

Research Proposal for Wabash Institute: Pedagogies for Social Justice and Civic Engagement

Dialogue in the “Purple Zone”: Pedagogies for Civil Discourse in Online and On-site Settings

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Framing Questions and Project Goals

The purpose of this project is to explore the use of *deliberative dialogue* as a tool for facilitating difficult conversations and encouraging civic engagement in online, on-site, and congregational settings within theological education. This project will focus on teaching seminary students, clergy, and congregations how to use civil discourse to create a “purple zone” within the political red-blue divide. Deliberative dialogue is characterized by individuals' explicit engagement with multiple perspectives on an issue in a way that reflects consideration of and listening to others' views and demonstrates receptiveness to movement in one's own thinking. Utilized by the Kettering Foundation and National Issues Forum Institute (NIFI), deliberative dialogue is a method that enables citizens from diverse backgrounds and political orientations to constructively engage each other, support community-building, and strengthen the democratic process. In a deliberative dialogue, participants engage in respectful discourse to weigh pros and cons of three different approaches to an issue; discern together the common values they share in the midst of their different standpoints; and determine next steps for social action as a community. My colleagues and I at Lexington Theological Seminary (LTS) will consider the ways in which deliberative dialogue can be used in three learning settings: an on-site classroom, an online platform, and in the congregation. Our intent is to determine if deliberative dialogue is a viable method for bridging the divide between seminary study and public ministry that can also build capacity for civic engagement and social justice action in the church.

At LTS, our model for theological education combines a primarily online platform with a congregation-based model of teaching in which the local church is a fully integrated partner in the education of our ministry students. In other words, the congregation *is* the classroom. Therefore, one focus of this project will be to bring a cohort of clergy who are alumni of LTS and lay leaders from their congregations to our campus to teach them the process of deliberative dialogue to use in their congregations, and then to follow this cohort for a year to track the effectiveness of the technique. Simultaneously, we will be testing the use of deliberative dialogue in the online classroom. Additionally, we have created a year-long Continuing Education Certification program called “The Church, Community, and Conflict Management” in which faculty will be invited to employ techniques for teaching civil discourse and social engagement. This series of six courses will enable us to bring deliberative dialogue as well as other pedagogies of civil discourse into the classroom as students engage with issues that can cause divides in the church and society. Supported by this Wabash-funded program, our goal is to help build a pedagogical bridge between classroom study and public theology by enabling ministry students, practicing clergy, and congregations to host and facilitate difficult conversations around challenging social issues.

This project is guided by the following overarching questions:

- Is deliberative dialogue an effective pedagogical tool for facilitating difficult conversations about social issues in the seminary classroom and in our students' ministry contexts? What can we learn from testing deliberative dialogue as a pedagogical model for theological education that will challenge us to rethink our approaches to teaching in both online and face-to-face seminary courses?
- How might deliberative dialogue enable students to frame (or reframe) their understanding of the role of religion in the public square? How does this technique compare with other tools for teaching democratic discussion?

- What are the unique challenges and resistances that the use of deliberative dialogue might meet in the online classroom? Does distance-learning hinder discussion-based teaching and/or offer unique opportunities for student learning?
- If pastors and laity are taught the deliberative dialogue process for engaging in difficult conversations about social issues and then implement this process in their churches, will this lead to increased public engagement and social action on the part of their congregations?

These questions arise from our ongoing conversations at LTS about how we might deepen and expand our teaching techniques in concert with the pedagogical commitments of our institution to “prepare men and women for ministry in congregations through innovative instruction, flexible curriculum, congregational experience, and compassionate engagement with the needs of society.” Each of our students is required to be involved in an accountable ministry site throughout their degree program. In fact, our students are often the pastors of their congregational sites. The emphasis on congregational experience in our curriculum integrates classroom learning with the students’ ministries by including a congregational component in every course. For example, students in a New Testament course might teach a session on Paul’s Letter to the Romans in their church; pastoral care instructors might require their students to create a genogram of their congregations; students in preaching classes preach and record their sermons in their worship services for evaluation by the instructor and fellow students. This project of exploring deliberative dialogue for use in the classroom and congregation is a natural extension of our commitment to competency-based, developmental, and student-centered learning.

