



# Together We Thrive

A collaboration of the Southern New England Conference, UCC, the New England Synod ELCA, Lutheran and the Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts, that is funded by Lilly Endowment, Inc.

## ***Newly Forming Affinity Group for Preachers***

### ***What is an Affinity Group?***

An Affinity Group is a small group that gathers in person four times per year around a specific topic, learning goal or type of ministry work. The group is led by a topic expert who plans each gathering, resources the group and facilitates group conversations.

### ***Affinity Group for Preachers***

Preaching is the one constant, every week, but preachers rarely find ways to talk about their sermons. In this group you will find ideas for organizing sermons that make preaching easier and more effective. You will meet a cohort of other preachers and together share our enthusiasm for the art and craft of preaching. Together, we will talk about how to deliver a message that touches your congregation, and addresses today's spiritual hunger. We will also talk about the spiritual discipline of preaching and how sermons feed your soul. This group will be a resource for you no matter your experience level, your style of preaching or how you find your texts.

The affinity group will meet on a quarterly basis beginning in Fall 2020. Due to the nature of the group, participants will need to be able to meet in person. Location will be determined once participants are registered.



**Rev. Dr. Susan Cartmell** author of the book, [UnCommon Preaching](#), will be leading this group. Susan has led several workshops on preaching at Super Saturdays. She regularly hosts a table at the Festival of Homiletics where she talks to preachers from across the country. She presented at Preaching Academy for the Missouri Conference of the UMC. Preaching has become, for her, a spiritual discipline that nurtures her faith.

### ***Participation Fee - \$250***

Each group costs over \$7,000 to run for a year. A grant from the E. Rhodes and Leona B. Carpenter Foundation and a small portion of the Lilly Endowment grant that funds Together We Thrive covers more than 75% of this cost. This incredible opportunity is available to clergy for \$250 per person for the year, which can be paid in installments. A minimum deposit of 25% is due to reserve your spot. For installment plans, the final payment must be received before the final gathering begins. Payments must be made to Together We Thrive and not to the leaders.

If you would like to participate in this Affinity Group or others, please register at [www.TogetherWeThriveGrant.org/AffGroupReg](http://www.TogetherWeThriveGrant.org/AffGroupReg) or contact Rev. Heather Ramsey Mabrouk - [Ramsey-mabroukh@sneucc.org](mailto:Ramsey-mabroukh@sneucc.org), the Together We Thrive Program Coordinator.