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**The Stories of our Stuff**Congregation Art and Story Project

**Rocky Mountain Synod, ELCA**
*A Reconciling in Christ Synod • Christ’s Church, Better Together*

**Congregational Art and Story Project**

*RESOURCE: If you have questions about logistics or details, would like help facilitating the conversation or art-making process, please contact Tara McConnell. 970-218-2311 or tlmcconnellart@gmail.com*

In thinking about our theme “Reformation• Then.Now.Always.” we invite you to work with your ministry to continue the artistic activity of reflecting upon and utilizing ministry objects to tell our story and examine our connection in community and shared history.

**Procedure of gathering objects:**

**1.)** Similar to what occurred at the Theological Conference, arrange a time with your ministry to work together to clean out ministry spaces. Ministry spaces can include: closets, drawers, rooms, desks, sanctuaries, boxes, kitchens, etc.

**2.)** From each space cleaned out, pick object (s) that were once used in ministry and may no longer have a purpose: VHS tapes, costumes, curriculum, coffee pots, decorations, choir robes, etc.

**3.)** Share the story for each object with each other and reflect upon its history. Please write down key observations and insights about each object from your reflections. Keep this accessible throughout the project.

**Questions for reflection may include:**

* Where did the object come from/how did it come to be in your church?
* What was its purpose in ministry?
* How does this object reflect who we are/were as a church body?
* How does it (or does it not) connect us through our histories/theology/community?
* What material is it made out of and how was that material manufactured?
* Where does this material go when no longer in use?
* What are the environmental implications of this material/what is our role as stewards of the earth in working with this material?
* How can the object be re-purposed for ministry purposes or who might be able to use this object?

**4.)** As a congregation, use the de-commissioning litany (available in early January) to formally recognize the ministry that happened with these objects as you prepare to dispose of or repurpose them.

**Artistic Expression:

Option 1:**

1. Once objects have been gathered, find a time as a congregation (or delegate to interested individuals) to create an art piece that combines all the objects. Depending on your objects this may include taking them apart, reforming them, reattaching, compiling pieces together, shredding, breaking, using them as whole pieces, or any other ways you can come up with to use your objects as art. Art pieces can be in the form of sculpture, tapestry, mosaic, mural, etc. etc. Take pictures/video along the way to document the creation of the art.
2. Share your project with the congregation. Display it in the narthex, create time for participants to share and ask questions. Use the attached pages to help create your display. Tell the stories during worship. Challenge other ministries and groups to clean and re-form their “stuff”.
3. Keep your artistic creations to be shared at Synod Assembly in the spring. Please write a short description about your piece (1-2 paragraphs on the attached sheet) including where the objects came from, their story in ministry and shared theology, or any other important details you would like to share from this process.

**Option 2:**

1. Take pictures throughout the cleaning/gathering/reflection process. Create a collage, book, or some other compilation to share your process, your reflections, the stories of your objects, and what happened to your objects.
2. Share your project with the congregation. Display it in the narthex, create time for participants to share and ask questions using the attached pages as part of your display. Tell the stories during worship. Challenge other ministries and groups to clean and re-form their “stuff”.
3. Bring your story or display to Synod Assembly in the spring to be a part of the art installation.

**Assembly Display Details**

1.) Synod Assembly is May 5-7, 2017 in Colorado Springs

2.) Completed projects should be no larger than 3 feet wide (must be able to fit on half of a 6 foot table)

3.) Let us know you are bringing your object by submitting your information on the assembly webpage: [www.rmselca.org/assembly](http://www.rmselca.org/assembly)

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**The Stories of our Stuff**

**Object:**

**Where it was used:**

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 **The Story of our Stuff**

**Congregation:**

**Our Story**