In light of the aforementioned methodology, LTS is particularly attentive to pressing social issues impacting the larger Church. Due to increasing divisiveness in churches and the expressed desire of our students, alumni, and their congregations to learn how to dialogue with each other about the important issues of our time, the pedagogical experiment for this project involves the joint training of clergy and lay leaders to equip them to lead and guide civil discourse in their congregations. This training event will include instruction that incorporates my research and scholarship in developing a homiletical model for incorporating deliberative dialogue in a process I call the “sermon-dialogue-sermon” method. My LTS full-time colleagues, Drs. Emily Askew and Jerry Sumney, will join me in observing, and evaluating the cohort of pastors and laity that we will bring to our campus to learn the deliberative dialogue process and how it can be applied in the congregation. We will also invite outside teacher-scholars from other institutions with expertise in the areas of homiletics, sociology, and civil discourse to expand our resources for teaching and assessment. These individuals (introduced below) are well-known and respected in their fields and will assist in the training of the cohort and in developing assessment tools to gauge the effectiveness of deliberative dialogue in the in-person and online settings, as well as in the congregation.

At the same time, we will engage in conversations about pedagogies of civil discourse with the faculty who will be teaching the online courses in our “Church, Community, and Conflict Management” certificate program. We will compare and contrast the use of deliberative dialogue with other tools for teaching civic engagement and social justice work in the online seminary classroom in order to assess its viability in an online setting.

This project, then, has three goals:

- **Goal I will implement deliberative dialogue in an on-site seminary classroom and assess its pedagogical effectiveness.** We will bring together a group of ten pastors who are LTS graduates and one lay leader from their congregation (a total of 20 people) to learn the sermon-dialogue-sermon method and deliberative dialogue. Testing deliberative dialogue with alumni will ensure that we have participants who graduated from our program who are in positions of pastoral leadership and able to implement the strategies over the 12-month duration of the project. LTS core faculty, along with invited colleagues from four other institutions, will participate in the teaching, assessment, and evaluation of this cohort in order to consider how deliberative dialogue might be utilized in other teaching areas and contexts within theological education.

- **Goal II will equip the clergy-laity pairs to implement the pedagogy of deliberative dialogue in their churches in order to increase their congregation’s capacity for civic engagement and social justice action.** We will accomplish this goal by training the clergy-laity cohort in the skills of facilitating deliberative dialogue. Over the course of the twelve months following this training, I and a colleague from the Kettering Foundation will mentor the pairs as they implement the process in their congregations and receive feedback from them on the use of deliberative dialogue in their churches. Involving both lay leaders and clergy in this project is an innovative approach to learning in that it brings the congregational experience into the classroom – and the classroom into the parish – in a very direct way.
- **Goal III will test deliberative dialogue against other discussion tools in an online classroom setting.** LTS core faculty and faculty in the certificate program will be invited to implement this pedagogy in their online courses. We can then explore the factors that affect the success of deliberative dialogue and other forms of civil discourse in that specific format. Tools such as asynchronous threaded discussion boards and synchronous real-time dialogues via videoconference will be used by instructors in the areas of ethics, pastoral care, biblical studies, Christian education/formation, and preaching. We will assess how factors such as teacher and student responsiveness, communication of respect via discussion boards and computer screens, and ways in which power dynamics and relationships are mediated online affect both teaching and learning. We will also contrast the capacity for “textual listening” in online discussion forums with auditory listening through video or in-person interactions.

This grant will enable us to engage in programming, research, and interdisciplinary study that goes beyond standard educational structure in several ways. First, we will be able to test the deliberative dialogue methodology that can serve both the church and the academy by preparing students to engage in productive civil discourse in the classroom and within their congregations. Second, the grant will provide funding to bring in colleagues beyond our institution who will join us in training the participants in the clergy-laity cohort and in designing assessment instruments for comparing the success of deliberative when used in face-to-face classrooms, online courses, and congregational settings. They will also offer mentoring and feedback to the director throughout the project’s duration. These colleagues are:

