

LEARNING MINISTRY DAY 2021 – SESSION DESCRIPTIONS

A. Covid 19: Biblical and Theological Perspective (Session 1 only) Maximum 12 participants

The pandemic is a particularly stubborn evil that has caused theologians to study hard and think carefully. This workshop will highlight the differences among perspectives on the pandemic as well as some surprising points of agreement.

Presenters: **The Rev. Dr. Roger E. Timm** is a retired ELCA pastor. Ordained in April 1971, he has served in both parishes and campus ministry settings. During the 1980's Timm was assistant chaplain and assistant professor of religion at Muhlenberg College. Since then he has served on the Faith Formation Resources Ministry Team and has led several Learning Ministry Day workshops.

Pastor Scott Paradise is a Minister of Word and Sacrament on the roster of the Lower Susquehanna Synod (i.e., the Harrisburg area). He is currently the pastor of Millcreek Lutheran Church in rural Newmanstown, Lebanon County but has served congregations in urban, suburban, and small-town contexts over twenty-one years of ministry. He enjoys learning and teaching all ages as a way of inviting the faithful to "Live as children of light." (Ephesians 5:8b).

B. Teaching "The Greatest Story" (Session 2 only) Maximum 20 participants

One of the effects of the pandemic has been a sharp rise of interest in adult bible studies. Many of these adults might know little or nothing about the Bible, so starting with "The Greatest Story" can be a great place to begin. "The Greatest Story" is a bible study about - The Bible! This study gives an overview of every book of the Bible, listing major stories in each book, who are the people you will meet, when the book was written and what the major themes are throughout the entire Bible. This is a thorough, easily understood and extremely informative work. Participants will be able to look at the material and learn various techniques that teachers can use. This is a study that can help adults finally learn what the Bible is really all about.

Presenter: **Cheryl Statham** is a member of the Faith Formation Resource Ministry Team and a member at Trinity, Bangor. She has been teaching classes for both children and adults for more than 20 years. In her private life, she enjoys gardening, cooking, reading and is also learning archery, which is a long-held desire.

C. Adult Bible Study Resources (Session 3 only) Maximum 20 participants

The call for more Adult Bible Study Resources in the church continues as the pandemic rages on. Zoom learning has taken place of in-person bible studies. So, what resources can work for adult learning both for now and post-pandemic? Participants will be able to experience various types of adult resources, including the "Making Sense Of..." series and the Small and Large Catechisms.

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D. Unique Ways to “Teach Outside-of-the-Box” (Session 1 or 3 – select one) Maximum 20 participants

Come discover various creative ministry ideas for children, youth and adults. This workshop will explore “unique” ideas to enhance teach efforts for all ages. Ample time will be allowed for discussion and sharing of participants’ ideas.

Presenters: **Samantha (Sammi) Johns** is recent Moravian College grad with a BA in Educational Advocacy. She been active in her church serving on many committees including, Worship and Music, Christian Ed, Call Committees, Library Committee, Social Media Committee, Youth Ministries, & Special Needs Ministry. She also serves on two Synod committees; Youth, Young Adult and Family Ministry Team and Faith Formation Ministry Team. Over the summers of 2018 and 2019 she served at Bear Creek Camp as their Daycamp Leader. Sammi has been a workshop leader since she been 17 years old and even though she’s young, she has a passion for serving the Lord and doing his work.

Marlene Werkheiser is currently serving as Pastoral Care Provider for St. Paul Lutheran Church, Fountain Hill. She has been a Director of Christian Education/Youth at three Lutheran churches and has served on the Synod’s Faith Formation Resource Ministry Team for many years. She holds a BA from DeSales University in Liberal Arts (Spiritual & Secular Management) and is attending Crossroads Lay Leadership Program at Moravian Seminary.

E. Finding Sunday School Resources on the Web (Session 1 only) Maximum 25 participants

Life has changed for everyone this year, and that includes the church. Sunday School leaders are trying to re-imagine how to hold classes safely but in a way that is still meaningful and educational. This workshop will teach participants how to search for free resources, and they will have an opportunity to tour some key sites. Sites will include Sparkhouse, Group and Children’s Ministry, as well as other sites that have Bible videos, worksheets and puzzles.

Presenters: **Pastor Maritza Torres Dolich** is the Outreach Pastor of Christ, Allentown. She obtained her Bachelors of Science in Food & Nutrition from Drexel University, Philadelphia, in 1983. Between 1983 through 1998 she worked in the food service/hospitality industry. In the fall of 1998, after prayerful consideration, Pastor Maritza began her studies at the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia where she graduated with a Master’s in Divinity in May of 2002. In the summer of 2004, she was ordained by the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America to the ministry of Word and Sacrament and called by St Stephen Evangelical Lutheran Church in Allentown PA as their sole pastor and spiritual leader. In 2012 St. Stephen merged with Christ Lutheran Church. The St. Stephen’s building was kept as the outreach center in the Franklin Park Playground area. Rev. Maritza was called to be the Pastor of Outreach and executive director of St. Stephen’s Outreach Center of Christ Lutheran Church.

