details about the events below (where appropriate): <http://neos-elca.org/events-calendar/>

OCTOBER

- 3 **Ordination**, Katheryn Kollar, 10:30 AM, Brookside Park, Ashland
- 7 **Bishop's Clergy Meeting**, 10:00 AM, via Zoom (contact mmatevia@neos-elca.org for link)
- 12 **Discipling and Evangelizing Team**, 1:30 PM, via Zoom
- 13 **Conference Deans Meeting**, 1:00 PM, via Zoom
- 17 **Synod Council Meeting**, details to be sent to Synod Council members
- 28 **Congregational Resource Team**, 12:00 PM, via Zoom
- 31 **Ordination**, Deborah Pinnegar, 10:30 AM, at Lutheran Memorial Camp, Marengo, Ohio

NOVEMBER

- 4 **Bishop's Clergy Meeting**, 10:00 AM, via Zoom (contact mmatevia@neos-elca.org for link)
- 10 **Conference Deans Meeting**, 1:00 PM, via Zoom
- 18 **Congregational Resource Team**, 12:00 PM, via Zoom
- 26-27 **Thanksgiving Holiday** – Lutheran Center and Resource Center closed

DECEMBER

- 13 **Installation** of Rev. Dr. Laura Barbins as Bishop of the Northeastern Ohio Synod*
- 24-31 **Lutheran Center and Resource Center Closed for Christmas and New Year's Holidays**

JANUARY

- 1-3 **Lutheran Center and Resource Center Closed for Christmas and New Year's Holidays**

*Additional information about the time of the service, and livestream access, will be forthcoming.

Choose this day whom you will serve... as for me and my household, we will serve the Lord
[Joshua 24:15]

As the Father has loved me, so I have loved you; abide in my love.
[John 15:9]

Dear people of God in the Northeastern Ohio Synod,

In Holy Scripture there are several well-known farewell speeches. I've cited from two of them above.

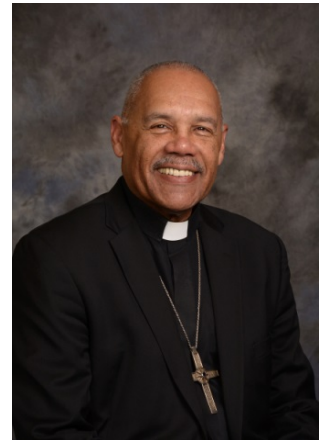
Farewell discourses in the Bible and Jewish literature follow a fairly consistent pattern. A spiritual leader gathers his followers around him one last time and utters words of instruction and encouragement. He recalls some of the highlights of his leadership and interprets their meaning for their future without him.

While the words that I write on this page are far from equal to those, I refer to them because I believe, at long last, that this will be the final time I communicate with you on this platform.

It's been more than a year since I announced my plans to retire. While some might think that was rather early, it was done to allow sufficient time for an orderly election process and a seamless transition to a new bishop.

Then, as we are all aware, something called the COVID-19 virus dawned upon us around March of this year and continues to disrupt life as we know it. Our assembly, originally scheduled for June, was postponed indefinitely, until finally, in September it was

held electronically, and a new bishop was elected. The Rev. Dr. Laura Barbins will begin serving as the Fifth Bishop of the Northeastern Ohio Synod on December 1.



Thus I have had more time than necessary to think about what I would say to you now that this moment has finally arrived.

And yet, I am a little hesitant to speak with finality.

Don't misunderstand, *I am retiring!* But in the back of my mind I am aware that God's Holy Spirit has surprised me at almost every point in both my personal and vocational life. Being elected bishop of the Northeastern Ohio Synod was not on my list of ministry goals. In fact, it was about the farthest thing from my mind. And certainly, extending my service beyond my term was a responsibility to which I committed with some trepidation, not knowing at the time how long that would last.

But as I have learned from experience, wrestling with those decisions is like Jacob wrestling with God. It's no contest. God wins every time. I'm not the one who is in charge of my life, where I will live, or what congregations or synods I will serve. It's God's call, not mine, not yours.

I remember writing somewhere at one time that throughout history God has made many

curious choices. Scripture is replete with plenty of those stories. And again, I wouldn't equate my choice as bishop with those whom God set apart to carry out God's plan of salvation for the world.

Serving God and serving you in this capacity has been purely grace.

And that grace has been most evident through you, the baptized people of God in the Northeastern Ohio Synod. You have been my source of encouragement and I pray that you will also do the same for Bishop-Elect Barbins when she begins serving you in December.

Her leadership style will be different from mine. No two people are alike. But remember that the Holy Spirit is working in, with, and through her to accomplish whatever God wills for this synod.

I want to leave you with several thoughts as you welcome Bishop-Elect Barbins as your shepherd for the next six years.

First, God loves you with an everlasting love.

Second, you are instruments of God's love for others. Jesus calls all of us into the ministry of God's work in the world. As he told his disciples on the night of his farewell discourse: *"Those who abide in me and I in them bear much fruit, because apart from me you can do nothing."*

Our whole existence as church is based on that truth; that we are called to love as God has loved us. Let us not base our mission and ministry on anything else.

With the whole church, we, the people of God in Northeastern Ohio, are called to be the hands and feet of Christ and share in the love and abundant blessings of God.

May we respond to needs of the world with compassionate hearts.

So as my ministry among you draws to a close, let me say with the most fervent enthusiasm that it has been a privilege, an honor, and a blessing to have served as your bishop.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope, by the power of the Holy Spirit. Amen.