- **Rev. Gregg Kaufman**, a retired ELCA pastor, Kettering Foundation research associate, and expert in training facilitators in the process of deliberative dialogue. Rev. Kaufman will share with me the task of training the clergy-laity pairs in the deliberative dialogue process. He will also co-facilitate the online follow-up meetings with the clergy-laity pairs. Rev. Kaufman will be a key conversation partner to assess and evaluate the use of deliberative dialogue as it is applied in the on-campus training event, in online platforms, and in congregations.
- **Rev. Dr. Ron Allen** is the Professor of Preaching and New Testament at Christian Theological Seminary (retired). Dr. Allen is well published in the subject of conversational and collaborative preaching. He will join me in the clergy-laity training to observe and evaluate the deliberative dialogue process and to offer instruction on conversational preaching within the sermon-dialogue-sermon process. He will also offer input on the assessment instruments and engage in evaluative conversations about the pedagogical aspects of deliberative dialogue in the field of homiletics.
- **Rev. Dr. Katie Day** is the Charles A. Schieren Professor of Church and Society at United Lutheran Seminary whose research and teaching focuses on the intersection of faith and societal dynamics. Because of her work in conducting longitudinal studies of the long-term effects that social action and civic engagement have on church members and congregations, she will assist in developing tools for tracking the effectiveness deliberative dialogue within congregations. Dr. Day’s expertise will be sought in the overall structure of the project, the design of the assessment instruments, and evaluation of deliberative dialogue used in in-person, online, and congregational settings.
- **Dr. Wayne Thompson** is the Associate Professor of Sociology at Carthage College and has served on the research staffs of several different denominations. Dr. Thompson will assist with the design,

administration, and evaluation of the two congregational surveys over the course of the project. He will also help develop and evaluate the student and faculty questionnaires that will assess the effectiveness of deliberative dialogue and thus measure the success of this project.

Third, this grant includes stipends for LTS core faculty members **Dr. Emily Askew**, Associate Professor of Theology, and **Dr. Jerry Sumney**, Professor of Biblical Studies, to attend the clergy-laity training event for the purposes of evaluation and assessment. Fourth, the funding will provide honorariums for the four part-time faculty in the continuing education certificate program to take part in a videoconference faculty symposium to assess pedagogies of civic engagement and social action in the online classroom. The courses and instructors are: “Ethics, the Church, and the #MeToo Movement” (**Dr. Christy Newton**); “Social Ethics” (**Dr. Christy Newton**); “Power, Privilege, and Difference: Issues that Damage Congregational Life” (**Dr. Richard Coble**); “Reading the Hebrew Bible in the Broader Religious and Civic Community” (**Dr. Richard Lowery**); “Educating for Hospitality and Peacemaking” (**Dr. Elizabeth Conde-Frazier**); and “Preaching in the Purple Zone” (**Rev. Dr. Leah Schade**). Fifth, this grant will cover course-load reduction costs for the program director that will allow LTS to have a faculty member dedicated to researching pedagogical strategies that enable ministry students, pastors, and congregations to engage in difficult conversations about important social issues and the role of the church in the public square.

Because of the cross-pollination among teaching colleagues from five different learning institutions that this grant will enable, as well as the clergy and laity who will participate in this project, there is a high potential for robust exchange about the following pedagogical questions:

- How can we create more learner-centered teaching environments for our students and their congregations that balance the voices of students and teachers while enhancing democratic participation?
- In what ways will the use of deliberative dialogue challenge our assumptions about the use of discussion techniques in the classroom? How will those techniques differ between in-person and online settings? If students resist the use of this technique, how can we get at the root causes for this resistance and overcome impediments to student learning?
- What are the moral, ethical, and political challenges of utilizing the pedagogy of deliberative dialogue in theological education and in congregations? In what ways will factors such as gender identity, race, sexual orientation, physical ability, age, and socioeconomics affect the implementation of deliberative dialogue both in the classroom and in the congregation?
- How will the use of deliberative dialogue challenge our understanding about the dynamics of power, hierarchy, and authority in the teacher-student relationship, as well as the privileging of certain epistemologies over others?
- What are pedagogical strategies we can use to create a “purple zone”, i.e., elicit diverse views and voices around difficult social justice issues within the red-blue divide? If this project indicates that that deliberative dialogue can cultivate and nurture democratic dispositions and discussions about these issues in our students and their congregants, how might we integrate this technique in our institution and the larger church going forward?

We will count this grant and the project as successful if we are able to gain insight into how we might structure or restructure our teaching to incorporate deliberative dialogue in order to bridge the divide between theories about social engagement and the actual practice of these pedagogical strategies in classrooms and ministry settings. If successful, this Wabash-funded project will demonstrate the ways in which the methodology of deliberative dialogue can serve as a viable teaching tool in in-person, online, and congregational settings so that theological education, as well as the larger church, can incorporate this tool for civil discourse into their pedagogies.

Description of Activities

GOAL I ACTIVITIES (Implement deliberative dialogue in an in-person seminary classroom and assess its pedagogical effectiveness.)

