



## NW Washington Synod Gatherings Equip the Saints for the work of ministry

Saturday, May 13 at Salem Lutheran Church, Mount Vernon  
Saturday, May 20 at Saint Andrew's Lutheran Church, Bellevue  
8:30am – 3:30pm each Saturday

Worship, fellowship, conversations, learning & lunch  
\$40 / person

Congregations will decide if they are registering their church members as a group or inviting folks to register individually.

Online Registration will be open: April 10 – May 1 – find link on our [Synod Website](#)

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## Forum Titles, Facilitators & Descriptions

### Accompanying Our Neighbors without Stable Homes

**Presenters:** Rev. Kristy Daniels (Church of Steadfast Love and Compass Housing Alliance); Rev. Verlon Brown (Central/Seattle, formerly with REACH working on the streets of Seattle with those struggling with alcoholism); and Rev. Paul Benz (Street Minister with Operation Nightwatch and Harborview Medical Center Chaplain)

**Description:** Live + Love + Advocate. We will share information and lead a discussion on recognizing, accompanying, and advocating for our neighbors who are experiencing homelessness or housing insecurity. **Session: #2 both Saturdays**

### Best Financial Practices

**Presenters:** Bart Brosten, NWWA Synod Treasurer

**Description:** This interactive forum is geared toward congregational treasurers, financial secretaries, and others who work with church finances. It will be led by Synod Treasurer, Bart Brosten, and a panel of church financial volunteers who have been or are currently participating in their churches' budgeting and financial oversight. Outcomes will be a summary description of best financial practices, as well as making networking connections for church financial types to know and support one another. **Session: #3 both Saturdays**

### Building Partnerships, Community, and Collaboration

**Presenter:** Bishop Shelley Bryan Wee

**Description:** Have you heard someone in your congregation (or yourself) say, "We would love to do this new thing, if only we had the money or resources." Or "We are energized to do this project, if we only had help." Or "We want to know what the needs of the community are and how we can help." During our time in this forum, we will learn about developing partnerships, collaborating with other entities, and furthering connections in our communities. Come with your ideas, too! This will be a time of exploration together. **Session #3 both Saturdays**

### Changing Currents of Faith Formation

**Presenter:** Rev. Dr. David Hahn (Director of Formation & Learning, NWWA Synod)

**Description:** We are noticing that leaders are faithfully struggling to make sense of what it means to be church in today's rapidly changing world. We spend time and energy experimenting with new methods of being the church while only applying them to outdated imaginations more rooted to expectations of past models for success than the realistic challenges of our time. Without understanding the changing currents of faith formation, how faith and belief itself has become effected by the current cultural backdrop, we will only continue to spin our wheels in perpetual motion like a one-winged duck, and without any directional sense that resembles faith in Christ. Come and explore this shift, why this work seems so strange for us in today's pluralistic context, and what kinds of things we might begin to do to mitigate our headaches, and to replace them with practices of trust and hope. **Session: # 3 both Saturdays**

### Coach Northwest Story Sharing

**Presenters:** Rev. Cara Tanis (Coach NW Coach Coordinator) and Kasey Shultz (Coach NW Administrative Assistant)

**Description:** Come learn about coaching in our synod—what it is and what it can look like in practice. Coaching is an intentional relationship in which the trained coach uses powerful questions, strategic listening, and accountability to

uncover and utilize your strengths and insights to accomplish your goals. During this session, coaches will share stories from a wide variety of coaching scenarios—from coaching for retirement to coaching an entire congregation. Come with your questions and curiosities! Whether you are a rostered minister or lay leader, come learn how coaching can be tailored to you and your goals. **Session: # 1 both Saturdays**

### **Conflict is Normal**

**Presenter:** Pastor Laurin Vance, Executive Director of Consultation to Clergy

**Description:** Conflict is normal – and so is assistance with conflict! During this forum learn about mediation as a way through conflict to resolution. Pastor Vance will share how congregations can seek assistance during times of conflict and an overview of the mediation process. Bring your questions. **Session #1 both Saturdays**

### **Congregational Constitutions**

**Presenters:** Rev. Tor Berg (First, Bothell) and Rev. Chris Boerger (former NWWA Synod Bishop and ELCA Secretary, currently serving as transition pastor in Southwestern WA Synod)

**Description:** During our time we will explore each section of the ELCA Model Constitution for Congregations - its philosophy and how it guides who we are, what we are about, and how we function. Bring your questions!

