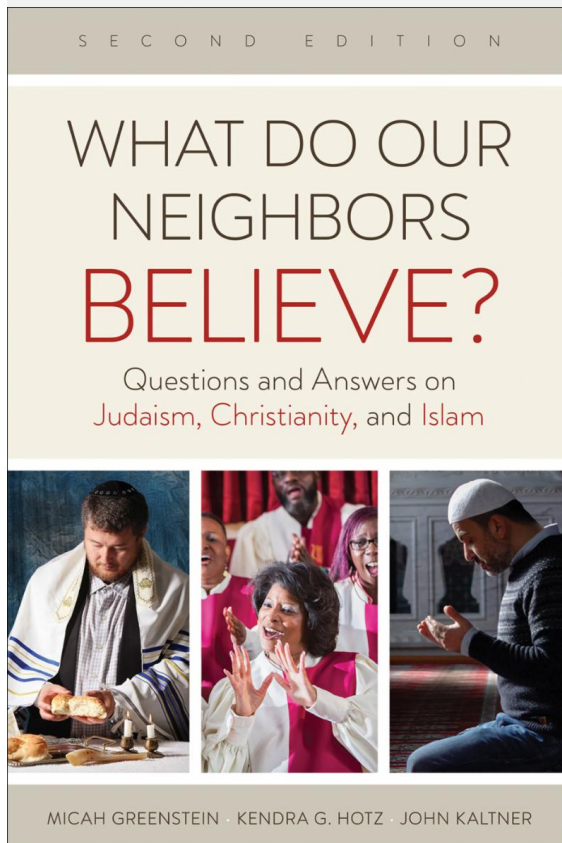




August 6, 2019

Get Lost in a Book



The current social and political climate makes it easy to benefit from religious misunderstanding. Political and religious leaders create fear of the religious other in order to drum up support for themselves. But the best way to combat deliberate misrepresentation is to provide accurate, timely information about the three great monotheistic religions: Judaism, Christianity, and Islam.

Originally published in 2007, *What Do Our Neighbors Believe? Second Edition* organizes the three belief systems, asking the same questions of each: When and where did each originate? What are the sacred writings? What kind of leaders does each have? What are their most essential beliefs? New sections explore current ethical questions and issues, including the deliberate use of misinformation about Islam to bolster power and generate fear and the recent rise in anti-Semitic hate crimes. By introducing the common aspects of Judaism, Christianity, and Islam, the authors make understanding their genuine differences and their many similarities much more possible.

Pastoral Letter to the Presbytery

Brothers and Sisters in Christ,

It was a hard and dark weekend. Like many of you I watched with shock, anger, and sadness the news coverage Saturday evening of the shooting deaths of 22 people in El Paso, TX. And then, again, the next morning the deaths of 9 people in Dayton, OH, from another young shooter. Our hearts are broken. God's heart is broken.

As I drove early Sunday morning to preach for the Belden and Laurel congregations, I found myself editing my sermon in my head, again and again. I've done this numerous times over the last several years. We have a litany in our country that gets recited in various ways every time there's a mass shooting: Dayton OH, El Paso TX, Gilroy CA, Virginia Beach VA, Charlotte NC, Aurora IL, Thousand Oaks CA, Pittsburgh PA, Annapolis MD, Santa Fe TX, Parkland FL, Highlands Ranch CO, Sutherland Springs TX, Las Vegas NV, Orlando FL, Charleston SC, Newtown CT, Aurora CO, Virginia Tech (Blacksburg) VA, Columbine CO.....

So, what now? What do I say? What can any of us say? Not again, not again, O God? We offer our prayers, as they are vitally needed. Yet we know, prayer is not enough. God calls us to respond with more than just words when his children are being killed by other children in the streets, schools, campuses, malls, night clubs, mosques, synagogues, and churches around this nation. We are called to act, confessing that it is way past time for action. Not one of us has "the" answer or answers to solve gun violence in our country. But together, I believe, with voices raised and actions taken, we can make a difference and bring about real change in our country.

So, what next? What can I do? What can we do?