The participants in the clergy-laity cohort will consist of recent graduates of the LTS MDiv program serving in politically mixed congregations who live within a 2-hour radius of the seminary. We have identified and had preliminary conversations with ten of these pastors about their willingness to participate in this grant program. Their response has been enthusiastic.

Prior to convening on the seminary campus, members of the cohort will receive readings and narrated PowerPoint lectures to orient them to the sermon-dialogue-sermon process and deliberative dialogue. The on-campus training will consist of activities beginning on a Friday at noon and concluding on Saturday afternoon. Rev. Kaufman and I will conduct the first deliberative dialogue which will focus on the NIFI issue advisory, “What Should We Do about the Opioid Epidemic?” The deliberative dialogue will be facilitated by the instructors and the exercise will be observed by LTS faculty and Dr. Allen. Together we will assess student learning specifically around the question of whether the dialogue can restructure assumptions about engaging issues of public concern and cause participants to reconsider the relationship between the church and politics. In guided conversations, students will give feedback immediately after the process about any resistances they experienced or concerns they had about the dialogue process. This will enable us to address student learning issues in real-time.

GOAL II ACTIVITIES (Equip the clergy-laity pairs to implement the pedagogy of deliberative dialogue in their congregations in order to increase their congregation’s capacity for civic engagement and social justice action.)

In the first deliberative dialogue, the instructors model the skills of facilitation. In the second deliberative dialogue, the participants will take turns with facilitating. To prepare them for this task, Rev. Kaufman and I will present a lecture about how to effectively moderate deliberative dialogue. The second exercise will involve role-playing so that participants can “try on” the role of facilitator. This time we will use the NIFI issue advisory on immigration “Coming to America: Who Should We Welcome? What Should We Do?” and the accompanying faith-based moderator guide. Our goal is for students to gain experience in learning to “think on their feet” about scenarios that may arise when facilitating deliberative dialogue in their congregations. During the exercise, the instructors will offer commentary, guidance, and pose questions to encourage a “fishbowl” experience so that learning occurs for all participants. The intended outcome is for students to gain basic competence in facilitating a deliberative dialogue. This exercise will also be observed by and debriefed with LTS faculty and Dr. Allen wherein feedback from the learners regarding their concerns and resistance to the instruction will be solicited and addressed. Dr. Ron Allen and I will also provide instruction to clergy on the sermon-dialogue-sermon process as part of this training.

Once the clergy-laity pairs return to their congregations, they will carry out two sermon-dialogue-sermon processes in their churches – the first with a dialogue led by the pastor, the second led by the layperson. The cohort will take part in two follow-up videoconferences with Rev. Kaufman and I over the next twelve months to share what they observed and learned, to receive guidance and feedback, and to ascertain what effects the use of this method has had in their congregations. In two faculty meetings, we will report on the progress of the cohort and elicit feedback from our peers on pedagogical questions that arise.

GOAL III ACTIVITIES. (Test deliberative dialogue against other discussion tools in an online classroom setting.)

The four part-time and one full-time faculty (the project director) teaching courses in the continuing education certificate program will test deliberative dialogue and other tools for teaching civic engagement to our current students in the online format of the distance-learning classroom. Using the book *Discussion*

as a *Way of Teaching: Tools and Techniques for Democratic Classrooms* by Stephen D. Brookfield and Stephen Preskill, we will experiment with different strategies for creating a “democratic classroom” in order to compare and contrast the challenges and opportunities that accompany each technique.

Prior to the start of the program, the Dean will convene a faculty discussion with the instructors to plan which tools and techniques for discussion will be used and evaluated. These may include but are not limited to: deliberative dialogue via synchronous videoconference, asynchronous threaded discussion boards, and asynchronous collaboration through Google Docs (or similar software). A faculty symposium at the conclusion of the grant period will allow for reflection on what we learned and how we might apply it in our individual teaching and incorporate it into our institutional philosophy of teaching going forward.

