

Ministry in a House Divided

Ohio Rostered Ministers Gathering

January 25-27, 2022

9am to Noon each day via Zoom

With political polarization at a high level in our nation and productive conversation at an all-time low, explore how rostered ministers can assist with and navigate divisiveness by drawing on our Christian values and strategies for dialogue.

Tuesday, January 25 – 9am to noon

Welcome, Opening Scripture & Prayer with Bp. Barbins

Keynote: “Ministry in House Divided: Finding the Purple Zone” with Leah Schade

Workshop: “Depolarizing Within – Part 1” with Beverly Horstman

Closing Prayer

Wednesday, January 26 – 9am to noon

Welcome, Opening Scripture & Prayer with Bp. Dillahunt

Workshop: “Depolarizing Within – Part 2” with Beverly Horstman

Tools for Bridging Divides in Your Congregation with Leah Schade & Beverly Horstman

Closing Prayer

Thursday, January 27 – 9am to noon

Welcome, Opening Scripture & Prayer with Bp. Beaudoin

Workshop: “Preaching Across the Divide: Strategies for Sermons in The Purple Zone” with Leah Schade

Sharing of Insights from Text Study / Q & A with Leah Schade

Closing Prayer

Synod Time

All sessions will take place via Zoom.

Registration fee is \$30 per person

(even if multiple people are on the Zoom connection)

The link to register and pay for the Rostered Ministers Gathering is below. To help us keep the event secure, only those who have completed and paid for their registration will receive a follow up email which will contain the Zoom invite link for the RMG. The e-mail address used for registration will be the e-mail the Zoom invite link is sent to so please double check you have entered your email correctly.

<https://tithe.ly/event-registration/#/4655064>

The Rev. Dr. Leah Schade



The Rev. Dr. Leah D. Schade is the Assistant Professor of Preaching and Worship at Lexington Theological Seminary in Lexington, Kentucky. An ordained minister in the Evangelical Lutheran Church in America for twenty years, Leah earned both her MDiv and PhD degrees from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia (now United Lutheran Seminary). She has pastored three Pennsylvania congregations in suburban, urban, and rural contexts and has been a community organizer and activist for environmental issues for nearly a decade. Leah has authored five books and is conducting a longitudinal research study about ministry, preaching, and social issues that has surveyed nearly 3,000 clergy and 1,000 laity since 2017. She is the EcoPreacher blogger for Patheos writing about religion, culture, politics, environmental justice and other social issues. She is also co-founder of the Clergy

Emergency League, a network of 2,500 pastors throughout the U.S. who provide support, accountability, resources, and networking for clergy to prophetically minister in their congregations and the public square in this time of political upheaval, social unrest, and partisan division.

KEYNOTE: Ministry in a House Divided: Finding the Purple Zone

Red state/blue state politics threaten the foundations of our democracy and tear the fabric of our churches. Congregations and church leaders need new perspectives and insights for navigating this difficult time. Rev. Dr. Leah Schade will offer an overview of “the purple zone” based her longitudinal research of nearly 3000 clergy and 1000 laity from 2017-2021. She will then introduce a new method for engaging issues of public concern called the “sermon-dialogue-sermon” process which enables congregations to find the values that bind them together and respond faithfully to God’s Word.

WORKSHOP: Preaching Across the Divide: Strategies for Sermons in The Purple Zone

The challenge of preaching across the red-blue divide in our churches is fraught with risks, but also offers opportunities for proclaiming the gospel and building community in profound and contextual ways. Informed by insights from her longitudinal research of nearly 3000 clergy and 1000 laity from 2017-2021, the Rev. Dr. Leah D. Schade will help you think strategically about your sermons in the midst of this fractured time. Based on her book *Preaching in the Purple Zone: Ministry in the Red-Blue Divide* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2019), Dr. Schade offers a way to approach preaching in this politically divisive climate using two tools she developed: a “dialogical lens” for interpreting scripture, and the “Five Paths for Prophetic Preaching.” Participants will workshop upcoming lectionary texts for preaching using these tools.

Braver Angels

Launched in 2016 – right here in Ohio – Braver Angels is a national citizens’ movement to bring liberals, conservatives, and others together at the grassroots level – not to find centrist compromise, but to find one another as citizens. Through workshops, debates, and campus engagement, Braver Angels helps Americans understand each other beyond stereotypes, form community alliances, and reduce the vitriol that poisons our civic culture. Braver Angels was inspired by the words of Abraham Lincoln, who not only called on Americans to summon the “better angels” (the original name of the organization) of our nature — but called on us to find the courage needed to pursue a more perfect union, “with malice toward none, with charity for all, with firmness in the right.”

Website: <https://braverangels.org/>



Beverly Horstman is the Ohio State Coordinator for Braver Angels and writes on their website: “I am so pleased you are interested in our organization which is working to depolarize our country. Ohio is proud to be a cornerstone in Braver Angels growth as an organization. The second Red / Blue workshop was held in Ohio in 2017 with the first Alliance Group founded from participants involved in this important event. We have an active and growing Braver Angels presence in Ohio including five Alliance Groups who meet and work together in their communities.”

Website: <https://braverangels.org/ohio/>

WORKSHOP: “Depolarizing Within”

The Depolarizing Within Workshop is designed to foster skills to help you lessen the effects of polarization when you encounter them in your political conversations. Note that by “polarization,” we are not referring to healthy disagreements over issues or philosophy. We are talking about how we regard and talk about large groups of ordinary people on the other side of the political aisle.

The goals of this workshop are to teach participants:

- How to be more aware of their own “inner polarizer”
- How to be critical without demonizing, dismissing or stereotyping large swaths of the population
- Strategies for intervening constructively in social conversations with like-minded peers when these conversations veer into contempt and ridicule for people who hold other political views.