Peace,



+Bishop Abraham Allende

Congregations in the Call Process (Mission Site Profile Completed)

- Brook Park, Redeemer (part-time/shared), Paul Bailie, interim
- Chagrin Falls, Lord of Life: Associate Pastor
- Elyria, Emmanuel (part-time/shared), Becki Verbridge (UMC), interim
- Hudson, Rejoice!, Doug Fidler, interim
- Medina, Living Word (part-time), Elizabeth Hadler (UMC), interim
- New Philadelphia, Emmanuel, Bob Linsz, interim
- New Pittsburg, St. Peter, Christopher Bartholomew, interim
- North Canton, St. Jacob's, Kyle Woodrow (UMC), interim
- Parma, Parma, Ann Paynter, interim
- Strasburg, First (part-time/shared), Jeff Goggins, interim
- Westlake, Prince of Peace, Tom Henderson, interim
- Wooster, Zion, Shari Ayers, interim

Transitions

- Lucas, St. Paul, called first call candidate Katheryn Kollar; accepted; ordination October 3; serving St. Paul and Pleasant Valley; installation TBA.
- Bellville, St. Paul, called first call candidate Debbie Pinnegar; accepted; ordination October 31; installation TBA.
- Youngstown, Martin Luther, called Pastor Jeremy Hollingshead; installation TBA.
- Vermilion, Trinity, called Sarah Taylor; accepted; installation TBA.

Prayers for Healing

- Pastor Mulba Borsay
- Pastor Alan Nathan
- Pastor Leah Schafer
- Pastor Gwendolyn Snell
- Pastor Gail Zackrison and her daughter, Cindy

Ongoing Prayer Concerns

- Pastor Joe Ertl
- Pastor Larry Mackey and his wife, Lida

Sympathy

- Family and friends of Pastor John F. (Jack) Maxium, former NEOS pastor
- Pastor Herb Garnes on the death of his wife, Deborah
- Pastor Robert Kelley, first Bishop of the Northeastern Ohio Synod, on the death of his wife, Marline
- Family and friends of Margery Sersig, widow of Pastor Jack Sersig
- Family and Friends of Pastor Donald Hesterman
- Pastor Nathaniel Adams on the death of his Aunt and Sister
- Pastor Andrew Riggs on the death of his father, Jim Riggs

*If you would like to add the name of a rostered minister – your own or someone else's – to the Unified's list of "on-going prayer concerns," please contact Marilyn Matevia at the Synod office:
330-929-9022, ext. 22;
mmatevia@neos-elca.org
Unless otherwise requested, individuals will be included on the list for two editions of the Unified.*



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Important reminder about background checks: Congregations are called to be safe places for all members, and every ELCA congregation is responsible to have established guidelines and policies protecting all members. When hiring church workers, please remember the importance of background checks. Your congregation should have official guidelines in place to safeguard members against abuse. For more information about background checks and guidelines: www.elca.org/backgroundchecks

***** Please remember to tell the Synod office if your posted position has been filled! *****
Contact Marilyn Matevia, mmatevia@neos-elca.org, or 330-929-9022, ext. 22

Part-time Chaplain. St. Paul's Senior Living Community, located in Greenville, PA has an opening for a part-time Chaplain. Resumes are being accepted by email at lchuey@sp1867.org or by mail to Lynn Chuey, 339 E. Jamestown Road, Greenville, PA 16125. You can also apply online at www.sp1867.org. This opportunity is approximately 20 hours per week. For a full job description click here: <https://tinyurl.com/y7qhfk38>

High School Youth Leader. St. Paul, Berea is looking for an enthusiastic person with a heart for the Gospel who enjoys teaching and mentoring high school age students. During the school year, will lead a weekly Sunday School class (9:45-10:45AM). During the summer months, will assist with our Vacation Bible School and chaperoning a mission trip for one week. Throughout the year will be responsible for planning, promoting, and leading a few social activities per month for students from 8th-12th grade in age. Part-time, 8-12 hours per week (including prep time (on your own schedule) and class/activity time). Upper classman college students/graduates with a major in theology /seminary / secondary education preferred. Please email your resume to officestaff@stpaulberea.org.

Chaplain. Continuum Care Hospice is looking to hire a Full-Time Hospice Chaplain for their locations across the Northeast Ohio Region. The Chaplain will offer pastoral care and spiritual guidance to hospice patients, families and staff. Education/Experience: Master of Divinity (MDiv.) required, Clinical Pastoral Education Units (CPE) preferred, Hospice experience preferred. Must have experience with clinical documentation in electronic medical records and care planning in a hospice environment. To learn more about joining the Legacy Health Services family, please visit our website at www.LHShealth.com

Organist. St. Luke's, Cuyahoga Falls is seeking an Organist for their weekly Sunday services, choir practices, and additional and seasonal services. Please click on the following links for a full job description (<https://tinyurl.com/y7t9alwk>) and application (<https://tinyurl.com/yd3amnj6>).

Part-Time Director of Worship and Music. Christ the Redeemer, Brecksville is seeking a part-time director of worship and music. The qualified candidate for this position should be proficient in organ and piano. Additional desired qualities would be choir directing, familiarity with Lutheran liturgical worship, and basic computer knowledge. The individual would be involved in our worship planning and be responsible for playing at our Sunday worship services, as well as, seasonal and other planned services. Availability for funerals and weddings hosted by the church would also be desired - subject to scheduling. We are seeking a Christian candidate who feels a call to, and love of, music, is creative, personable, relational, and a team player. Resume and cover letter can be emailed to pastorrandy@crlcbrecksville.org.

Director of Music Ministries. Advent, Solon is seeking a part-time Director of Music Ministries to provide accompaniment for weekly worship service, direction of choirs, and continued development and coordination of the music program. Applicant should provide a resume with relevant experience and references. A complete job description is available at AdventSolon.org/Music. Applications should be sent to Advent Lutheran Church, 5525 Harper Road, Solon, OH 44139 or emailed to PastorJim@adventsolon.org.

Part-time Youth Coordinator. St. Jacob's, North Canton prayerfully seeks a person to fill a part-time Youth Coordinator position. A small but mighty group of Junior & Senior High kids await an enthusiastic leader to guide them in learning, service and fun. Flexible hours, a supportive congregation, and competitive pay make this job a gem! For details, contact Krista at 330-877-2676 or via email to discipleship@stjacobselca.org

Organist/Music Director. St. Jacob, Massillon (Jackson Township) is seeking an Organist/Music Director to play Sundays at 9:00 a.m. and to direct and rehearse the choir. Other responsibilities include planning repertoire for worship serves with input from the pastor and Worship Board along with possibly playing for weddings and funerals. Contact Becky Foltz (beckyfoltz1@gmail.com / 330-854-5155) for more in-depth details.