Assessment, Evaluation, and Response

We will assess the effectiveness of this project using the following tools and instruments:

- 1) **Questionnaires for clergy-laity pairs and online students.** A questionnaire will be given to the clergy-laity pairs just prior to the in-person training, immediately after completing the training, and twelve months after the training. The same questionnaire will be given to students in the online courses in the continuing education certificate program just prior to and immediately following each course. The questionnaire will be designed to elicit responses that answer the following questions: Will exposure to the deliberative dialogue process make any difference in learner’s attitudes about civic engagement in general, civic engagement within the church setting, and the church’s engagement with social justice issues? For the clergy-laity pairs, how will these attitudes change once the participants implement the deliberative dialogue in their congregations? Will participants demonstrate increased willingness to have their congregations address social justice issues, and if so, what forms will this take? At the conclusion of the certification program, Drs. Thompson, Kay and I will analyze and report on the responses from the questionnaires from all the courses and share them with faculty. All partners in the grant program will participate in a videoconference symposium to discuss the results of the questionnaires and engage in conversation about the pedagogical questions raised in this proposal.
- 2) **Congregational surveys.** A survey will be distributed to the congregations of the pastor-laity pairs prior to the training session and provide us with the following baselines: 1) the congregation’s level of dividedness on a range of social justice issues; 2) congregants’ attitudes toward dialogue about issues of public concern within the church; 3) confidence in the congregation’s ability to engage in productive dialogue on social issues; 4) congregants’ willingness to participate in social justice activities. The same survey will be administered twelve months after the training is complete to measure if there is any change in these four areas. The results from both surveys will be analyzed by Schade, Day, and Thompson and shared with the project partners as well as the clergy-laity pairs in order to assess the effectiveness of the sermon-dialogue-sermon method and deliberative dialogue process.
 - a. *Surveys of congregations as a control group.* In order to provide a more accurate assessment of the effects of the training, both surveys will also be distributed to a control group of at least ten congregations whose pastors receive no training.
- 3) **Faculty questionnaires.** After teaching their course in the continuing education certificate program, each instructor will receive a questionnaire about their basic philosophy of teaching and how that informed their choice of the techniques; how the techniques functioned in their classroom; how students responded to the techniques; challenges and opportunities afforded by the techniques; and what they learned from using the technique that they might use in future courses. We will use these questionnaires alongside the student questionnaires to compare and contrast the use of deliberative dialogue with other tools for teaching civil discourse.

There are two ways in which ongoing learning will happen on the part of the project director:

- 1) **Regular meetings with the dean, LTS colleagues, and colleague consultants from outside the institution in order to engage in peer feedback and mutual learning about the process of deliberative dialogue and the sermon-dialogue-sermon method.** These meetings will focus on how we might improve the art and craft of teaching using a variety of learner-centered activities and constructivist techniques, especially deliberative dialogue. Our questions will include: How did the technique of deliberative dialogue function in the different settings, and what was its effect on the teaching and learning process? Is this “democratization” of the classroom transferrable to other disciplines such as theology, biblical studies, history, pastoral care, Christian education, ethics, and other areas of theological education? If so, in what ways might we use this and other forms of behaviorist and constructivist learning in order to cultivate pedagogies for social justice and civic engagement in our courses?
- 2) **Attending the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion (SSSR) annual meeting.** By presenting about the assessment tools used in this project, I will be able to engage with experts in the field of the sociology of religion to evaluate the effectiveness of these tools for assessing the pedagogy of deliberative dialogue in the classroom and congregation.

These two strategies will ensure that, as project director, I have accountability partners both within and external to the institution. At the conclusion of the project, I will write a full report for presentation in academic guilds such as SSSR, the Academy of Homiletics, and the Religion and Pedagogy group of the American Academy of Religion. This project will likely result in a monograph which will be made available to the public. Institutionally, we will consider the ways in which we may integrate the pedagogical tool of deliberative dialogue across disciplines in order to promote discursive strategies for promoting exchanges where students in all three learning settings of our curriculum – online, in-person, and in the congregation – develop multi-perspective understandings of their own and others' views, and where they show the possibility of increasing their willingness to engage in public issues and social action.

Timeline for the Pedagogical and Assessment Process

2019

May	Official letters sent to clergy inviting them to participate in the “Purple Zone” training and to identify a lay leader to join them (see Appendix for draft of letter). Schade, Thompson, and Day design pre-event congregational survey, pre-event clergy-laity questionnaire, and faculty questionnaire. Dean convenes meeting of continuing education certificate faculty to discuss pedagogies of civic engagement. May 30 – deadline for clergy and laity to accept invitation.
June-July	Books sent to clergy-laity cohort and faculty. Survey #1 distributed to congregations.
August	First course in continuing education certificate program begins. Congregational Survey #1 closes Aug. 30.
September	Schade, Thompson, and Day evaluate results of congregational survey which will be shared with clergy-laity cohort and project partners. Two-day workshop with clergy and lay leaders (dates TBD). Cohort questionnaires distributed and collected.
October	Schade attends SSSR meeting to receive feedback on surveys and questionnaires.
November-December	Clergy-laity pairs engage in first sermon-dialogue-sermon process in their congregations. Cohort meets with Schade & Kaufman via videoconference after first sermon-dialogue-sermon process to debrief and strategize second process.