**Session #1 both Saturdays**

### **Engaging Younger Generations**

**Presenters:** Rev. Chelsea Globe (Pastor of Lutheran Campus Ministry at the University of Washington in Seattle) and Becky Cole (Director of Children & Family Ministry & Preschool at Holy Spirit, Kirkland)

**Description:** Looking to add more young people to your congregation? Using the research of Fuller Youth Institute's "Growing Young" study, we will learn key concepts and behaviors that are found in congregations who actively engage youth and young people. We will explore the "6 Core Commitments" that these types of congregations display and learn how to implement them in our own contexts. Any congregation can be successful in ministry with young people, no matter the size, age, demographics, and location. **May 13 - session #2; | May 20 – session #1**

### **Faith and the Environment**

**Presenters:** Rev. AC Churchill (Executive Director of Earth Ministry/Washington Interfaith Power and Light) and Keah Calluccie (Multifaith Program Manager of (Earth Ministry/Washington Interfaith Power and Light)

**Description:** As people of faith, we are invited to be good stewards of creation, to take care of the great gift that the Divine has created, and to care for our neighbors. Earth Ministry/Washington Interfaith Power and Light staff will help participants identify and articulate spiritual values that collectively ground us in our call to be co-Creators with God, the Earth, and it's inhabitants. This introductory workshop will also provide concrete steps for putting those values into action for the environment and equip participants to take recommendations and resources back to their own houses of worship.

**Session #3 Saturday, May 20 only**

### **Faithful Foundations for Becoming an Anti-Racist Church**

**Presenters:** Rev. Priscilla Austin (Immanuel, Seattle) and Rev. Dr. David Hahn (Dir. of Formation & Learning, NWWA Synod)

**Description:** Anti-racism work in the life of a Christ-centered community isn't an option in today's world if we are to truly bear witness to the life of Jesus. To reduce it to some progressive political agenda misses the mark of being an integrated, and faithful movement of the Spirit for any Jesus-following community. We invite you to explore with us how we see anti-racism as a ministry of intersectionality between faith and life, and as a baptismal extension of our faithful witness to Jesus Christ. Come explore with us what possible next steps to consider for you and your community of faith.

**May 13 – session #1 | May 20 – session # 2**

### **Got Burnout? Discover the Science and Practice of Compassion**

**Presenter:** Rev. Mia Baumgartner (Manager of Spiritual Care & Wellbeing, University of Washington Medical Center)

**Description:** The lack of self-compassion is one of the biggest predictors of burnout. The call to love our neighbor is strong in our faith. However, offering ourselves compassion is often a challenge. Come and learn how to reduce stress, increase well-being, and mitigate burnout by deepening your understanding of the science and practice of compassion.

**Session: # 2 both Saturdays**

## **How Will YOU Bend the Arc Toward Justice?**

**Presenters:** Elise DeGooyer (Executive Director at Faith Action Network) and Elizabeth Dickinson (Partnership Coordinator at Faith Action Network & Social Justice Coordinator at Our Redeemer's, Seattle)

**Description:** Are you discerning how to be involved in work for justice and public witness? Join a conversation with others about what energizes you. Share stories about what you and/or your congregations are already doing to make a difference. Hear how to amplify your efforts by joining with other faith traditions that are part of Faith Action Network (FAN). FAN staff will share stories what we've accomplished together. Beginners and seasoned advocates all welcome. Our collective faith voices are needed now more than ever! **Session: #3 both Saturdays**

## **Living Legacy**

**Presenter:** Rev. Herb Shao (Director of Evangelical Mission in NW Washington Synod) and Legacy Team Members

**Description:** Perhaps you have heard that several of our synod congregations have had holy conversations and have made the decision to merge or close. The Synod has a Living Legacy team is ready to come alongside our congregations to listen, discern, and offer our support. Join this forum to learn about the NWWA Synod Living Legacy resources including church closure, archiving church records, and the legacy of a church beyond its closure. **Session #1 both Saturdays**

## **Lutheran Disaster Response**

**Presenter:** Ray Shjerven (Retired Fire Captain and current Treasurer of Washington Volunteers Active in Disasters - affiliation of Washington state religious organizations responsive to disasters)

**Description:** This presentation will explore the past, present, and future of Lutheran Disaster Response (LDR). Many are familiar with LDR's work on behalf of those impacted by earthquake, landslide, and flooding. Climate change has affected the increase and the severity of disasters in North America and the world. In response, LDR is redefining their mission. LDR continues to provide relief in the wake of disaster, but they are also turning their attention to working for resilient communities. This bifurcation of missions is leading LDR in new opportunities to react and to prepare communities for natural and man-made disasters. You will come away from this session knowing a host of new acronyms, as we partner with ecumenical and secular organizations toward a common mission. **Session: #3 May 20 only**

## **Reconciling in Christ - What it is and what comes AFTER your community becomes RIC**

**Presenters:** Deacon Liz Colver (Transition Minister, Board Chair of ReconcilingWorks) and David Horton (Director of Music at Trinity/Lynnwood and ReconcilingWorks Intern)

**Description:** This forum will review what it means to become a Reconciling in Christ (RIC) community, and then dive more deeply into the answer to the question "so NOW what?!" It's imperative that we listen and respond to the diverse needs of all those we seek to welcome. As communities that declare an inclusive welcome to LGBTQIA+ siblings, we will consider the next steps beyond a welcome statement and rainbow flag. As youth are more and more aware of gender diversity and expansiveness, how do ministries with youth programs handle overnight trips? What are neo pronouns and how do we practice using new words? If everyone knows everyone else, why are nametags with pronouns important? What about bathrooms? You are invited to bring all these questions, wonderings, and more to the brave space of this forum!