The 2017 NEOS Compensation Guidelines state: Those asked to serve as pulpit supply should be contacted well in advance of the date needed and, upon acceptance, be provided with a copy of the worship bulletin and pertinent information about the service. A member familiar with congregational worship practices should be on hand to welcome the pastor prior to the service. The recommended honorarium for one worship service is \$150 plus mileage at the current IRS mileage reimbursement rate- beginning **January 1, 2020, 57.5 cents/mile**). Travel reimbursement should also include turnpike tolls. For additional services, scheduled within three hours of the conclusion of the initial worship service, whether at the same congregation or at another, as in two-point parishes, an additional \$50 per service should be paid plus any additional mileage. If additional services are scheduled during the week that are similar in nature e.g., Sunday evening, Wednesday, Saturday, etc., an additional honorarium of \$85 for each additional service plus mileage at the current IRS mileage reimbursement rate (see above) should be paid. For additional responsibilities, appropriate compensation should be provided. Expenses for lodging and meals, if necessary, are to be paid by the congregation. (Contractual interim pastors are reminded that they are responsible for obtaining supply in their absence.) *The current Pulpit Supply list is also available on the NEOS website under the "Resources" tab.*

The following persons have indicated their availability for pulpit supply (additional supply pastors from denominations in full communion with the ELCA can be found on page 2):

The Rev. Paul Bailie
1695 Orkney Road
Madison, OH 44057
440-477-3641
bailiepaul@gmail.com
(available on 4th Sundays)

The Rev Langley Collins
1310 Fifth Ave Apt 907
Youngtown, OH 44504
(C) 330-720-9872
lmcollins605@gmail.com

The Rev. David Connor
12700 Lake Ave., #100
Lakewood, OH 44107-4318
(C) 216-226-0346
Prdavec526@yahoo.com

The Rev Barbara Essex
(UCC) 11205 Euclid Ave
Cleveland, OH 44106
(O) 216-421-9614 ext. 301
(H) 216-772-2325
barbara.upcam@gmail.com

The Rev Don Frantz
114 Forest Hill Dr.
Avon Lake, OH 44012
(H) 440-961-0000
(C) 937-725-0319
dfrantz4@oh.rr.com

The Rev Rod Funk
8032 Munson Road
Mentor, OH 44060
440-946-5270
rphunque@yahoo.com

The Rev George Gaiser
944 Dussel Rd.
Kent, OH 44240-6524
330-678-9287
gigaizer@att.net

The Rev Elizabeth Hazelton
9396 Brandywine Rd
Sagamore Hills, OH 44067-2480
330-468-0412
pastorbetti@sbcglobal.net

The Rev Tom Henderson
313 Janice Dr.
Berea, OH 44017
440-539-6294
tomhenderson10@hotmail.com

The Rev Jim Kulma
1496 Marlowe Dr.
Lakewood, OH 44107
(C) 216-221-7333
jkulma@cox.net

The Rev Dr Deborah Michaels
13193 Hampton Club Dr.
Apt. 102
North Royalton, OH 44133
440-281-5337
revdeb51@yahoo.com

The Rev Todd Mills
Trinity Lutheran Seminary at
Capital University
2199 E Main St Columbus,
OH 43209
(O) 614-236-6301
(C) 614-965-2472
tmills@capital.edu

The Rev George Murphy
538 Cynthia Lane
Tallmadge, OH 44278-2884
330-524-4090
gmurphy10@neo.rr.com

The Rev Shelley Nelson-Bridger
26760 Chapel Hill Drive
North Olmsted, OH 44070
(C) 513-635-7594
pastorshelleynb@gmail.com

The Rev Gail Patton
5256 Spencer Rd.
Lyndhurst, OH 44124-1251
440-442-5256

The Rev Robert Pindell
925 Barkston Dr.
Highland Hts., OH 44143-3218
(H) 440-449-6301
(C) 440-679-1943
bobdell@ix.netcom.com

The Rev Haldon Robarge
12015 Lagoon Circle
NW
Uniontown, OH 44685
330-760-3925
hrobarge@neo.rr.com

The Rev Robert Sander
4818 Leigh Ave NW
Canton, OH 44709-1943
(H) 330-497-7293
(C) 419-973-7773
rev1bobs@aol.com

The Rev Richard Seaks
10778 Liberty Street
Garrettsville, OH 44231-1210
330-527-8104
revseaks@gmail.com

The Rev H Dixon Slingerland
147 Barrington Place E
Aurora, OH 44202
330-995-6101
slingerlandh@gmail.com

The Rev Jonathan Steingass
3108 Lester Rd
Medina, OH 44256-7724
330-722-6139
jsteingass@zoominternet.net

The Rev Edward Wahl
(NWOS)
2856 St. Rt. 529
Cardington, OH 43315
419-864-0850
revedwahl@hotmail.com

The Rev Richard Weaver
255 Teal Circle
Akron, OH 44319
(C) 419-591-8594
Rweaver2484@yahoo.com

NORTHEASTERN OHIO SYNOD SUPPLY PREACHERS – LAY (NON-COMMUNION SERVICES)

Richard Brenneman
13256 Shipley Rd
Fredericktown, OH 43019
740-694-1755
dbbrenneman@gmail.com

David Rebeck
244 Fairpark Dr.
Berea, OH 44017-2405
440-891-9793
djrebeck@roadrunner.com

Ken Reinoehl
407 Ninth St. NW
North Canton, OH 44720
330-866-2452
reinoehlk@gmail.com

Linda Weidenbach (Non-Sunday services)
2984 Chaucer Drive NE
Canton, Ohio 44721
(C) 850-766-5640
lindakjw@gmail.com

ORDAINED MINISTERS FROM DENOMINATIONS IN FULL COMMUNION WITH THE ELCA

Episcopal Church, Diocese of Ohio: *Supply roster can be found at: www.dohio.org.*

Moravian Church:

The Rev William Surber
Uhrichsville,
330-401-7754
Revwes51@gmail.com

Reformed Church of America (RCA):

The Rev Don Poest
Brunswick, 330-273-7396
brcpoest@aol.com

United Church of Christ (WR=Western Reserve Association; EO=Eastern Ohio Association):

The Rev Mendle E. Adams
(EO, WR) Lyndhurst,
216-246-6369
mendle.adams@yahoo.com

The Rev Dick Beck (EO, WR)
Mogadore,
330-807-2800
rfbeck3@sbcglobal.net

The Rev Karen D.
Binford (EO) Ravenna,
330-968-9622
revgrandma@att.net

UCC continued...

