

Dear Colleague,

Your voice can help transform how we talk about dying in America—changing the culture from one that doesn't talk about crucial end of life matters, to one that does.

At The Conversation Project, our mission is to ensure that everyone's wishes for end-of-life care are both expressed and respected. While 90 percent of Americans think it is important to share their wishes for care through the end of life with their loved ones and doctors, fewer than 30 percent have done so. To narrow this gap, we aim to reach people where they live, work, and **pray** with the message that talking about our wishes is a gift we give our loved ones.

This is where you come in.

We are asking you to commit to preach or teach on the vital importance of having The Conversation with loved ones about each person's unique, values-based wishes for care through the end of life—and to do this during *Conversation Sabbath* which will take place **November 11-20, 2015**.

As clergy, we see how avoiding conversations about our hopes for care at the end of life can leave family members in the dark. Confusion about a loved one's wishes can result in strife at the bedside, increased grief and depression for caregivers, and lasting damage in relationships among the people we love the most.

We tend to think it's always too soon to have these crucial conversations, but often it ends up being too late. During *Conversation Sabbath*, you can share your faith's teachings on this critical topic and encourage your congregants to talk in a familiar setting about what matters most to them--not to wait for a medical crisis in the ICU.

Last fall we tested *Conversation Sabbath* in Greater Boston. Thirty faith leaders participated--joined by dozens of congregations who heard about it through one of our monthly webinars with Conversation Project allies across the country. This year we aim to spread *Conversation Sabbath* nationally.

Talking about what matters most about living (not just what's the matter with us) is a topic that will preach!

It is a topic that need not be glum. In fact, we feel *Conversation Sabbath* is a celebration of:

- Our readiness to talk about a topic that touches us all: the reality of our mortality
- Our readiness to share our wishes for care through the end of life with our loved ones and doctors
- Our readiness to ground our conversations about the kind of care we want in our values and faith

Congregations registered for *Conversation Sabbath* will be promoted through The Conversation Project's social media platforms and its newsletter, and included in press

materials to the media. When you register, we will send you a free digital resource package we call Conversation Sabbath in a Box. In it you will find sample newsletter articles and bulletin inserts, programming suggestions, graphic and text assets to share on social media, and of course, a link to our free, downloadable Conversation Starter Kit guide to get you and your community talking about this tender topic.

Please join us in creating *Conversation Sabbath*. Your voice will make a difference in how everyone's unique wishes for care through the end of life will be expressed and respected. Register your congregation today at <http://goo.gl/forms/3rhG0XpMgg>.

Yours in peace,
Rosemary Lloyd
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* If your liturgical calendar makes preaching on these dates impossible, please let us know what other time you will share the message in 2016. Thank you!