

This webinar is produced by PRC – Practical Resources for Churches



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About PRC

PRC is a non-profit denominational resource center offering consultants, workshops, webinars, and resources to congregations.

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North Carolina Synod, ELCA
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Clergy and Laity Wellness and Flourishing

Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund



The work of clergy is sacred

The cost of discipleship

The joy of discipleship

Extremes of highs and lows occupational hazards

Clergy experience role complexity and role overload

Preacher. Teacher. Pastor. Counselor. Plumber.
Mediator. Janitor. Administrator. Organizer.

Clergy Stressors

- Secondary trauma from grief counseling
- Mediating conflict
- Criticism from congregation
- Impossible to please everyone
- Working with volunteers to fulfill the mission and vision

Clergy Stressors

- Struggling and shrinking congregation
- Lack of financial resources
- Exposure of family to pressures from the church
- Absence of a life of predictability

Impact of Stressors on Clergy

- Depression: chronic sadness and loss of interest
- Anxiety: chronic worry and obsessive thoughts
- Burnout: chronic energy depletion and exhaustion

Barriers to Positive Mental Health

- Lack of social support (network of support)
- Social isolation (feeling lonely)
- Financial stress (low pay and high debt)

What is mental health?

- Psychological, emotional and social wellbeing
- Mental health includes positive and negative emotions

What is flourishing?

- Experiencing positive mental health
- Wellbeing at your foundation

Positive Emotions

- JOY
- GRATITUDE
- CONTENTMENT
- INTEREST
- PRIDE
- AMUSEMENT
- AWE

Negative Emotions

- FEAR
- ANGER
- SADNESS
- MAD
- GUILT
- ANXIETY
- DESPAIR

Power of Positive Emotions

- Helps us survive
- Helps us in times of stress
- Helps us connect to others
- Helps us to heal
- Helps us to recover physically and mentally
- Helps us to flourish

Influence of Positive Emotions

- Joy: playful, getting involved
- Gratitude: creative urge to be social
- Contentment: savor life and integrate experiences
- Interest: explore and learn

Influence of Positive Emotions

- Pride: dream big
- Amusement: share, laugh, joviality
- Awe: absorb and accommodate

Flourishing Behaviors

- Volunteer our time
- Feel playful
- Socialize with people we don't know
- Donate to causes
- Set higher goals for ourselves

Flourishing Behaviors

- Increased interest in engaging in physical activities
- Increased willpower to overcome temptations
- Persist at a task longer
- Generate creative solutions

Two Kinds of Happiness: We Need Both

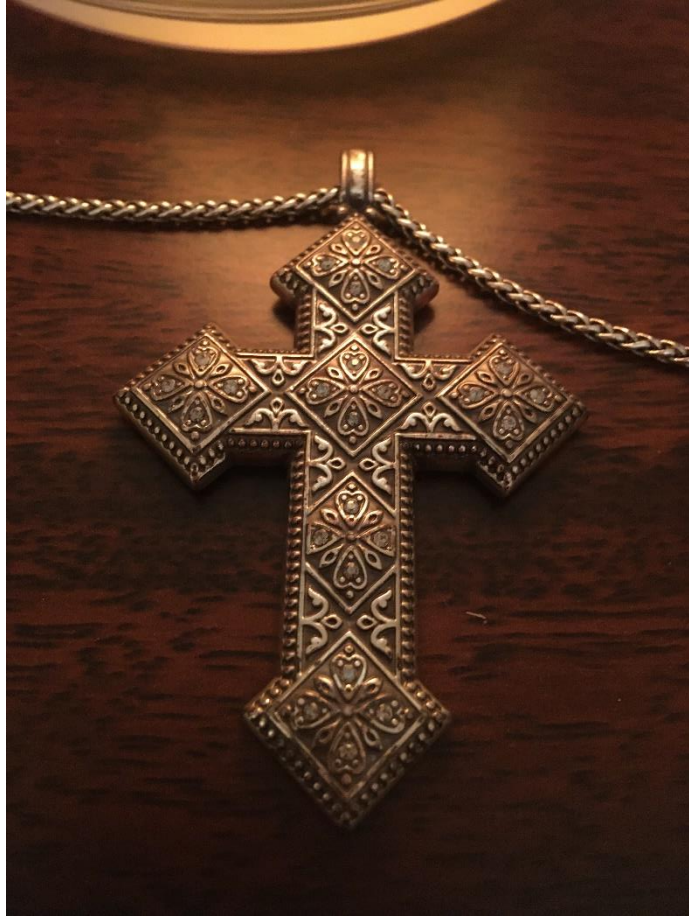
- Individual: How well you are doing as an individual
 - Have meaning in your life
 - Accepting of yourself
 - Feeling like you are growing as a person
- Collective: How well you are doing with other people
 - Having a sense of belonging
 - Contributing to the wellbeing of others

Key to Clergy Flourishing

- Sense of success comes not from the pews, but from knowing you are doing your all to fulfill your calling to serve God

Key to Clergy Flourishing

- Embrace the process and not perfection, knowing that you are working with God and God is guiding your ministry



Key to Clergy Flourishing

- Discernment: spiritual disciplines like prayer, bible study and meditation guide your understanding of the work God calls you to do



Physical and Mental Health

Make physical and mental health a priority

- Mindfulness in our eating and drinking habits
- Go to the doctor to get annual physicals and mental health check-ups
- Go outside and get fresh air