The Rev Henry W. Bruner
(WR)
Elyria, 440-322-9749
billandmartybruner@gmail.com

The Rev Monte E. Canfield
(EO) Newcomerstown,
330-204-7763
montecan@roadrunner.com

The Rev James G. Deitz
(WR)
Amherst, 440-988-2714
ejdeitz@centurytel.net

The Rev Jonathan M.
Dodson (EO, WR) Hudson,
330-888-8755
dodson.jon@hotmail.com

The Rev Barbara J.
Essex (WR)
South Euclid,
216-772-2325
bjessex@aol.com

The Rev Kenneth E.
Hutchinson (EO) North
Canton,
330-526-8520
hutchinson@sssnet.com

The Rev Veronica M.
Jefferson (WR) Cleveland
Heights,
216-291-5510
revvmjeff@gmail.com

UCC continued...

The Rev Doyle A.
Luckenbaugh (EO)
Massillon, 330-309-5253
doymar58@sssnet.com

The Rev Carolyn J. Mann
(EO)
Brinkhaven, 740-824-4632
haymann51@yahoo.com

The Rev James A. Nelson
(EO)
Orrville, 330-683-2792
revjn0203@hotmail.com

The Rev Sharon G.
Nichols (EO)
North Canton,
330-499-5707
uccrev@neo.rr.com

The Rev Steven Savides
(EO, WR)
Akron, 617-894-4496
Steven@thesavides.com

The Rev Rev. Brian A.
Shields
4005 Navahoe Rd.
Cleveland Heights, OH
44121
(C) 216-956-8475
bshields80.bs@gmail.com

The Rev Timothy
Staveteig (EO, WR)
Cleveland,
216-401-5460
tstaveteig@gmail.com

UCC continued...

The Rev Glenn E.
Swope (EO, WR)
Alliance,
330-823-5107
cgsarts@aol.com

The Rev Kate L.
Walsh (EO, WR)
Chagrin Falls,
330-472-0228
katewalsh1216@gmail.com

United Methodist Church:

The Rev Bernie
Dougherty
2742 Stockman Ct.
Stow, OH 44224
336-491-8840
revbdough@aol.com

Last updated 9/2020

Your LINK to Ministry Resources

NE Ohio Resource Center

September 2020
Volume 25, Issue 9

Pastor Kirsten Nelson Roenfeldt has created for **catechism** students a **scavenger hunt** for the ELCA website. With some adapting it could also be used with new member classes. For a copy contact the synod resource center.

SparkHouse has created **conversation cards** for the home.
<https://tinyurl.com/y3zh9puq> Consider using a question from these cards to engage participants as they gather in person or on zoom and wait for a meeting to begin.

New discipleship resources have been added to the **ELCA Faith Practices** website. The first two can be used in a small group/conversation setting.

Resiliency: Faith Practices in Tough Times

Resiliency: Setting Free our Lament

The parent's guide is designed for parents or in a family setting.

Resiliency: A Parent's Guide

<https://www.elca.org/Resources/Faith-Practices>

As you assess the various needs and roles in the congregation (some may no longer be appropriate or viable) what are some new opportunities? For example: **technology usher** – one who assists individuals in connecting virtually to worship, meetings or small group gatherings. What are some of the new roles and titles in your congregation? Share them with the resource center.

Karen Kaufman,
Resource Specialist

Staffed Hours

8-4 Mon, Tues & Thurs

Call or email ahead of visit for recommended resources to be immediately available for viewing.

Not able to visit? Most items can be mailed.

1890 Bailey Road
Cuyahoga Falls, Ohio
44221-5576

330-929-9020
rc@neos-elca.org
twitter.com/resources4U

You can receive this newsletter **every** month digitally by emailing rc@neos-elca.org

Leader Helps

FaithLead of Luther Seminary is offering 3 podcasts to assist leaders navigate these uncertain times and lead for the future. To learn more about each of these podcasts:

Pivot: Leading through Chaos

Wilderness Time

Faithful Adaptation

Visit: <https://faithlead.luthersem.edu/resources/podcasts>

The resource center continues to support congregations during these extraordinary times. One way is by sharing resources between congregations. Recently St. Mark, Wapakoneta (Pastor Doug Pretorius) shared numerous copies of Bible Studies in new or like new condition for use by sister congregations. Remaining titles include:

Intersections

Praying: Meeting God in Daily Life - Lyn Klug 22 copies

Smart Choices: Making Your Way through Life - Eppley/Melander 17 copies

In Life Series

In Walks Jesus - Peter E. Mueller 20 copies

Dare to Be Different - Stephen D. Hower 15 copies

From Guest to Disciple - Joel Heck 8 copies

Kerygma

Parable: Stories for Life - Richard J. Henderson 15 copies

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Yes, Lord, I Have Sinned but I Have Several Excellent Excuses - James W. Moore – 11 copies

If you are interested in any of the above titles contact the resource center 330-929-9020/rc@neos-elca.org asap so you will not be disappointed.

We continue to provide a table of gratis materials for those visiting the resource center and welcome your donations.

Hymns for the Church Year

by Thomas H. Boreman

boreman4@yahoo.com

TIME AFTER PENTECOST, LECTIONARY 23—CHRIST THE KING (and DAY of THANKGIVING)

Year A

Hymn suggestions are from four Augsburg Fortress publications. *E* refers to *Evangelical Lutheran Worship*, *L* refers to *Lutheran Book of Worship*, *W* refers to *With One Voice*, and *WP* refers to *Worship and Praise*. H is Hymn of the Day, G is Gathering Hymn, and S is Sending Hymn. I, Ps, II, and HG are hymns relating to the Revised Common Lectionary, and refer to the First Lesson, Psalm, Second Lesson, and Holy Gospel.

