

PREACHING PERSPECTIVES 2020

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Tuesday, Oct. 13, 10:00 a.m. – 3:00 p.m. Eastern

10:00 – 10:15 **Welcome, opening prayer, introductions**

10:15 – 11:00 **Leah Schade, Keynote #1 -- Ministry in a House Divided: Finding the Purple Zone**

Description: Red state/blue state politics threaten the foundations of our democracy and rend the fabric of our churches. Congregations and church leaders require new perspectives and insights for navigating this difficult time. Rev. Dr. Leah Schade will offer an overview of “the purple zone” based on her survey of 1200 mainline Protestant pastors. 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.

11:00 – 11:15 **Break**

11:15 – 11:45 **Leah Schade, Keynote #2: Uncovering Your Congregation’s “Theologies of Conflict”**

Description: Tensions and conflict are normal in the church but are sources of anxiety and dread for many congregations. We rarely discuss conflict from a theological perspective, but it’s important to understand the unspoken assumptions a congregation has about the relationship between God and our human disagreements and skirmishes. Is it possible to be in conflict and yet remain connected in the Body of Christ? How do we assess our congregation’s “theologies of conflict”? This session will help you to unearth our hidden beliefs about how God relates to us and our congregations in the midst of conflict so that you can equip your church to handle tensions in a healthier and growth-producing way.

11:45 – 12:00 **Break**

12:00 – 12:30 **Small groups: “Theologies of Conflict” Worksheet and discussion**

12:30 – 1:00 **Large group discussion**

1:00 – 1:15 **Break**

1:15 – 1:45 **Leah Schade, Keynote #3 -- Preaching Across the Divide: Strategies for Sermons in The Purple Zone**

Description: 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. This session 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 will offer a new way to approach preaching in this politically divisive climate using a “dialogical lens” for interpreting scripture. We will examine the upcoming lectionary texts (RCL) to see how God works in and through our complicated, messy, conflicted, and yet faithful conversations in order to bring about discernment, justice, healing, and reconciliation.

1:45 – 2:15 **Small groups: “Dialogical Lens” Worksheet and discussion**

2:15 – 2:30 **Break**

2:30 – 3:00 **Q&A with Leah Schade**