

**WESLEY LEADERSHIP INSTITUTE**  
**September - 2016**  
**Holston Conference of the United Methodist Church**



## The CEU News

Continuing  
Education  
Update

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*Muslims & Christians in Appalachia:  
Mapping a Future Together*  
October 1, 2016 Johnson City, TN 0.5 CEUs

Sponsored by the Holston Conference Muslim Outreach Team, this event is for members of the United Methodist church interested in building personal relationships within the Muslim community. Featured speakers include Bruce and Emy P. and Rebekah S., who lived among Muslims for years, and Rev. Steven D. Martin, Communications Director at the National Council of Churches, USA, who will talk about love as a Christian ethic and strategy. Limited seating - See event info link above for registration information.

### QUICKLINKS:

- [Check CEU Report](#)
- [Apply for CEU Credit](#)
- [Evaluation Form](#)
- [Gift Certificate](#)

*CEF 2016: Real.Relevant.Community*  
October 9 - 13 Nashville, TN 1.6 CEUs

This year's CEF Retreat will feature Diana Butler Bass as key-note speaker, Rev. Vance as Bible Study leader, and Chris Bell as music director. Join Diana as she shares her insights about the future of church & religion while we explore what it



# Sermon Academy



Sermon Academy  
October 24 Sevierville, TN 0.5 CEUs

This workshop, led by Rev. Susan Leonard-Ray, Anderson District Superintendent in SC Conference, will be a gathering of those who rely on and value words to help people connect to the Living Word. During our time together, we will focus on preaching possibilities for the Advent journey, exploring both lectionary and non-lectionary options for helping people live toward the joy of Christmas. We will talk about the practical aspects of sermon preparation that help real faith connect with real life.

## CLERGY NOTES:

Just another reminder to **take your QUADRENNIUM CEU report to your charge conference**. The annual report in your online profile refers to the **NEW** appointment year (July 1, 2016—June 30, 2017). The quad report will show all the credits you earned during the last quadrennium. The required number of CEUs is 12. If you still have events to report for that period, you can either submit them to me via online reporting or send me an email (sueweber@holston.org) with a relevant certificate or event details.

## MONTHLY MESSAGE:

### Congregations as Political Systems

- by David Brubaker (© Lewis Center 6/22/16)

Congregations, like all organizations, are arenas for political activity. While we tend to think of politics as pertaining to governmental entities, the phrase “workplace politics” communicates the reality that political activities occur in multiple organizational settings. Power and authority are negotiated and contested in every organization, thus political activity is also endemic in every organization. While every congregation is indeed a political system, political activity does not need to be manipulative, polarizing, or personally demeaning.

When citizens leave their homes to “assemble” in a synagogue or church, they inevitably form a political system as well as a spiritual and social one. Yet the reality that congregations are not only spiritual and social systems but also political ones is for many congregants a deeply disturbing thought. Politics appears to be brutish, nasty, and coarse — particularly in the current U.S. election cycle. Bringing such malodorous activities into a religious congregation strikes many congregation members as something abhorrent. Can a congregation be a healthy political system, or are we condemned to replicate the political grandstanding, intransigence, and polarization that now dominate our national politics?

I would suggest that there are four essential requirements for a congregation to function as a healthy political system:

#### 1. *Clear and consistent decision-making policies and practice*

Destructive political activity often results when individuals and groups in a congregation do not understand — or do not trust — existing decision-making mechanisms. Fuzziness in decision-making is a chronic cause of negative politics in congregations.

#### 2. *Clear lines of authority and accountability*

Position descriptions for professional staff are as essential for healthy congregational functioning as they are in any other organization. Periodic role clarification is needed as individual positions turn over or are revised. Every position description should also clarify to whom that position is accountable, and provide for annual review and accountability, in order to ensure meaningful accountability.

#### 3. *Clear channels for communication and participation*

Nearly every congregation I've attended or worked with gave significant attention to how it was communicating “to” the congregation. The combination of verbal announcements when the congregation gathers, a printed bulletin, a website, and email blasts are today all standard. But less attention is given in most congregations to how the leadership hears back “from” the congregation.

Click [here](#) to read the rest of this article.



David Brubaker has consulted on organizational development and conflict transformation in the U.S. and in a dozen other countries. He is the author of *Promise and Peril*, an Alban book on managing change and conflict in congregations.

## UPCOMING EVENTS:

Be sure to visit the Holston [online calendar](#) for a complete list of upcoming events throughout the Conference and beyond.

### September:

#### Welcoming Communities

September 9 Chattanooga, TN 0.5 CEUs

#### Welcoming Communities

September 10 Knoxville, TN 0.5 CEUs

#### Membership to Discipleship

September 19 - 20 Lake Junaluska, NC 1.0 CEUs

#### Connect!

September 20 - 21 Lake Junaluska, NC 1.0 CEUs

#### New Room Conference

September 21 - 23 Franklin, TN 1.0 CEUs

#### Rowan Williams - Bonhoeffer Lectures

September 28 - 29 Sewanee, TN 0.5 CEUs

### October:

#### Muslims & Christians in Appalachia

October 1 Johnson City, TN 0.5 CEUs

#### National Disciple Making Forum

October 6 - 7 Hendersonville, TN 1.0 CEUs

#### Wesleyan Covenant Assoc. Conference

October 7 Chicago, IL 0.8 CEUs

#### Holston Disaster Response Training

October 8 Maryville, TN 0.7 CEUs

#### CEF 2016

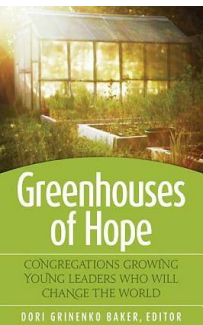
October 9 - 13 1.6 CEUs

#### SoulCare Retreat for Ministry Leaders

October 20 Chattanooga, TN 0.3 CEUs

#### Sermon Academy

October 24 Sevierville, TN 0.5 CEUs



### THIS MONTH'S FEATURED BOOK/VIDEO:

Remember, each book related to ministry qualifies for 0.3 CEUs and 3 books = 1 full CEU. Submit name, author, publisher and date, and a brief review for continuing ed credit.

*Greenhouses of Hope: Congregations Growing Young Leaders Who Will Change the World*  
- by Dori Grinenko Baker

Do you know a church where young people regularly shape the liturgy with words that speak their truth in ways that also inspire their elders? Do you hear about congregations that reach out in quirky new ways to their ailing neighborhoods, instead of locking doors and shipping out to a suburb? Do you find churches creating hospitable space that invites the live wriggling questions and doubts of young people in unhurried, unworried ways? Do you see congregations where young people's gifts are not stored in the basement or bracketed into 'contemporary' worship services but are brought forth and celebrated? The authors who collaborated on this book launched a quest for such vibrant, life-giving, greening congregations and observed the diverse practices that grow there.

They named these churches 'Greenhouses of Hope.' A Greenhouse of Hope is a Christian congregation freeing itself to experiment with both newly imagined and time-honored ways of following the path of Jesus. Its members respond to God's love through practices that genuinely embrace the gifts of youth and young adults. Out of these greenhouses emerge young leaders who want to change the world.

In Greenhouses of Hope, Dori Baker and six contributors tell the stories of these remarkable congregations, helping others think about how they can create space for the dreams of young people to be grafted into God's dreams for the world.

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