

# the conversation project



Bringing Advance Care Planning Conversations to your Congregation



# Staff



## Naomi Fedna

Project Coordinator  
The Conversation Project

- Graduate of University of Massachusetts Amherst
- Graduate student at Harvard Divinity School

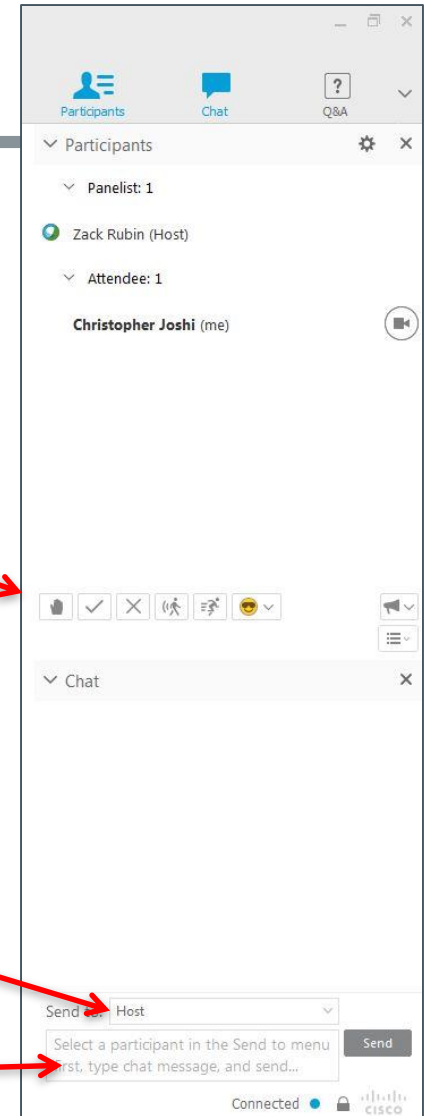
# WebEx Quick Reference

- Welcome to today's session!
- Please use Chat to "All Participants" for questions
- For technology issues only, please Chat to "Host"
- WebEx Technical Support: 866-569-3239
- Dial-in Info: Audio / Audio Conference (in menu)