September 6, 2020

TIME after PENTECOST-LECTIONARY 23

H	E470/W703	Draw Us in the Spirit's Tether
H	E716/L419	Lord of All Nations, Grant Me Grace
Ps	E772/L480	Oh, that the Lord Would Guide My Ways
II	E246/L37	Hark! A Thrilling Voice Is Sounding
II	E648	Beloved, God's Chosen
II	E639	When We Are Living
HG	E652/L365	Built on a Rock
HG	WP68	I Was Glad
HG	E615/W739	In All Our Grief
HG	E603/W735	God, When Human Bonds Are Broken
	E731/L558	Earth and All Stars!
G	E452/W745	Awake, O Sleeper
S	E836/L551	Joyful, Joyful We Adore Thee
G	E864-5/L549	Praise, My Soul, the God of Heaven
	E791	We Sing to You, O God

September 13, 2020

TIME after PENTECOST-LECTIONARY 24

H	E605/L307	Forgive Our Sins as We Forgive
H	E606/W733	Our Father, We Have Wandered
I	E359/L126	Where Charity and Love Prevail
Ps	E864-5/L549	Praise, My Soul, the God of Heaven
II	E867/L552	In Thee Is Gladness
H	E482	I Come with Joy
	E490/L198	Let All Mortal Flesh Keep Silence
G	E521/L251	O Day of Rest and Gladness
S	E835/L527	All Creatures, Worship God Most High!
S	E434/L530	Jesus Shall Reign
	E871/L542	Sing Praise to God, the Highest Good
G	E651/W750	Oh, Praise the Gracious Power
G	E858-9/L543	Praise to the Lord, the Almighty
G	E415/L169	Father, Most Holy
S	E543/W721	Go, My Children, with My Blessing

September 20, 2020

TIME after PENTECOST-LECTIONARY 25

H	E358/W666	Great God, Your Love Has Called Us
H	E587-8/L290	There's a Wideness in God's Mercy
I	E724/L436	All Who Love and Serve Your City
Ps	E893/L401	Before You, Lord, We Bow
Ps	E835/L527	All Creatures. Worship God Most High!
Ps	WP53	Great Is the Lord
HG	E431	O Christ, What Can It Mean for Us
HG	E765/L469	Lord of All Hopefulness
H	E583,685/L406	Take My Life, that I May Be
G	E669/L383	Rise Up, O Saints of God
S	E676/L403	Lord, Speak to Us, that We May Speak
S	W671	Alleluia, Alleluia, Give Thanks
	E608/W734	Softly and Tenderly Jesus Is Calling
	E668/L397	O Zion, Haste
G	E853/L545-6	When Morning Gilds the Skies

September 27, 2020

TIME after PENTECOST-LECTIONARY 26

H	E712/L423	Lord, whose Love in Humble Service
H	E801/WP28	Change My Heart, O God
I	E776/L446	What God Ordains Is Good Indeed
Ps	E749/L414	O God of Love, O King of Peace
Ps	WP70	I Will Call upon the Lord
II	E660/L377	Lift High the Cross
II	E820/L514	O Savior, Precious Savior
II	E853/L545-6	When Morning Gilds the Skies
II	E416/L179	At the Name of Jesus
HG	E806/L504	O God, My Faithful God
G	E634/L328-9	All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name!
G	E526/W719	God Is Here!
S	E846/W786	Amen, We Praise Your Name
	E538	The Lord Now Sends Us Forth
	E818/L492	O Master, Let Me Walk with You

October 4, 2020

TIME after PENTECOST-LECTIONARY 27

H	E645/L367/W747	Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation
H	E769/L453	If You but Trust in God to Guide You
I	E727/L421	Lord Christ, When First You Came
II	E404/L475	Come, Gracious Spirit, Heavenly Dove
II	E826/W801	Thine the Amen
II	E803/L482	When I Survey the Wondrous Cross
HG	E654/L369	The Church's One Foundation
HG	E742/L439	What a Friend We Have in Jesus
HG	E343/L94/W661	My Song Is Love Unknown
G	E883/L245	All People that on Earth Do Dwell
	E596-7/L293-4	My Hope Is Built on Nothing Less
S	E669/L383	Rise Up, O Saints of God!
G	E730/L244	Lord Our God, with Praise We Come
S	E670	Build Us Up, Lord
	E729/L433	The Church of Christ, in Every Age

October 11, 2020

TIME after PENTECOST-LECTIONARY 28

H	E462/L203	Now We Join in Celebration
H	E719/L429	Where Cross the Crowded Ways of Life
I	E827/L516	Arise, My Soul, Arise!
I	E826/W801	Thine the Amen
Ps	E778/L451	The Lord's My Shepherd
Ps	E502/L456	The King of Love My Shepherd Is
Ps	L501	He Leadeth Me: Oh, Blessed Thought!
II	E430/L171	Rejoice, for Christ Is King!
II	E873-4/L553	Rejoice Ye Pure in Heart
II	WP95	Make Me a Channel of Your Peace
HG	E523	Let Us Go Now to the Banquet
HG	E547/L221	Sent Forth by God's Blessing
HG	E362/L210	At the Lamb's High Feast We Sing
S	E820/L514	O Savior, Precious Savior
S	E867/L552	In Thee Is Gladness

October 18, 2020

H E841/L562
H E713/L416
I WP149
HG E686/L410
HG E690
HG E871/L542
HG E757/W782
S E705/L415
G E731/L558
G E822/W795
G E526/W719
S E678/L408
S E825/L252
E812-13/L500
E413/L165

TIME after PENTECOST-LECTIONARY 29

Lift Every Voice and Sing
O God of Every Nation
We Bow Down
We Give Thee But Thine Own
We Raise Our Hands to You, O Lord
Sing Praise to God, the Highest Good
All My Hope on God Is Founded
God of Grace and God of Glory
Earth and All Stars!
Oh, Sing to the Lord
God Is Here!
God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending
You Servants of God
Faith of Our Fathers
Holy, Holy, Holy, Lord God Almighty!