2020

January	Schade & Kaufman meet with project partners to report on cohort progress and discuss pedagogical questions and issues.
February-March	Clergy-laity pairs engage in second sermon-dialogue-sermon process.
April-May	Clergy-laity pairs complete questionnaire about deliberative dialogue. Schade & Kauffman meet via videoconference with clergy-laity pairs to debrief the process, then meet with project partners to report and discuss project.
June-July	Schade, Thompson, and Day analyze results of faculty and student questionnaires from online courses.
August-September	Congregational Survey #2 is distributed, closes Sept 30.
October	Schade, Thompson, and Day evaluate results of Congregational Survey #2; results shared with clergy/laity cohort and project partners. Faculty symposium to debrief the continuing education certificate program and assess pedagogies of civic engagement in the online classroom.
November	Schade completes final report.

Supporting Literature

The supporting scholarship for this project is drawn from and synthesizes complementing strands of thought from the fields of homiletics and learning theory (see Appendix for bibliography). In terms of homiletics, I will be building on the work of Ron Allen, O. Wesley Allen, John McClure, Lucy Atkinson Rose and others who have contributed toward the concept of *conversational/collaborative preaching* and *prophetic/ethical homiletics*. This branch of homiletic theory posits that clergy can utilize the practices of dialogue with their parishioners in order to create sermons that are communal, nonhierarchical, personal, inclusive, and scriptural. This conversational approach is especially helpful when addressing complex and controversial issues of public concern in a pastorally prophetic way. It enables clergy to stay in relationship with congregants even when engaging with politically fraught topics.

This project is also supported by my own research into clergy preaching about controversial issues and politically divided congregations. In 2017, I designed a research questionnaire called “Preaching About Controversial Justice Issues” to ascertain if, why, and how theologically-trained preachers in mainline Protestant traditions choose to address controversial issues in their sermons. Just over 1,200 clergy responded to the survey. Insights from this questionnaire inform my own scholarship, writing, and teaching on the sermon-dialogue-sermon method, including my book *Preaching in the Purple Zone: Ministry in the Red-Blue Divide*.

In terms of pedagogy, this project draws on the theories of John Dewey who posited that learning occurs through the experience of human activities. This “learning by doing” philosophy of pedagogy will be utilized as students take part in the deliberative dialogue process both in the classroom and (for the clergy-laity pairs) in their congregations. This technique is a learner-centered approach that draws on social constructivist pedagogy, in that learners make meaning in community through dialogical engagement. We will be working with a constructive pedagogy in which learner-centered education comes to the fore and enables the students to construct their understanding of the deliberative dialogue process, critically reflect on it, and, in the training cohort, practice facilitation using the technique of role-play. For the continuing education certificate instructors, we will use Brookfield and Preskill’s work on the use and evaluation of discussion tools to inform our conversations on behaviorist pedagogy which emphasizes the learning and performance of new skills, in this case, civil discourse and facilitating deliberative dialogue. The epistemological assumption behind this open-ended strategy is that knowledge will come through practicing and applying the skills of civil discourse and facilitation. These skills include deep listening that fosters respect and understanding while ascertaining values that undergird opinions in order to make reasoned – and respectful – arguments. Students learn that there is no “right” answer but a spectrum of viewpoints that can co-inform each other, potentially leading to shared inquiry, exploration, and discovery. The process intends to convey that through civil discourse, participants may experience improved

relationships with people who hold different political views. In turn, this may lead to better institutional decision-making and community problem-solving.

Budget Narrative and Line Item Budget

The following expenditures are intended to be consistent with the spirit and intent of the Wabash Project Grant for Pedagogies for Social Justice and Civic Engagement and reflect the purpose, goals, and activities of this proposal.