**Raise your hand**

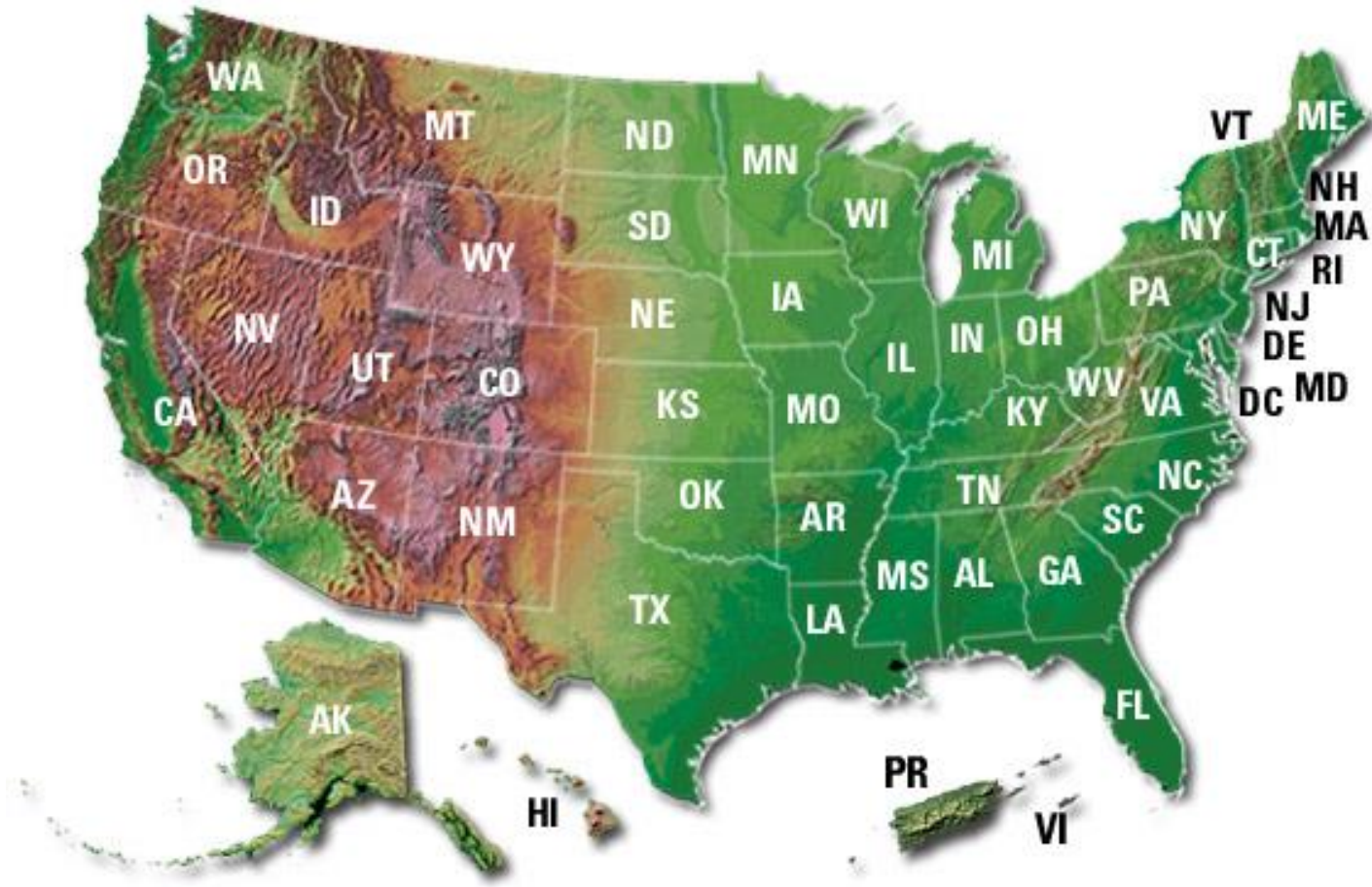
**Select chat recipient**

**Enter Text**



# Where are you located on the map?

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# Faculty

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Rev. Rosemary Lloyd, BSN, MDiv

Advisor to Faith Communities

The Conversation Project

- Graduate Georgetown University and Harvard Divinity School
- Ordained Unitarian Universality Minister, Served The First Church in Boston
- Graduate of Metta Institute
- Former R.N., CPE intern at DFCI, Hospice Volunteer

# What we hope you will take away

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- Insight into the key value of sermons in supporting advance care planning conversations in your community
- Texts and ideas for grounding a sermon on crucial conversations about one's wishes for end-of-life care
- Themes and liturgical calendar
- Motivation to participate in Conversation Sabbath

# Agenda

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- Burning Questions about setting goals
- Why sermons matter
- Texts and Timing
- Stories from the field
- Conversation Sabbath 2018
- Q & A

# Burning Questions

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- If you have a question that arose out of the content from last week—building a team, setting an aim, engaging senior clergy, or assessing your congregation, please enter it into the chat and we will aim to weave answers into tonight's presentation.



# Your Gift of Peace: Clarification

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- St. John the Evangelist, RC, Columbia, MD
- Tallied attendance: 900 participants at 5 events held over 6 months, following 6 months of planning (not all unique)
- # Members of SJE: 3,000
- # Programs: 3 CSK workshops, 2 panels
- Attendance: 100-150 workshops, 200-350 panels
- Follow up: 50% self report completing health care proxies; 25% self report working on them.
- Audrey will join webinar session 5 on programming in two weeks.

# Action for Change

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- Change takes place because people decide to take action
- What action do you want to take?

# Change Ideas for Congregations

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- ❑ **Sermons**
- ❑ Pastoral Care
- ❑ Programming

# Why Sermons Matter

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- Sermons are designed to create change
  - Thinking
  - Feeling
  - Acting
  - In People, Institutions, and Society
- Reach people in a familiar setting
- Often a key element of a weekly service
- Follow up possible since many gather weekly

# “What Matters Most”

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- A topic with universal application
- Requires theological or ethical grounding and guidance, employs storytelling
- Needs to be revisited; people ready to hear at different points in time
- Although a tender topic, provides opportunity to address vital, inspiring, transformational matters (e.g. forgiveness, love, gratitude, values, right relations)

*“Honor your father and mother.”*

Exodus 20:12

*“Treat your parents kindly and with humility.”*

Quran 17:24

*“The inherent worth and dignity of every person.”*

First Principle-UUA

How do we honor... treat  
kindly...uphold dignity without  
having important conversations  
about living and dying?



