Dear Colleague,

Your voice can help transform how we talk about dying in America--changing us from a culture that doesn’t talk about crucial end of life concerns--to one that does. Please join clergy of many faiths as The Conversation Project celebrates *Conversation Sabbath* **November 11-20, 2016**.\*

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At The Conversation Project, our mission is to ensure that everyone’s wishes for end of life care are expressed and respected. While 90% 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% have done it. To narrow this gap, we aim to reach people where they live, work, and **pray.** This is where you come in.

We are asking you to please commit to preach or teach on the vital importance of having The Conversation with loved ones about our unique, values-based wishes for care through the end of life—and to do this during *Conversation Sabbath,*

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.

We believe the faith community is a powerful voice for change. Last fall we tested Conversation Sabbath in Greater Boston. More than 30 diverse clergy leaders participated, joined by dozens of congregations across the country who heard about it on one of our monthly webinars with Conversation Project allies in more than 350 communities. This year we aim to spread Conversation Sabbath to even more congregations.

Talking about what matters most about living (not just what’s the matter with us) is a topic that will preach (you can find sample sermons from last year in our Community Resource Center at theconversationproject.org

Is a topic that need not be glum. In fact, *Conversation Sabbath* is a celebration--of our readiness:

• 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 to highlight this unique and unifying event. Sample sermons as well as suggestions for supplemental programming on our website’s community resource center.

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://bit.ly/239M7yF>

Yours in peace,

Rev. Rosemary Lloyd

Advisor to the Faith-Based Community for The Conversation Project

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\* If your liturgical calendar makes preaching on these dates impossible, please consider committing to do so on another November weekend.

For more information: Rev. Rosemary Lloyd, Advisor to Faith Communities •rsmlloyd@gmail.com

 Visit our website: theconversationproject.org