Project director, Leah Schade:

- LTS will arrange for a reduced course load for Dr. Leah Schade in the fall of 2019. Cost for coverage: **\$6400.**
- Dr. Schade will attend the annual meeting of the Society for the Scientific Study of Religion (not normally covered by LTS) to receive feedback on the surveys and questionnaires. Registration = **\$150.** Travel via car (674 miles roundtrip x \$.58) = **\$391.** Hotel (\$179 x 3 nights) = **\$537.** Meals (\$50 x 3) = **\$150.** **Subtotal = \$1228.**
Total for project director = \$7628

Project partners:

- *Outside faculty stipends*
Ron Allen, Katie Day, Gregg Kaufman, Wayne Thompson: \$2000 each (**Subtotal = \$8000**)
- *LTS full-time faculty stipends*
Emily Askew, Jerry Sumney \$500 each (**Subtotal = \$1000**)
- *LTS continuing education certificate program instructors*
Richard Coble, Richard Lowery, Christy Newton, Elizabeth Conde-Frazier
\$100 each (**Subtotal = \$400**)

Total for project partners = \$9400

GOAL I Activities

- *Books.* Clergy-laity pairs and six consultants will receive *Preaching in the Purple Zone: Ministry in the Red-Blue Divide* by Leah Schade (Rowman & Littlefield, 2019). **26 x \$25 = \$650.**
- *Travel for consultants attending training.* Round trip airfare for Kaufman (flying from Florida) is estimated at \$525. Round trip mileage for Allen (commuting from Indianapolis, IN) is estimated at \$219 (378 miles x \$.58/mile). Round trip mileage for Askew (commuting from Nashville, TN) is estimated at \$246 (424 miles x \$.58/mile) **Subtotal = \$990**
- *Travel for clergy and laity pairs attending training seminar.* A total of 20 clergy and laity will travel by car to the LTS campus for a two-day training seminar. We estimate that each pair will drive no more than 300 miles roundtrip. (300 miles x 10 pairs = 3000 x .58) **Subtotal = \$1740**
- *Lodging for consultants and LTS faculty attending training.* Kaufman, Allen, and Askew (commuting from Nashville, TN) will each lodge for 2 nights. (\$169 x 2 nights x 3 people) **Subtotal = \$1014**
- *Lodging for clergy/laity pairs.* \$169 x 20 rooms. **Subtotal = \$3380**
- *Meals:* LTS faculty members [Askew, Sumney] and Dean along with Consultants [Allen, Kaufman] will meet with Schade for one dinner and one breakfast. (\$20 x 6 for dinner = \$120; \$10 x 6 for breakfast = \$60). **Subtotal = \$180.** Catered meals will be provided during the training seminar for participants, two consultants, two LTS faculty, and project director. Estimated costs are 2 lunches (\$15 x 30 = \$450 x 2 = \$900); 1 breakfast (\$10 x 30 = \$300); 1 dinner (\$20 x 30 = \$600). **Subtotal = \$1800. Meals total = \$1980**

Goal I total = \$9754

GOAL II Activities: The seminary currently maintains a Zoom account, so no additional costs will be accrued from the use of this platform for meeting with the clergy-laity pairs following the training.

GOAL III Activities. Consultant honorariums are listed above. All project partners and dean will receive copy of *Discussion as a Way of Teaching* by Brookfield and Preskill. $\$31 \times 11 = \341 . One catered lunch will be provided for the symposium. Lunch for on-campus faculty, dean, president: $\$15 \times 10 = \150 .

Goal III total = \$491.

Line Item Budget

Project director	\$7628
LTS Faculty and Outside Consultants	\$9400
<i>Personnel subtotal</i>	<i>\$17,028</i>

GOAL I

Books	\$650
Travel for consultants and faculty	\$990
Travel for clergy and laity	\$1740
Lodging for consultants and faculty	\$1014
Lodging for clergy and laity	\$3380
Meals for consultants, clergy and laity	\$1980
<i>Goal I Subtotal</i>	<i>\$9754</i>

GOAL II no costs

GOAL III

Books	\$341
Lunch for symposium	\$150
<i>Goal III subtotal</i>	<i>\$491</i>

SUBTOTAL	\$27,273
Institutional Indirect Expenses (10%)	\$2727
TOTAL	\$30,000

In summary: Lexington Theological Seminary has received over \$1 million in grants in last the ten years which were executed faithfully and in accordance with the mission of both the grantors and the institution itself. We are confident that LTS has both the academic commitment and administrative capacity to support this research project as part of the Wabash Institute's Pedagogies for Social Justice and Civic Engagement.

