

RE•FORMATION

THEN • NOW • ALWAYS

Rocky Mountain Synod Assembly — May 5-7, 2017

Re•Formation: Always Session 1 Participant Guide

Welcome to Re•Formation: Always Session 2! Below is a guide to today's session.

Session 1 Theme: “What does it mean to live out a Christian identity in the world?”

Session 1 Goals: 1) *meaningful small group conversation* that 2) builds trust and 3) invites us to start reflecting on faith lived in the world, to prepare for 4) tomorrow's conversations on ELCA social statements and the Small Catechism.

Session 1 Overview: Today's session will have two parts: 1) Bible Study and 2) Small group conversation. At the end, you'll wrap up and preview tomorrow's session, in which we'll put parts of Luther's Small Catechism in conversation with some of the ELCA's Social Statements.

Session 1 Outline

1. **Gather/Welcome:** Your Facilitator will welcome you and help the large group break into your small groups.
2. **Introductions in small groups:** Take a moment to (briefly!) share your name, congregation, and location with one another.
3. **Introduction to goals for Re•Formation: Always Session 1**

On behalf of the *Re•Formation: Always* planning team, welcome! As we continue to reflect on the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, we're asking what it means to be a Lutheran Christian today, and how we live out that Christian identity in our daily lives in the world. We'll ground our conversations in Bible Study and share some stories with one another in small groups. More than anything, the goal of this session is *meaningful conversation*.

Guidelines for healthy conversations: Many of you have lots of experience being in small groups (or with other people, in general), so just a few reminders: please strive to make sure every person in your group has a chance to be heard. Please strive to listen and respond to one another with kindness and respect. When (not if!) you disagree with someone, please first seek to understand their position and perspective better. And please, before you share publicly what someone else has shared in your small group (either online or face to face), ask them if it's ok. This concludes our healthy conversation announcement. Now we return to our regularly-scheduled programming. ☺

4. Guided *Lectio Divina* Bible Study – Luke 10:25-37 (15 min.)

Lectio Divina is a practice for small groups to read and reflect together on a scripture text, typically by reading the same text several times and responding each time to guiding questions. You will read and discuss the text in your small groups.

Luke 10:25-37

²⁵Just then a lawyer stood up to test Jesus. “Teacher,” he said, “what must I do to inherit eternal life?” ²⁶He said to him, “What is written in the law? What do you read there?” ²⁷He answered, “You shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your strength, and with all your mind; and your neighbor as yourself.” ²⁸And he said to him, “You have given the right answer; do this, and you will live.” ²⁹But wanting to justify himself, he asked Jesus, “And who is my neighbor?” ³⁰Jesus replied, “A man was going down from Jerusalem to Jericho, and fell into the hands of robbers, who stripped him, beat him, and went away, leaving him half dead. ³¹Now by chance a priest was going down that road; and when he saw him, he passed by on the other side. ³²So likewise a Levite, when he came to the place and saw him, passed by on the other side. ³³But a Samaritan while traveling came near him; and when he saw him, he was moved with pity. ³⁴He went to him and bandaged his wounds, having poured oil and wine on them. Then he put him on his own animal, brought him to an inn, and took care of him. ³⁵The next day he took out two denarii, gave them to the innkeeper, and said, ‘Take care of him; and when I come back, I will repay you whatever more you spend.’ ³⁶Which of these three, do you think, was a neighbor to the man who fell into the hands of the robbers?” ³⁷He said, “The one who showed him mercy.” Jesus said to him, “Go and do likewise.”

Step 1: Invite one person from your small group to read the text aloud while the rest of the group follows along. Then, each person shares: what word or phrase stuck out to you on the first hearing?

Step 2: Invite a different person in your small group to read the text aloud a second time and answer the second question: What character did you most identify with?

Step 3: Invite a third person in each small group to read the text aloud a third and final time, and answer the third question: What might Jesus be saying through this parable about living out our faith in the world?

Step 4: 1-minute wrap up—In the large group, your facilitator will invite anyone to call out *one word or phrase* you consider a “takeaway” from the Bible Study.

5. Small Group discussion (30 min.)

Tell a Story: The story we just read is often called “The Parable of the Good Samaritan.” Jesus often taught in parables, which were short stories that placed the big questions and issues of faith alongside everyday examples from life. In this parable, Jesus asked his listeners to consider how to live out their faith in God by being a “neighbor.” Next, we’ll share stories from our lives that explore how we live out our Christian identity in the world every day.

Small Group Questions:

1. Who was someone in your life who modeled for you what it means to live out Christian identity in the world?
2. When and where in your life did you make a choice or take an action that was prompted by your Christian identity?
3. What is one way your congregation has lived out Christian identity in the world?

6. Wrap Up/Preview (5-7 min.)

Wrap-Up: In the large group, the facilitator will invite anyone in the room to share *one word or phrase* you consider a “takeaway” from your small group conversations. What is one insight you have gained about living out Christian identity in the world?

Preview:

Tomorrow’s session theme: Living the Catechism in the World

Overview: For the 500th anniversary of the Reformation, Presiding Bishop Elizabeth Eaton has asked ELCA members to study Martin Luther’s Small Catechism—Luther’s clear and simple guide to what Christian faith looks like in everyday life. Tomorrow, you’ll have the chance to explore some of the texts from the Catechism and to connect them to some of the ELCA’s social statements—texts that the church has created to address how our Lutheran-Christian identity connects to some of today’s most pressing issues.

Getting Ready: In tomorrow’s session, we’ll ask you to choose ONE of the following topics: Church in Society; Peace; Economic Life; Race, Ethnicity and Culture; or Caring for Creation. Be thinking about which topic you feel most drawn to, or challenged by. We encourage you to check the Assembly app to find 1-page summaries of each social statement and links to the whole social statements as well as the Small Catechism.

How it Works: Tomorrow we’ll meet again back here in this room at our session time, and you’ll form small groups around your areas of shared interest.

In the Meantime: Look for Pastor Zach Parris at our “Re•Formation: Always” table and share what you’re learning in a short video interview!

Go in peace, serve the Lord! Thanks be to God!