- **Pray.** For God's comfort for all those affected by gun violence. Confess our pain, our loss, our feelings of hopelessness, our inability to respond. Below is a prayer offered by Presbyterian Outlook Editor the Rev. Jill Duffield. There are numerous others on the PCUSA website: www.pcusa.org and Presbyterian Outlook pres-outlook.org/2019/08/prayer-for-el-paso
- **Learn.** Educate yourself, your family, your friends, your community, your congregation about the issues of gun violence, gun control, white nationalism, structural racism, systemic poverty... all part of the landscape of gun violence in our country
- **Understand.** Do you know what the General Assembly of the PCUSA has said and done regarding gun violence and gun control? The Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) has a long history of support for gun control legislation. You can find it along with many other resources at: www.presbyterianmission.org/what-we-believe/gun-violence/
- **Act.** I will be joining other Presbytery/Mid-Council leaders across the denomination in a shared statement and taking specific actions for

legislative action and steps for social change over the next year. What are you willing to do? Some ideas:

- *Presbyterian Disaster Assistance* (pda.pcusa.org) has numerous resources and opportunities to get involved. Several of us at Synod School this year viewed the documentary "TRIGGER: THE RIPPLE EFFECT OF GUN VIOLENCE." It is produced by PDA and available for viewing with groups in your church and community. It is also now available on Amazon Prime Video and includes study guides to use with the film.
 - *Sojourners Magazine* is a wealth of resources for both prayer, education, and action. It can assist you in advocating for legislative change to gun laws. sojo.net There are numerous resources available to guide in acting for legislative change. Just ask.
- **Join.** Leaders in Homestead Presbytery are stepping up and stepping out to help us respond in a variety of ways. If you're interested in joining folks to share, strategize, and work for change, let me know. If you have a story about something happening in your church or community to make a difference, let me know. Send me an email at stephene@homesteadpres.org and we will find ways to work together to respond in faith, hope, and love.

I look forward to hearing from you. Know that you and Homestead Presbytery, and this nation, during this critical time, and always, are in my thoughts and prayers.

Grace and Peace,

Steve Earl
Interim Executive Presbyter
Homestead Presbytery



Prayer for El Paso
August 3, 2019 by Jill Duffield

Enough, Lord God, enough.
Rend our hearts and restore your
goodness and mercy in our land.
Through you, all things are possible,
and yet we fail to claim your power to

transform chaos into order, war into peace, and anger into action. We pray yet again, Lord God, yet again for your children cut down in a hail of gunfire, for families devastated, communities decimated, our country reeling from self-inflicted wounds of hate. We beg your forgiveness for our unwillingness to address the soul-sickness of our nation, the idolatry of guns and our infatuation with violence and anger and hatred. Comfort those who mourn. Heal the hurting. Strengthen the helpers. Grant courage to your people that we may not just say enough but do all we can and everything required to stop the killing in our streets.

Amen.

This prayer from Presbyterian Outlook editor Jill Duffield was written after news reports of a mass shooting August 3 at a shopping mall in El Paso. Congregations

Don't miss this opportunity!

You're invited!

To a **FREE** local gathering for lunch and a presentation

Wednesday August 28th from 12p-4p

at

Calvin Crest Camp, Fremont, NE



THE BOARD OF PENSIONS
OF THE PRESBYTERIAN CHURCH (U.S.A.)

Your church is an employer

- Is your church the kind of place people would want to work?
- In this time of record low-unemployment, keeping the employees you have is becoming more important than ever!
- The Board of Pensions wants to help you be the best employer you can be.

The Board is a resource

- Did you know the Board of Pensions has changed more in the last 3 years than the previous 30?
 - Our plan has become more flexible...but the price of flexibility is complexity!
- Would you like to get a better handle on some of the options available to you as an employer—some at little or no-cost to you—that can be great benefits to your staff whether that's one part timer or a few people in a couple f/t and p/t roles?

Who would benefit?

The Pastor and any other congregational leaders involved in personnel, compensation, and benefit decisions. This might include:

- Personnel Chair
- Finance Chair
- Financial Secretary
- Business or Office Administrator.

