

# Excellence in Leadership (EiL)

## Expanding Perspectives



Courageous, resilient, and faithful leaders for the sake of the world

*“You don’t need a title to be a leader.”*

Anonymous

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This past year, while working on my own transformation for the sake of God’s work in the world, I attended a reconciliation event at Zion Baptist Church in Five Points, Denver. It was the four-month anniversary of George Floyd’s death. Afterward, standing in this vast and historic place, Reverend Davis, lead pastor at Zion Baptist, talked about the urgency and immediacy of God’s work in this mostly-black community. As he spoke, I could sense a profound space expanding inside of me.

*Excellence in Leadership* encourages us to embrace vulnerability and connect beyond our usual social location. We look at culture as it sways our point of view—which for me began with a suburban, middle class, white upbringing—and how it bestows stereotypes that neglect the actual experience, while causing real harm.

At one of the churches I serve, First Lutheran in Longmont, we decided to study race. In a six-week class, we learned about the fallacy of genetics in race, the historical experience of black and brown people in this country, the blindness of privilege, and the justifications around guilt. People of faith, rooted in love, were broken open by the reality of injustice and were wondering what to do next. Harm to one is harm to all and connecting stirs us to action. God is always in solidarity with suffering!

Showing up and being fully present takes some work, but it is a joyful and worthwhile endeavor. Our flawed and redeemed selves can be leveraged for the loving purpose of God’s emerging future. This might include knowledge about theories, but it’s also making ourselves available as people who are “brave, awkward, and kind.” (Brené Brown) As Jesus-people, may we ever deepen with our neighbors far and near, knowing we’ll emerge with something beautiful and life-giving.

### Questions for Reflection

- What gets in your way of loving your neighbor?
- How might you and your neighbor share your meaningful stories?
- Where do you feel the nudge to be part of God’s emerging future? What is your first step?