**Tools for crafting a Sermon** – By Pastor Connie Winter-Eulberg 5/2022

**Study of the Scripture**

 Read the texts for the upcoming Sunday. Read the again. Circle anything that is a question. (about a person, location, topography, question about the translation.) You can read other translations for some help.

 Underline for highlight anything that jumps out at you as significant.

**Lectio Divina** – This is a spiritual practice that involves reading a scripture passage, meditating and prayer that allows us to focus on God.

**Meditation**

Walk or go to a Labyrinth and focus the themes in the text/s. If you aren’t near a Labyrinth, take a walk in your neighborhood focusing on what caught your attention in the scripture.

**Pick out the text** that you would like to focus on for your sermon. Some people write down the ties that the O.T. text has with the gospel and they include that as they highlight their theme.

**Bible Study Group** – This study group can be from your church or can be people who do not live near you.

 \*\*You have an invitation to attend the Treasure Valley Lutheran group. This group has people from Boise area, Twin Falls, Pocatello and N. Dakota. Mondays at 2:30 pm. Zoom Invite:

**Commentaries:** workingpreacher.org Preachers from all over the U.S., Canada, S. America England and Africa. I find the preachers from other cultures to be helpful. They use the lectionary texts for the week as well as the narrative lectionary. There are commentaries and podcasts.

Need Variety: **Mark Allan Powell** – Prodigal Son/Lost Sons, Trinity Seminary: Father & Younger Son, Eastern Europe – Famine Africa: Lack of hospitality

**PREACHING RESOURCES:**

* WorkingPreacher.com Podcast and Blog from Luther Seminary
* Textweek.com
Great roundup of commentary and resources for each week’s texts
* SundaysAndSeasons.com
*New Proclamation* commentaries are excellent.
* BibleGateway.com Good site for looking at multiple translations in parallel
* Interpreter’s Guide Large one volume commentary that is pretty good.
* A *good* study bible: *Harper-Collins*, *The New Oxford Annotated*, or the *Lutheran Study Bible*.

**First Draft:** Date of Sermon, Text, and theme. You can type it all out or make Notes.

 If you are unsure, write what comes into your mind. You don’t have to use it, just start with your thoughts or questions or insights. I give you permission to have a crappy first draft.

 You can start with what you intend to use as the theme for the scripture passage. Think about why you chose the theme.

Who is this scripture for?

Example: God speaking to the Israelites?

Jesus speaking to the Jews in his hometown?

What was the intended message that the writer was giving?

 What feelings do you have after reading this scripture?

 You may want to look at the scripture from the vantagepoint of one of the people in the story.

**Revisions** – Read through your sermon and see if you have woven the theme throughout. Many black preachers will have the theme be one sentence that is woven into the sermon. The theme can also be a call and response. When I say, “What does God want us to do? You respond: God wants us to love our neighbor.”

 If you or someone else cannot pick up your theme in the sermon, then revisions to add this theme are recommended.

 \*Many pastors require confirmation students to listen to the sermon and answer questions for each week. One of the great questions is: “What is the theme of this sermon?” If the confirmands cannot answer the question, then you may need to make it clearer.

**Readers:** Some people invite folks from their congregation to be their readers for their upcoming sermon. You may want to pick people from many walks of life and a variety of ages. Your reader can be anywhere in the world. You send it, they read it.

**Second Draft –** Pray about what the Reader has suggested. Often my reader will ask me to make something clearer or they want me to re-order the sequence of the sermon.

Again, I read it out loud. This really helps. When we preach, we are not reading it, we are speaking it and our voice and body language needs to reflect the words that we say.

**Practicing to Preach the Sermon:** I suggest that you preach it to a friend or a loved one to get kind feedback. You can preach your sermon to yourself in the bathroom mirror. That way you can get a sense of your body language and facial expressions.

 **Feedback:** You may want to gather a group of people in your congregation that will be kind, helpful and specific feedback after you preach.

**Deadlines:**

For years I have finished the final draft on Saturday mornings.

Now, I have to have it done by Tuesday night and preach it to a camera on Wednesday morning for our recorded worship. Then on Thursday I start the sermon for the Sunday that is 10 days away. I have a good handle on it by Saturday and I preaching the sermon that I recorded on Wednesday on the Sunday.

 For a significant part of the week I have 2 sermons in my head. This can be confusing. I have to remind myself on Saturday what sermon that I am preaching the next day.

 As my church gets the equipment for Live Streaming in the next week and we are trained in the coming weeks, I will be able to change my schedule for sermons.