October 25, 2020

H E779/L448
H E517/L230
Ps E749/L414
Ps E724/L436
Ps E503-5/L228-9
II E591
II E590/L297
HG WP73
S E654/L369
G E665/L393
G E812-3/L500
G E729/L433
E652/L365
S E645/L367
G E513/W712

REFORMATION SUNDAY

Amazing Grace, How Sweet the Sound
Lord, Keep Us Steadfast in Your Word
O God of Love, O King of Peace
All Who Love and Serve Your City
A Mighty Fortress Is Our God
That Priceless Grace
Salvation unto Us Has Come
I Will Sing, I Will Sing
The Church's One Foundation
Rise Shine, You People!
Faith of Our Fathers
The Church of Christ, in Every Age
Built on a Rock
Christ Is Made the Sure Foundation
Listen, God Is Calling

November 1, 2020

H E422/L174
H E426/W691
I E628/L331
I E425/L314
I WP44,45
Ps E827/L516
Ps E492/W706
Ps E531/WP139
HG E728/W764
E E424/L175
G E632/L320
S E441/L351
E E873-4/L553
E423/W690
S E414/L535

ALL SAINTS DAY

For All the Saints
Sing with All the Saints in Glory
Jerusalem, My Happy Home
Behold the Host Arrayed in White
Glory to God
Arise, My Soul, Arise!
Eat This Bread, Drink This Cup
The Trumpets Sound, the Angels Sing
Blest Are They
Ye Watchers and Ye Holy Ones
O God, Our Help in Ages Past
Oh, Happy Day when We Shall Stand
Rejoice Ye Pure in Heart
Shall We Gather at the River
Holy God, We Praise Your Name

November 8, 2020

H E724/L436
H E436/L31
I E710
I E717/W763
I E810/L503
II E531/WP139
HG E827/L516
HG E488-9/L224

TIME after PENTECOST-LECTIONARY 32

All Who Love and Serve Your City
Wake, Awake, for Night Is Flying
Let Streams of Living Justice
Let Justice Flow Like Streams
O Jesus, I Have Promised
The Trumpets Sound, the Angels Sing
Arise, My Soul, Arise!
Soul, Adorn Yourself with Gladness

HG E244/L25
G E439/W744
S E867/L552
G E438/W627
S E785/L346
G E861/W799
G E625

Rejoice, Rejoice Believers
Soon and Very Soon
In Thee Is Gladness
My Lord, What a Morning
When Peace like a River
When Long before Time
Come, We That Love the Lord

November 15, 2020

H E730/L244
H E760/W788
Ps E632/L320
II E450/L188
II L399
HG E677
HG E688
HG E678/L408
S E805/L495
S E815/W649
E439/W744
G E452/W745
G E441/L351
E715
S E327/L355

TIME after PENTECOST-LECTIONARY 33

Lord Our God, with Praise We Come
O Christ the Same
O God, Our Help in Ages Past
I Bind unto Myself Today
We Are the Lord's
This Little Light of Mine
Lord of Light
God, Whose Giving Knows No Ending
Lead on, O King Eternal
I Want to Walk as a Child of the Light
Soon and Very Soon
Awake, O Sleeper
Oh, Happy Day When We Shall Stand
Christ Be Our Light
Through the Night of Doubt and Sorrow

November 22, 2020

H E634/L328-9
H E430/L171
I E778/L451
I E789/L481
Ps E847/L254
Ps E408/L522
Ps WP107
II E553/L265
HG E826/W801
HG E531
HG E431
G E855/L170
S E838/L518
E848/L520
S E432/L173

CHRIST THE KING

All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name!
Rejoice, for Christ Is King!
The Lord's My Shepherd
Savior, like a Shepherd Lead Us
Come, Let Us Join Our Cheerful Songs
Come, Thou Almighty King
Oh, Come, Let Us Sing
Christ, Whose Glory Fills the Skies
Thine the Amen
The Trumpets Sound, the Angles Sing
O Christ, What Can It Mean for Us
Crown Him with Many Crowns
Beautiful Savior
Give to Our God Immortal Praise!
The Head that Once Was Crowned

November 26, 2020

H E839-40/L543-4
H E694/L412
H E679/W760
II E689/L409
HG E881/L557
G E879/L561
S E680-1/L362
E740
S E856/L532
E829
E880/W797
G E693/L407
S E870/L241
G E733/W771
G E556/WP98

DAY of THANKSGIVING

Now Thank We All Our God
Sing to the Lord of Harvest
For the Fruit of All Creation
Praise and Thanksgiving
Let All Things Now Living
For the Beauty of the Earth
We Plow the Fields and Scatter
God of the Sparrow
How Great Thou Art
Have You Thanked the Lord
O God Beyond All Praising
Come, Ye Thankful People, Come
We Praise You, O God
Great Is Thy Faithfulness
Morning Has Broken

GETTING STARTED WITH LIVESTREAMING

Livestreaming an event, whether a worship service or Bible study, can seem like a daunting prospect. Simply explained, it's the process of sending and receiving video in real time over the internet. Like any process of this type, it can be explained in terms understandable to the non-expert or in the more precise terms of the technical deep dive. At the risk of oversimplifying, this article will describe in non-technical language the basics of the live-stream process, and the equipment required to get started.

How Does Livestreaming Work?

Think of livestreaming as a journey from sender to receiver with three parts: 1) capturing content, 2) encoding it, and 3) distributing it to the viewer over a stable internet connection. It begins with a camera and microphone, which is built into many smart phones, tablets, and laptop or desktop computers. The video and audio signals travel via ethernet cable or Wi-Fi to an encoder contained in a software program available for free or as a paid subscription, or a hardware device. Next the content is encoded, converting the raw video and audio to a format that can be streamed over the internet, and then distributed to the viewer via an open platform such as Facebook Live or YouTube Live or through a closed-platform service that requires a subscription and may restrict who can view it.