APPENDIX

Letter of Invitation to Clergy

Dear Rev. _____

Greetings in the name of Jesus Christ! I am writing to invite you to take part in a training program sponsored by Lexington Theological Seminary and the Wabash Center for Teaching and Learning in Theology and Religion. The program is called “Dialogue in the ‘Purple Zone’: A Pedagogy for Supporting Pastors and Lay Leaders in Preaching and Civil Discourse” and is part of a Wabash grant to study Pedagogies for Social Justice and Civic Engagement. You would be part of a select group of twenty individuals taking part in this year-long program of training, mentoring, and congregational assessment. The cohort will be convened by me, Rev. Dr. Leah Schade, Assistant Professor of Preaching and Worship at LTS, in consultation with Rev. Dr. Loida Martell, Dean and Vice President for Academic Affairs, the core faculty at LTS, and four other colleagues in the fields of homiletics, civil discourse, religion and social change, and sociology.

This program will focus on equipping pastors and lay leaders to engage their congregations in public conversations about challenging social issues. You and your lay leader will be learning the “sermon-dialogue-sermon” method I have developed which includes a method of civil discourse called *deliberative dialogue*. After the training, you’ll have the opportunity to implement the process in your congregation with ongoing guidance and mentoring.

This project arises from and is guided by the following questions:

- Within the red-blue divide in this country characterized by fractured politics in both society and the church, how can seminaries cultivate a pedagogy of dialogue that equips clergy to create and sustain a “purple zone”?
- Can clergy be taught to preach and facilitate conversations about difficult social issues in their congregations in healthy, generative ways?
- What difference would it make if laity participated in the pedagogical process with their pastors by learning the skills of facilitating deliberative dialogue and contributing to the sermon-writing process?
- If clergy and lay leaders engaged in this training, how might this enhance a pastor’s ability to preach both prophetically and pastorally, while also increasing a congregation’s capacity for civil discourse?

The training session will take place [date] at Lexington Theological Seminary in Lexington, Kentucky. There will be two follow-up videoconferences over the course of the twelve months after the training. As part of the assessment process in this program, we will be administering two congregational surveys – one prior to the training seminar and one twelve months following the training. We will also ask you and your lay leader to fill out questionnaires before the training, immediately following the training, and 8 months after the training. The program will be completed in May 2020.

Thanks to the grant from the Wabash Center, there is no cost to you or your lay leader to participate in this program. Travel, lodging, and meals for the training seminar will be underwritten by the grant. Also, you and your lay leader will each receive a free copy of the book I’ve written for this training, *Preaching in the Purple Zone: Ministry in the Red-Blue Divide* (Rowman & Littlefield, 2019).

This project reflects the focus of the Wabash grant to explore and assess pedagogies that encourage students to critically consider issues of public engagement and social action in relationship to the

understanding of religion. The project is also an outgrowth of Lexington Theological Seminary's congregation-based teaching model that invites the local church to become fully integrated partners in the education of clergy.

One of the reasons we are inviting you to be part of this group is that we are seeking clergy who pastor in "purple" churches – congregations that have a mix of members from across the political red-blue spectrum. As you and I have already discussed, your congregation meets this criteria. Also know that this invitation is a tribute to the effectiveness of your current preaching and ministry in your congregation. Our hope is that this program might strengthen your homiletical skills and provide you with new tools for leadership in your church.

As you are considering this invitation, I would ask you to think about a lay leader in your congregation who can join you in this this program. Each clergyperson will invite someone who is of a different political orientation than themselves and who has the capacity for learning the skills of moderating a deliberative dialogue. Having such a lay leader will allow for the training group to be politically diverse and give you a partner for reaching across the red-blue divide in carrying out the sermon-dialogue-sermon process in your congregation.

In summary, there are six expectations of clergy participants in this program: 1) identify and invite one lay leader in your congregation who will be willing to fully participate in this process with you; 2) complete the readings and watch the online orientation videos prior to the training seminar; 3) attend the two-day training seminar with your lay leader; 4) participate in two follow-up online sessions with your lay leader over the course of eight months following the initial training; 5) encourage members of your congregation to participate in two online surveys; 6) complete questionnaires immediately before and after the training, and 8 months after the training. Your acceptance of the invitation signals your commitment to make attendance and participation a priority within the demands of your life and ministry.

Thank you for prayerfully considering this invitation. Please respond by [date]. If we do not hear from you by then, we will assume you are not able to participate and move on to issue the invitation to others. We sincerely hope that you will be able to join us for this important project of teaching and learning.

Best regards,

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