SIGN UP by August 18th at homesteadpres.org

[Click to Download Flyer](#)

[REGISTER HERE](#)

***While this is a free event, registration is required to attend.
Please click the button above to register.***

Pertinent Presbytery News



Presbytery ASSEMBLY

Registration has CLOSED for August Presbytery Assembly

We have closed the registration for the August Presbytery Assembly. You may still attend, but you will be responsible for bringing your own lunch. Calvin Crest Camp requires 10 days notice of the meal count and in an effort to reduce waste we do NOT order extra meals. Nametags are also only printed for registered attendees. Thank you!



Get your 2019-2020 Book of Order

\$9.00/ Book - Pickup at the Presbytery Office
\$10.00/ Book - Ships to your address

You can place your orders by clicking below or fill out an order form at August's Presbytery Assembly.

The ordering will be open until Sunday, August 18th.

[ORDER NOW](#)

[Digital Download of 2019-2020 Book of Order](#)

Opportunities to Learn and Grow

LIVE2LEAD

Clergy appreciation month is October each year. How about treating your pastor - or yourself if you are the pastor - and church staff to a continuing education/

leadership event as one of the ways to say, "thank you for all you do" ? Here's why this is a gift that keeps on giving:

- Learn from world-class leaders.
- Impact your sphere of influence.
- Make meaningful connections.

These are just a few things you'll experience this year at Live2Lead. Of course, the speaker lineup is incredible too:

- *Rachel Hollis, #1 New York Times Bestselling Author and Entrepreneur*
- *Angela Ahrendts, former Senior Vice President of Retail for Apple, Inc.*
- *Marcus Buckingham, Global Researcher and Thought Leader*
- *Chris Hogan, All American Football Player and Ramsey Financial Coach*
- *John C. Maxwell, #1 New York Times Best Selling Author, Coach and Speaker*

But do you want to know what we look forward to most? **Every year we walk away with tools we can put into practice.** That is the difference in an event that we enjoy and an event that we mark our calendar for!

Hosted by Leadership Harbor, LLC, **Live2Lead on October 11, 2019 and clergy & church staff & Session member ticket pricing is only \$79 through the August 31. The price jumps to \$99 (non-clergy special discount pricing) then \$119 after September 4.**

We would love to see you there. www.leadershipharbor.com/training

Presbyterian Women Fall Gathering



September 13-14th Camp Calvin Crest

We start out on Friday at around 5:00 with a light dinner and conversation with our guest speaker, Jenny Lee, our PW Churchwide Moderator. She is our First Korean Moderator. Saturday is the main day starting around 9 and should be out by 3.

There is no charge for the Friday night dinner and activities. You may stay overnight for a small fee and the Saturday cost is \$15.00. 1 registration form will be sent to each church to make copies, or you can contact Terri Sherman at 402-525-6008.



**Synod of Lakes and Prairies
Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.)**

New Synod Event: 'Art of Transitional Leadership'

The Synod of Lakes and Prairies is planning a new event this fall -- "The Art of Transitional Leadership" -- that will provide ministry skills training for today and tomorrow's church pastors, staff, committees on ministry and congregational leaders. It is set to take place Monday through Friday, September 16-20 at Christ the Kind Retreat Center in Buffalo, Minnesota.



Due August 15, 2019

Please help us remind those in your presbyteries and synods that are considering or planning an event or workshop for 2020.

[Program Guidelines](#)

[Application](#)



CLP/CRE Program

The overall goal of the Christian Leadership Program of UDTs is to strengthen the church through quality theological education for lay persons. While the courses offered are particularly designed for lay pastor candidates, they will serve the needs of all lay persons who are contributing their gifts to the ministry of their local church. Church officers, Christian education leaders and teachers, and persons who wish to deepen their understanding of the Christian faith will discover a rich opportunity through this program.

[More Info / Apply Now](#)

Weekly Prayer Requests

York First Presbyterian Church

York First Presbyterian asks for wisdom and guidance of the Holy Spirit in this time of transition.

Homestead Presbytery

840 S. 17th Street, Lincoln, NE 68508

Monday-Thursday 9:00am-4:00pm

Friday 9:00am-12:30pm

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Interim EP: 803.556.3355
Stated Clerk: 402.217.3684