Capturing Content

Built-In Camera

The easiest way to capture the video and audio for livestreaming is by using a smart phone, tablet, or laptop that has a built-in camera and microphone. Most people are familiar with hand holding a smart phone or using a selfie stick in order to shoot video, but for the purposes of livestreaming worship, more stability is needed. This can be attained by mounting the camera on a small tripod. Although the camera on most smart phones is quite good, the audio can sound tinny without an external microphone attached. Search the internet for tools

to adapt mobile devices for shooting video (search term: "smartphone video kit with tripod and microphone"). Additionally, laptops have poor quality audio that would benefit from the addition of an external microphone.

Stand-Alone Camera

Here several options are available priced low to high. At the low end is a dedicated live stream camera such as the Mevo Start Live Streaming Camera (about \$400). More costly is a professional video camcorder capable of livestreaming, with the least expensive models ranging between \$1,300 and \$2,000 for the Canon XA Series of cameras, with JVC offering JVC GY-HM250 4K UHD Streaming Camcorder for about \$1,700 and the JVC 4K UHD House Of Worship Streaming Camcorder Version for about \$2,300. Note: these camcorders require the purchase of a separate video capture device to feed the video signal to a laptop. A third option is the PTZ (or pan-tilt-zoom) camera, so called for its ability to pan left to right, tilt up and down, and zoom in from across the room. The



"...AND THANKS TO THE CAMERA AND MICROPHONE
BUILT INTO MY COMPUTER, THE WHOLE CONGREGATION
CAN SEE AND HEAR US RIGHT NOW!"

camera is operated by remote control, and some models allow the operator to dial in a number of preset positions, which allows for multiple camera shots with a single camera. The camera is small and can be mounted on walls, ceilings, or any number of discrete locations. The PTZOptics Gen 2 series costs between \$1,700 and \$1,800.

A Stable Internet Connection

Before video content can be sent, a stable internet connection is required. For this reason, upload speed is important. Anyone who streams movies may be familiar with download speed, but upload speed has to do with sending data, not receiving it. First, make sure the computer is plugged into an outlet, not using battery power, otherwise it may run at 50% or 25% of normal speed. Second, use an ethernet cable that is Category 5 (Cat 5) or higher to hardwire the connection to the modem. While Wi-Fi can be used, an ethernet cable enables a better speed and more consistent signal. Finally, do a speed test using a free online speed testing site such as speedtest.net, speedof.me, or testmy.net. Most consultants recommend an upload speed of 5 Mbps or greater.

Encoding

Encoding is converting raw video to a format that can be delivered over the internet. Most mobile devices have a built-in encoder, but laptop and desktop users will require encoding software. Download OBS Studio, a free, open source software program, or use subscription software such as Wirecast, vMix, or Livestream Studio. A moderately powerful computer, at least 8 GB RAM is required, and 16 GB is preferable. Most encoding software options are able to also perform live video mixing, which is switching between multiple cameras or microphones in the midst of a livestream event.

Distributing

The final step on the livestream journey is the video platform that delivers the content to the viewer, called a Content Delivery Network (CDN). Among open platforms, Facebook Live and YouTube Live are the most popular, though Twitter and Instagram have livestream function as well. For those who are undecided between YouTube and Facebook, a service called Restream (\$20 per month) allows streamers to send the signal to both platforms at once. Closed platforms, such as Vimeo Livestream, Dacast, and Streamingchurch.tv, are available by subscription and allow control over where and how the stream is presented.¹

What about Video Conferencing?

For smaller groups or for more interaction, video conferencing platforms such as Zoom, Skype, Facebook Rooms, or Google Meet offer another option. Zoom, the most popular service, offers a free account for hosting meetings of up to one hundred participants and forty minutes duration, with paid plans (\$15 and \$20 per month) allowing more participants and offering more features. Whether free or paid, most video conferencing platforms offer features such as screen sharing, chat, and whiteboard. Unlike livestreaming formats, video conferencing allows persons without computer access to dial in. However, a video conference is not public like Facebook or YouTube, which can be discovered by social media users who are not already church members. In contrast, an email invitation with a link is required to participate in a video conference worship service, though a Zoom or other video conference can be configured to be pushed to Facebook or YouTube.

Here to Stay

According to a recent survey, the average consumer watches about ninety minutes of online video content per day. Eighty percent would rather watch a live-stream video about a business or organization than read a blog or social media post. They feel it's more engaging to watch something live than pre-recorded.² This data may motivate church leaders to go deeper, learn more, and livestream more events as opportunities permit.

Resources

"How to Live Stream A Sunday Service," PTZOptics, video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=vRFhC3jFyZ8>
"How To Live Stream Video: A Beginner's Survival Guide," Ephemera Video, <https://www.ephemera.com/blog/how-to-live-stream-for-beginners/>
"Live Streaming Setup For Small Churches," Jake Gosselin, video, <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9TKsLQYagYA&t=39s>
Paul William Richards, *Helping Your Church Live Stream*, Self-published. Available in hard copy on Amazon or as a free PDF download at <https://ptzoptics.com/church-book/Technologies for Worship> magazine, Special Edition, Streaming Handbook, <http://online.tfwm.com/>

1. For a comparison of streaming platforms, see "7 Best Platforms to Live Stream Your Church Service in 2020," Dacast, <https://www.dacast.com/blog/7-best-live-streaming-services-for-your-church/>

2. Amir Shahzeidi, "Top Ten Online Video Trends to Leverage in 2020 [Infographic]," January 2, 2020, *Digital Doughnut*, <https://www.digitaldoughnut.com/articles/2019/december/top-10-online-video-trends-to-leverage-in-2020>.

HOW TO FOSTER DEEP LISTENING AMID POLITICAL DIFFERENCE

Honest conversation about all matters, even politics, must be part and parcel of a Christian response to daily life, say Sarah Stewart Holland and Beth Silvers. Holland and Silvers came to this view after extensive dialogue over their own differing political views. Holland, a liberal, and Silvers, a conservative, knew each other as sorority sisters at Transylvania University in Kentucky, and later began having Facebook discussions after the 2016 presidential election. They now co-host a podcast called “Pantsuit Politics” in which they hold “grace-filled” discussions about politics, democracy, and values they hold dear.¹

What Can Churches Do?