Scherelene Schatz served as the Director of Christian Education at St. Stephan Lutheran Church in Allentown from 1987 - 2002. She also served as a librarian at Muhlenberg College and the New Jersey State Library where she learned to search for resources of all types. She is now retired and doing this for fun.

F. Putting the “Spirit” Back In Spiritual Gifts (Session 2 or 3 – select one) Maximum 20 participants

Close your eyes and dream for a moment. If you had limitless time and resources, and could start a new ministry or devote time to an existing one, what would it be? Bring your dreams and visions as we discover and re-discover the what, why and how of the unique gifts God gives each of us for the sake of God’s beloved world.

Presenter: **Pastor Jenny Heavner** serves at Star of Bethlehem Lutheran in Bethlehem, PA. She holds a Master of Divinity and a Master of Sacred Theology (Pastoral Care and Missional Theology) from Lutheran Theological Southern Seminary in Columbia, SC.

G. Creative Ways to Serve Our Community Through Thrivent Action Teams (Session 1 only) Maximum 20 participants

Thrivent Action Teams are volunteer service projects, education events or fundraisers designed to make an impact in our local communities. Whether through virtual volunteer activities, or drive thru or in-person events, Thrivent Action Teams can engage your congregation and magnify your church outreach.

Presenter: **Carolyn Schnizler Wilt** is an Engagement Leader for Thrivent serving Eastern Pennsylvania. She lives in Exeter Township in southeastern Berks County, and she loves bringing Thrivent’s mission– helping Christians make the most of all they have been given – to life through Thrivent’s financial education and generosity programs.

H. Fundraising Ideas for Congregations (Session 2 only) Maximum 20 participants

Get creative with fundraising through a mixture of traditional and new fundraising ideas to foster church and community engagement while raising money for your cause. Keep in mind that telling the “why” story behind your fundraiser can be just as important as your event logistics!

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J. Ministering to Non Tech Members as COVID 19 Continues (Session 1 only) Maximum 20 participants

How can we stay connected to members who do not have computers, iPads, or smartphones during this time of the pandemic? What will help them continue to feel part of our church family?

Presenter: **The Rev Grace Olson** is a pastor who, since her retirement, has served 8 congregations as their Interim or Transitional pastor. She is presently the Transitional Pastor at Redeemer, Allentown.

K. Worship through Video - Bringing Faith to the People (Session 1, 2 & 3 – select one) Maximum 20 participants

The pandemic made God’s people, the church, realize we had to find a way to provide God’s word to our congregations (and any seeking the Good News) in a safe and easy-to-access way. Join Trinity Hecktown’s Pastor Jennifer Hall and videographer Kristian Golick as they talk about their congregation’s transition to online worship using video, as well as demonstrate some helpful tips on recording and live streaming. This workshop will be helpful for both those starting from scratch, and those who have made an investment into dedicated video equipment.

Presenters: **Kristian Golick** is a professional video content producer based out of Nazareth, PA. After working in television advertising, he started his own business in the wedding industry. Being a wedding videographer gave him an incredibly valuable skill – being able to create a video that meets a bride's high expectations, while only getting one chance to capture a moment on the wedding day. Now, Kristian uses that focused skill in his current work – creating entrepreneurial videos for small businesses by pinpointing exactly what they need in their video to reach potential customer, and improve their prospects for long-term growth. When the pandemic began and churches cancelled in-person worship services, Kristian and the staff at Trinity Hecktown were faced with the challenge of providing the Word through live and pre-recorded videos.

Pastor Jennifer Hall began serving as Transitional Pastor at Trinity, Hecktown on March 19, 2020. After graduating from Luther Seminary in St. Paul, MN, in 2004, Pastor Jennifer served as a pastor for 12 years in both the Austin and Houston areas of Texas. In 2016 she was called to serve in the Pittsburgh, PA area and then moved to the Lehigh Valley in 2019 after marrying Pastor Scott Hall (St. John's Lutheran Church, Nazareth).

L. The Coronavirus Pandemic and Issues of Ethics and Justice (Session 2 only)

Maximum 12 participants

We will discuss issues of ethics and justice that have arisen as we have dealt with the COVID-19 pandemic. Our presentation will be guided in part by the ELCA's Social Statement on Health and Health Care, "Caring for Health: Our Shared Endeavor."

