

Wednesday March 25, 2020 – Continuing Ed Module

Time: Mar 25, 2020 1:00 PM Central Time (US and Canada)

Sharing Our Grief and Our Hope – with One Another As Leaders

Welcome and Centering Time – Jill – 5 minutes

Thank you for connecting with us today. This is the second week of our offering – Being Church in the Time of COVID-19. I am Jill Beverlin – Coordinator of Coaching for the ELCA. The ministry I support in the ELCA is offering these gatherings as a part of an intentional movement from the church-wide office in this time of COVID-19: “Here to Serve”.

Our topic today is Sharing Our Grief and Our Hope with One Another as Leaders. We pray you will find this time together to be a safe - and even brave space for you to bring your fears, your questions, your grief, your anxiety, - and, yes, even your hope! We gather recognizing that we are not going to find “all of the answers” in this session, and at the same time, knowing there is power in being gathered together in community.

We are blessed to have a guest speaker that will share some thoughts with us on the topic of grief and hope. Following this presentation, we will also have an opportunity to break into small groups to have a time of sharing with one another. I want to thank the team of ELCA coaches that have joined us today to help lead these discussions.

Before we begin, invite us to center ourselves in Christ by hearing the words of scripture. When I was thinking about what texts to offer today, I was struck – once again – at the serendipity of things. I needed to look no further than the lessons assigned for this coming Sunday – lessons that many of you are already wrestling with as you prepare to bring the Good News to the people you serve. God’s timing is – as always - simply amazing.

As we stand on the front-end of this pandemic – scrambling to absorb what might be ahead of us, the author of Psalm 130 gives us voice:

130:1 Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD.

130:2 Lord, hear my voice! Let your ears be attentive to my cry for mercy!

As we watch care-givers beg for protective equipment, doctors weeping from the weight of making decisions about who will receive care and who will die, and as we feel the enormous cloud of anxiety & grief settle heavily across our globe ... we hear these words from the Gospel of John, Chapter 11:

11:32 When Mary came where Jesus was and saw him, she knelt at his feet and said to him, "Lord, if you had been here, my brother would not have died."

11:33 When Jesus saw her weeping, and the Jews who came with her also weeping, he was greatly disturbed in spirit and deeply moved.

11:34 He said, "Where have you laid him?" They said to him, "Lord, come and see."

11:35 And Jesus wept.

Let me pause in the reading for a moment and point out something very significant here: Jesus wept even though He knew resurrection was coming. This is important modeling for us!

And the reading continues

11:40 Jesus said to her, "Did I not tell you that if you believed, you would see the glory of God?"

11:41 So they took away the stone. And Jesus looked upward and said, "Father, I thank you for having heard me.

11:42 I knew that you always hear me, but I have said this for the sake of the crowd standing here, so that they may believe that you sent me."

11:43 When he had said this, he cried with a loud voice, "Lazarus, come out!"

11:44 The dead man came out, his hands and feet bound with strips of cloth, and his face wrapped in a cloth. Jesus said to them, "Unbind him, and let him go."

11:45 Many of the Jews therefore, who had come with Mary and had seen what Jesus did, believed in him.

As this story ends we see - on the heels of grief - that we also experience HOPE – the hope we have of the power of the resurrection at work in the world!

It is in this spirit that I introduce to you our guest speaker. Dr. Don Eisenhower is the founder of Coaching at End of Life, ministry and training organization. He is a pastor and a Master Certified Coach (accredited by the International Coach Federation). He is the author of the books *Coaching at End of Life* and *Coach Yourself Through Grief*. Don has a passion to help people live fully until they die. He enjoys teaching and equipping coaches, hospice workers, funeral directors, clergy, friends and family members to better support and care for the dying and grieving in their midst.

Don has personally helped me navigate the grief of losing my youngest son and both of my parents in a relatively short time. Professionally, he is our newest training partner in helping to equip our coaching ministry to accompany others through losses in life.

It's an honor to call Don my colleague and friend – and I am confident you will walk away with a new perspective on LIFE after journeying with Don.

Presentation – Don ~ 20 minutes

- Normalizing our reactions
- ***Self-care***
- Coach Yourself Through Grief
- Grief & Hope in the same space

Break into small groups via breakout session function – by 1:30pm Central

Gather back into large plenary – by 1:55pm Central

- Don pray us out – by 2pm