Yet churches in our time confront a dilemma not faced by many previous generations: the divided nature of American culture. It affects how congregations order their life in worship, fellowship, study, and community outreach. Though church and state remain separate in American society, what happens in our divided society spills over into church life. How can churches and church leaders navigate the tricky waters of political difference without harming relationships in the process?

Hold a deliberative forum to explore options for churches engaging a divided society. Deliberation is a style of conversation that considers issues in depth in a group setting, employing careful listening to others for better understanding. “The Church’s Role in a Divided Society,” a guide developed by church leaders and the Kettering Foundation, outlines three options for churches with regard to political differences: 1) “the church as refuge,” which asserts that churches should focus more on spirituality and faith than social issues, 2) “the church as mediator,” which asserts that the church should actively engage the differences that people bring in order to gain a better understanding, and 3) “the church as prophetic

voice,” which holds that the church only lives out its mission by becoming an agent of change to improve society. Convene a group of church members to carefully explore the benefits and drawbacks of each option. The goal is not to change minds but to explore the value commitments of congregants in a way that deepens understanding.²

What if it is not possible to convene in person? One model developed by Kettering is centered around texting and online polling to forge consensus around difficult public issues. In this model, called Common Ground for Action, a moderator with a computer convenes a group in widely dispersed locations to deliberate through texting. Participants, anonymous to each other, exchange opinions throughout the event, and the moderator conducts online surveys before, during, and after the meeting, displaying results in graphic form in real time. More recently, Kettering has responded to the COVID-19 pandemic by



“AT THIS CHURCH, WE FOCUS ON SPIRITUALITY
RATHER THAN SOCIAL ISSUES...SO, LET’S PRAY
THAT GOD WOULD HEAL YOUR OBVIOUS CONFUSION
ABOUT EQUAL RIGHTS, IMMIGRATION,
AND GLOBAL WARMING.”

offering Zoom versions of the in-person deliberative forum, using texting and surveys for participants to state opinions about a topic and using Zoom to talk through the issues.³

Preach about a pressing social issue, invite small groups to explore the issue further, and then give a sermon in response to the dialogue. This “sermon-dialogue-sermon” model offers a “dialogical lens” for preaching and Scripture interpretation. The pastor begins by introducing an issue in the first sermon and, instead of taking a stand, explores the issue in its complexity, considering a wide range of voices. Later, small groups of diverse individuals engage the issue in more depth, brainstorming three approaches to the issue and then weighing the pros and cons of those approaches. The final sermon offers a “communal prophetic proclamation” that expresses the different perspectives that were explored in the group, the shared values that it revealed, and possible next steps the group could take to move forward on the issue.⁴ If it’s not possible to meet in person, hold discussions after the worship service via Zoom, using a feature called “Breakout Rooms” to break one large group into subgroups of three or four persons.

Offer the online course, *Make Me an Instrument of Your Peace: Guide to Civil Discourse for Groups*. This resource, released in 2020 by The Episcopal Church’s Office of Government Relations and its Department of Faith Formation, is available online for free. (The course is also available for individuals.) The five-part curriculum covers: civil discourse in context, tenets for civil discourse, values-based conversations, the complexities of policy, and sacred space for debate. The purpose of the course is to help anyone engage with others who hold a different view in a dialogue about the values that underlie these opinions. Each part utilizes three to six video lectures that are from five to seven minutes in length and are designed to support a fifty-minute class session.⁵

A Spiritual Imperative

The desire to assemble and debate are not only central to the American experience, they are integral to the Christian faith as well. As Holland and Silvers acknowledge, “love of the neighbor” implies not demonizing them, whether over tax policy or reproductive rights, and “turning the other cheek” implies

not using the community of likeminded individuals as a base to launch attacks on those who disagree. Likewise, being “the hands and feet of a loving creator” means not opting out of issues like roads and bridges, school curriculum, or war and peace. Agreement over how to structure community life cannot be had without conversation. In Holland and Silvers’ words, “Learning to have healthy conflict with each other over political challenges is of utmost importance; in fact, it is a spiritual imperative.”⁶

Other Resources

Judy Apps. 2019. *The Art of Conversation: Change Your Life with Confident Communication*. West Sussex, UK: Capstone.

The Listen First Project seeks to bridge social divisions “one conversation at a time” by partnering with a variety of businesses, schools, and other organizations to sponsor conversations that teach better listening. <http://www.listenfirstproject.org/>

Better Angels works to reduce polarization between conservative and liberal Americans and build alliances through Red/Blue workshops and ongoing partnerships between workshop graduates. <https://www.better-angels.org/>

Amanda Ripley, “The Least Politically Prejudiced Place in America,” *The Atlantic*, March 4, 2019, describes the upstate New York city of Watertown, centering on a longtime friendship between two Presbyterian women with differing political views. <https://www.theatlantic.com/politics/archive/2019/03/watertown-new-york-tops-scale-political-tolerance/582106/>

1. Sarah Stewart Holland and Beth Silvers, *I Think You’re Wrong (But I’m Listening): A Guide to Grace-Filled Political Conversations* (Nashville, TN: Thomas Nelson, 2019).

2. Resources available at Baylor University Public Deliberation Initiative, <https://www.baylor.edu/pdi/index.php?id=966987>.

3. “CGA and Zoom Technologies: Deliberation in the Era of COVID-19,” Maura Casey, June 6, 2020, Kettering Foundation, <https://www.kettering.org/blogs/cga-and-zoom>.

4. Leah D. Schade, *Preaching in the Purple Zone: Ministry in the Red-Blue Divide* (Lanham, MD: Rowman and Littlefield, 2019).

5. <https://www.churchnext.tv/library/instruments-of-peace-a-guide-to-civil-discourse/109671/about/>.

6. Holland and Silvers, 2-6.



With gratitude we thank all those who planned, helped , and participated in the 2020 Synod Assembly. We especially thank ...

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Kurt Hier
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Pastor Keri Lankford
Pastor Leonard Killings
Kevin Kampfer
Jane Koch
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