**Session: #2 both Saturdays**

## **Relating with Our Indigenous Neighbors**

**Presenters:** Rev. Charis Weathers (Burlington Lutheran Church) and Rev. Terry Kylo (Executive Director of Paths to Understanding)

**Description:** Every church in our synod is on land that was and is inhabited by Indigenous tribes, and yet most churches do not have any relationship with their Indigenous neighbors. *Why* is it important to be in relationship? What has hindered relationship? What does a congregation need to know before making connection, and how might relationship happen? These questions and more will be addressed through personal experience, video, and Q&A. **Session: #1 both Saturdays**

## **Taking Care of Business: Make Running Meetings Your Superpower**

**Presenters:** Kay Edgerton (Synod Vice President) and Rev. Chris Boerger (former NWWA Synod Bishop and ELCA Secretary, currently serving as transition pastor in Southwestern WA Synod)

**Description:** During our time together, we will learn the ins and outs of chairing effective council meetings. Topics to be covered include: Creating an effective agenda; Making parliamentary procedure work for you; Consensus building; Encouraging strong attendance and participation in meetings; Delegation and strong follow through on commitments. Our goal is to give you the tools to make your council effective, efficient, and empowered! **Sessions: #2 both Saturdays**

## **Underground Ministries: Local Resurrection and Reentry Communities**

**Presenters:** Chris Hoke (Founder and Executive Director of Underground Ministries) and Alvin Shim (Director of Operations, Underground Ministries)

**Description:** There are roughly the same amount of incarcerated people as there are churches in Washington State. Every church has exactly what just one person needs as they prepare to exit prison: trusting friendship, pre-release housing searches, rides to appointments, job connections, community. Without a goal to fix or solve or convert each other, One Parish One Prisoner teams gather instead to approach the tombs of the underground: mass incarceration, addiction, trauma, neglect, violence, isolation, fear, and shame—together, in their own neighborhoods. What does new life look like? One Parish One Prisoner teams are equipped monthly to write letters, explore these conversations together, to make room in their community, and take on this journey of trust and embrace. We have 40 paired teams in Washington State, six Lutheran churches, and we need approximately 60 more churches to practice this resurrection with a new friend experiencing incarceration. You are needed – come learn how you can help. **Session #3 both Saturdays**

## **What Future are You Practicing For? Embodying Communities of Trust via Applied Improvisation**

**Presenter:** David Westerlund (David Westerlund Consulting and Coaching)

**Description:** Our volatile, uncertain, complex, and ambiguous world is in need of communities of trust and belonging. How might the church cultivate the human skills of listening, empathy, and collaboration? We need a way to embody these skills and promote the well-being of ourselves, our churches, our communities, and societies. Applied Improvisation gives us this gift by giving us permission to play, unlocking potential in us to collaborate with wonder, joy, creativity, and possibility! Our highly-interactive, deeply reflective, and fun/joy-filled workshop will leave you feeling more deeply connected and give you simple yet potent games and exercises for you practice and play to create communities of support, belonging, and liberation! **Session #2 May 20 only**

**Sacred Spaces Series** You may select to attend 1, 2 or all 3 of these offerings:

### **Sacred Spaces – Creative Church**

**Presenters:** Pastor Emma Donohew and Julie Jesmer (Echoes/Bellingham)

**Description:** Creative Church is a worship experience (yes it counts as church!) Grounded in the theology that you are a wonderfully created being, there should be frequent opportunities to reflect the Creator by being creative. Creative Church is not about a perceived outcome or project, but rather the imaginative process. How can we utilize materials we already have to deepen our visual spiritual practices? How can we invite the sacred and God into this process together? Come learn practical tips on how to create, cultivate and sustain a Creative Church gathering in your context!

**Session: #1 both Saturdays**

### **Sacred Spaces – Wild Church**

**Presenters:** Rev. Cindy Myatt (North Cascades Wild Church/Marblemount) and Deacon Dianne Johnson (Director for Evangelical Mission, NWWA Synod)

**Description:** Come experience the wild @ Wild Church. Imagine experiencing the divine beyond the very walls of your sanctuary. Wild Church seeks to restore awareness, to renew our understanding that the natural world is sacred. Many of us are being called to reconnect to the earth, to find the divine within nature. This is more than just a spiritual practice, it is an action! It is learning who we are, how we interconnect to our community and to the world around us. Come learn about the wonders of Wild Church Wild Church and celebrate YOUR wild imagination! (Please dress for being outside!)

**Session: #2 both Saturdays**

### **Sacred Spaces – Group Coaching: Cultivating Sacred Space**

**Presenters:** Rev. Cara Tanis (Emmaus Table at 7400 Woodlawn) and Rev. Erik Samuelson (Transition Pastor and Coach)

**Description:** Do you have a hunch that you might be called to cultivate a Sacred Space experiment? How do you figure out what that might look like? Where would you start? What if you aren't feeling called to cultivate an experiment, but would like to see this happen in your congregation? How might you create the space and identify the leaders who might lead one? What might be the roadblocks? What kind of support might you need? This guided conversation will provide a time and space to reflect and plan how to encourage and support organic faith experiments in your context.

**Session #3 both Saturdays**