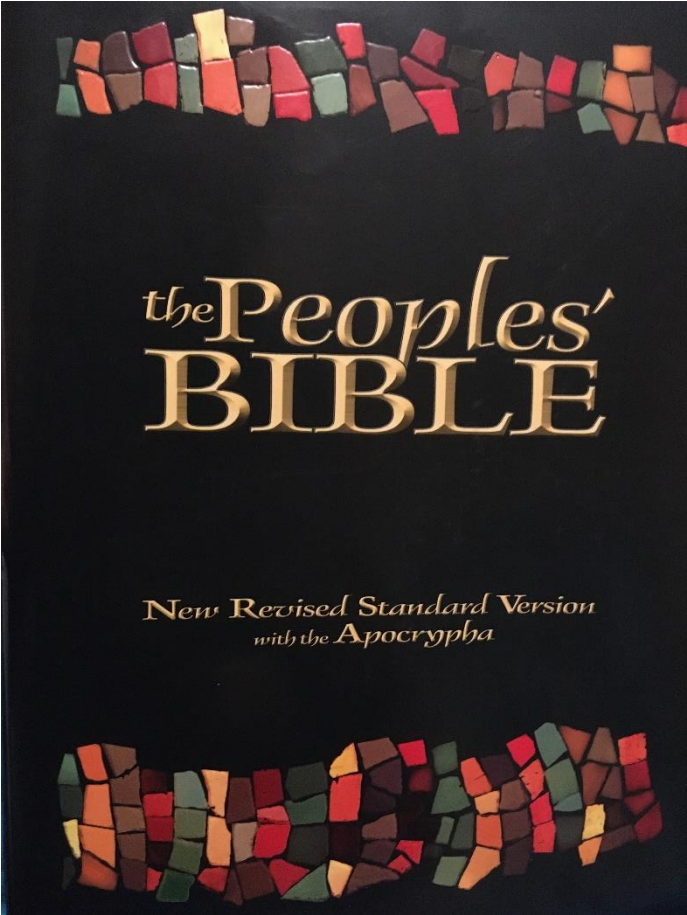
Physical and Mental Health

- Go for walks, bike rides, yoga, move your body
- Make healthy activities a priority
- Connect to a therapist or counselor



Spiritual Health Care

- Invest in your own spiritual health care
 - Create a daily practice of reading scripture
 - Set aside time for daily prayer and one-on-one time with God
 - Keep regular days of Sabbath
 - Connect to a spiritual director



the Peoples'
BIBLE

*New Revised Standard Version
with the Apocrypha*

Personal Interests

- Invest in Personal Interests
 - Make time to play
 - Enjoy a hobby
 - Spend time with friends
 - Have FUN

EXPLODING KITTENS®

ORIGINAL EDITION



A CARD GAME
FOR PEOPLE WHO ARE INTO
KITTENS AND EXPLOSIONS
AND LASER BEAMS
AND SOMETIMES GOATS.

AGES 7+
2-5 PLAYERS
2 MIN TO LEARN
15 MIN TO PLAY

#1
MOST-BACKED
KICKSTARTER
EVER

Setting Boundaries

- Separate work life and personal life
- Cluster work meetings to protect down time/free time (meetings only one night a week)
- Set “office hours” for the week and let the congregation know
- Manage technology by taking a tech-Sabbath

Setting Boundaries

- Communicate clearly when you take Sabbath (consider putting it under the signature of your emails)
- If you get a request on your day off, offer an alternative date
- Get clear communication from the church about their expectations and be honest about where they differ from your own expectations

Flourishing Friendships

- Find another pastor who can serve as a mentor
- Form or join a peer or covenant group
- Find at least one person you can confide in and get spiritual and emotional support to share personal and ministerial challenges

Flourishing Friendships

- Connect with friends regularly
- Create an “Accountability Partner” where you can share specific stressors and check-in regularly to help you maintain boundaries

A screenshot of a Zoom meeting interface. The main area is a 3x3 grid of video thumbnails. The top row contains Libby Davis Manning, Sarah, and Heather Apel, IN-KY Synod. The middle row contains Teresa "Terri" Hord Owens, Aleze Fulbright, and Leah Gunning Francis. The bottom row contains Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows, Jessicah Duckworth, and a placeholder for Verity Jones. A control bar at the bottom includes icons for Participants (9), Chat, Share Screen, Record, and Reactions. A tooltip is visible over the microphone icon, stating: "Mute My Audio (Alt+A). Or you can simply press and hold the space bar to temporarily unmute."

Libby Davis Manning

Sarah

Heather Apel, IN-KY Synod

Teresa "Terri" Hord Owens

Aleze Fulbright

Leah Gunning Francis

Jennifer Baskerville-Burrows

Jessicah Duckworth

Verity Jones

Stop Video

Participants 9

Chat

Share Screen

Record

Reactions

Mute My Audio (Alt+A). Or you can simply press and hold the space bar to temporarily unmute.

Supports to Clergy Wellbeing

- A sense of spiritual wellbeing
- Positive congregations (health and vitality)
- Congregation support of clergy
- Trust in the denominational church structure and support
- Hopeful about the future ministry opportunities

Self-Care is not selfish

Self-Care is a JUSTICE issue

How are you being a
good steward of your
own wellbeing?



Resources

- National Alliance on Mental Illness (NAMI) www.nami.org
- United Church of Christ Mental Health Network www.mhn-ucc.org
- Duke Divinity School Clergy Health Initiative www.divinity.duke.edu
- Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund, Minister for Disabilities and Mental Health Justice with the United Church of Christ email: lunds@ucc.org
- Website: www.sarahgriffithlund.com
- *Blessed are the Crazy: Breaking the Silence About Mental Illness, Family and Church* (Chalice Press, 2014)