*“Gather around so I can tell you what will happen to you in the days to come...When Jacob had finished giving instructions to his sons, he drew his feet up into the bed, breathed his last, and was gathered to his people.”*

Genesis 49: 1, 33



*Do we have the courage to talk about living and dying in what seems to be a death-avoidant culture?*

Are we willing to contemplate that unwanted interventions at the end of life may inflict harm and violence?

# Stewardship – Justice – Compassion

How might we integrate our values, faith, and ethics in considering decisions for care at the end of life?

# Other Texts

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- Poems

- When Death Comes, Mary Oliver
- Otherwise, Jane Kenyon
- Lyrics to “When I’m Gone,” Phil Ochs

- Stories:

- The Mustard Seed
- Appointment at Samarra
- Rabbi Yehudah Ha-Nasi and His Housekeeper

# con<sup>versation</sup> sabbath

Oct. 27 – Nov. 5 | #ConvoSabbath



# The Rabbi and The Doctor

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- Rabbi Esther Adler, Mt. Zion Temple, St. Paul, MN, Yom Kippur 2017
- Dr. Jeff Dichter, an ICU Medical Director

# A note of thanks

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“It routinely makes me hurt inside when patients and family are admitted to an ICU, as most have rarely if ever considered what care they truly want, or not.

It is heart breaking to try and help them assimilate it all, and all too frequently decisions are left for families, with left over feelings that may linger for years.

As health care professionals, we sometimes wonder ‘aren’t there others in society who might help all of us consider these things ahead of time?’”

# Thanks, continued

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“You did this in a highly sophisticated, yet understandable way. Your words were both educational and sensitive. And your message was precious: talk about it with your loved ones when you are well, and let them know how you would feel, and what your wishes would be, if you were very sick.

I would encourage you to give this talk as often as practical, to as many audiences as possible, as it is caring for all in very important ways, which may not be fully appreciated until the time comes.”



# Sermons

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- Write and deliver a sermon on why "talking matters" during Conversation Sabbath, adding a call to action to have "The Conversation"
- Identify preaching themes and supporting texts to ground and guide a sermon on the topics that touch us all. (e.g. aging well and wisely, caregiving, caregivers, ethics, and suffering)

# Preaching and Teaching

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- Plan and implement a thematically integrated, intergenerational worship service that addresses the importance of having The Conversation
- Identify 4 times in the liturgical year when a service with a “Conversation” or “Death and Dying” theme would have integrity
- Prepare a list of texts, readings, poems, and hymns that could be used in a service during “Conversation Sabbath”, recognizing there are elements of celebration to be incorporated
- Identify members of the congregation who would be prepared to testify or tell a story during a service about the challenge or blessing of having “The Conversation” and the difference it made
- Write and share your own story about an experience of a hard or a good death and what it taught you

# Q & A

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- Any questions?

# Action and Accountability

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## Getting Started:

- Continue thinking about what texts might ground a sermon on the importance of having The Conversation. What stories or poems as well as sacred texts could be used?

# Pre Work for Next Call

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- Reflect on what Pastoral Care means in your context and how Advance Care Planning or The Conversation Project fit into your ideas about what constitutes Pastoral Care.
- Find Conversation Starter Kits on the website. Review the Alzheimers/Dementia kit and How to Be/Choose a Health Care Proxy

# Next Call

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**The next session on Pastoral Care will be:  
Tuesday, May 8, 2018 @ 8:00-9:00 PM EDT**

**We are delighted that the Rev. Gloria White-Hammond, MD, MDiv, will join us.**

**Before shutting down your computer, please complete the survey that will pop up at the conclusion of this call.**

**THANK YOU! Have a beautiful week!**

# When I'm Gone

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“And I won't breathe the bracing air when I'm gone  
And I can't even worry 'bout my cares when  
I'm gone  
Won't be asked to do my share when I'm gone  
So I guess I'll have to do it while I'm here.”

-Phil Ochs