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M. Follow-Up With the Keynoter (Session 2 only) Maximum 20 participants

This workshop will serve as a follow-up to the keynote speech, allowing participants to have a time of informal conversation with Dr. Rossing.

N. Church Music in the Covid-19 World (Session 3 only) Maximum 20 participants

Music is a unifying element when our very definition of worshipping together has to change during a pandemic. During this workshop we will discuss ideas on how to facilitate participation among all ages through safe distancing, home recording, use of apps, multiple modes of music-making, and continuous outreach in the community by collaborating with other music teachers and congregations.

Presenter: **Kimberly Ayrton** is a Minister of Music at Maiden Creek Church and Piano teacher in Blandon. She has her Bachelor of Arts in Music Performance and Two Master's degrees in Theological Studies. Her husband, Jamie, is instrumental in the technical aspect of the Music program at church. Her two children, Sophia and Joseph, serve as talented, albeit rambunctious participants.

P. On-Line Confirmation Ministry (Session 1 or 2 – select one) Maximum 20 participants

We will share some ideas and experiences that we have found to be successful in our attempts at online confirmation ministry including ways to encourage the kids to come to class (games), sharing videos, biblical and catechetical material, and discussion tricks like playing Jeopardy.

Presenters: **Deacon Joy Gerhart** and **Pastor Greg Frey** from St. Paul's Lutheran Church in Douglassville. Joy has served St. Paul's for 3 ½ years as Director of Youth and Family Ministry and helps coordinate the parish's confirmation program and teaches the 10th grade fall class. She is a member of the FFRMT, and yes, she is departing from leading crafts this year. Pastor Frey has served St. Paul's for 20 years and was a former chair of the FFRMT. He has taught Lutheran Basics and other workshops for synod events.

Q. "Death Do Us Part?" - Grief, Resurrection, and Our Relations (Session 2 or 3 – select one) Maximum 20 participants

When people come to pastors in times of grief, they long to know what heaven might be like, especially concerning the nature of our relationships. Wedding vows for centuries have included the line: "Til death do us part" - and lifelong partners feel their faith challenged by the seeming disregard of a commitment they cherish and are not ready to sever forever. What does scripture say? What can we discern from the promises found there? Enter into this study, bringing your own wonders, and wonderings.

Presenter: **Rev. Christopher deForest** is the Bishop-Elect of the Northeastern Pennsylvania Synod of the ELCA.

R. YoYoFa is Awesome! (Session 2) Unlimited participants

By now you may have heard the phrase "YoYoFa" floating around our synod. But what does it mean? YoYoFa is what we affectionately call our Youth, Young Adult, and Family Ministries Team in NEPA Synod. The team plans opportunities for youth, young adults, and families, maintains a connection to the National ELCA Youth Ministry Network and Young Adult Ministries, and connects youth leaders across our synod on a regular basis. Get to know and join the Co-Conveners, Pastor Becca Middeke-Conlin and Pastor Lauren Applegate as well as NEPA's Director of Youth, Young Adult, and Faith Formation Ministries, Sammy Kelly, in this session as they dive into the upcoming opportunities available to youth leaders of all types - lay, rostered, staff, volunteer. There will also be opportunity to share more about yourself, ask questions, and discover the best ways for you and your church to be involved with what YoYoFa is up to.

Presenters: **Pastor Becca Middeke-Conlin** (she/her/hers) is Pastor at St. Paul's in Easton, PA and Good Shepherd in Easton, PA and is Co-convener of the Youth, Young Adult, and Family Ministry Team. She also serves on the Synod's worship team and is the lead organizer of We Love.

Pastor Lauren Applegate (she/her/hers) is Pastor at New Life Church in New Tripoli, PA and Co-convener of the Youth, Young Adult, and Family Ministry Team.

Sammy Kelly (she/her/hers) is our Director of Youth, Young Adult, and Faith Formation Ministries where she serves alongside the Faith Formation Ministry team (the team that plans Learning Ministries Day) and the Youth, Young Adult, and Family Ministry Team. She is passionate about connecting leaders from all around the synod to share their gifts, learn from one another, and spread the Good News that God's love is for all people.

S. Growing Young in a Changing World (Session 3) Unlimited participants

If you are eager to make your church a more welcoming space for young people, this workshop is for you! Did you miss out on NEPA's Growing Young Virtual Summit? Were you thinking of attending the Growing Young book discussions, but not able to commit long-term? This is your chance to hear a complete overview of the principles of Growing Young, how they can work for your congregation, and what is next for Growing Young in NEPA synod. If you've already read Growing Young or attended the Summit, this will be repeat information for you. If you are totally new to Growing Young, this is for you!

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