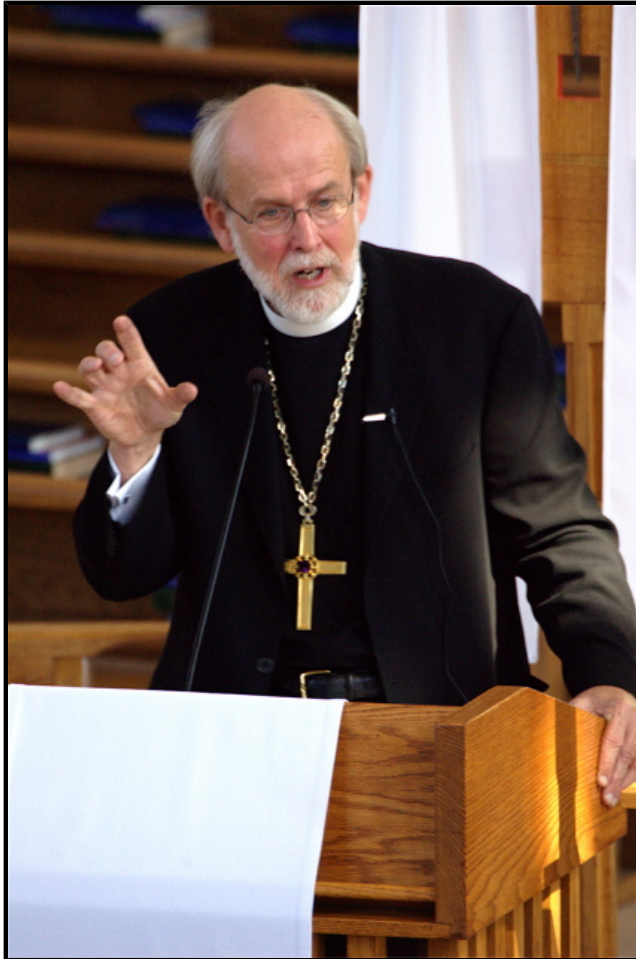


PREACHERS' RETREAT

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Preaching is at the very heart of the pastoral office. While there are many things that a pastor is called to do, the proclamation of the Word strikes not only at the heart of the office, but at the heart of the



faith.

Perhaps because it is so central to the pastoral calling, preaching makes demands – on our minds, on our times, on our energies. And over the course of time, the demands can deplete our resources and our service as proclaimers of the Word.

The Preachers' Retreat is uniquely designed to provide refreshment for the preachers' body, mind, and spirit. In a relaxed setting away from telephones, meetings, and other distractions, The Preachers' Retreat will sharpen our skills and nurture our spirits for the one task that we're called to do week in and week out. The schedule of The Preachers' Retreat is a balanced blend of renewing the mind and the spirit.

A retreat is by definition a time and place away from the routine. Here one can focus on prayer, scripture, and time of silence for the sake of finding renewal for

the life of the Spirit. The schedule of The Preachers' Retreat includes abundant opportunities for both corporate worship and individual prayer.

No one knows the demands of preaching better than preachers. An important part of this retreat will be the support and collegiality that comes from brother and sister pastors whose lives are given to the same calling. Retreat participants will be placed in small groups of 6-8 preachers. These small groups will be the setting for deep engagement with the preaching task, honing skills, building up the spirit, and developing relationships of support.

Perhaps the most unique aspect of The Preachers' Retreat is the engagement with the preaching task. Each small group will be facilitated by a veteran preacher recognized for his or her preaching skill and pastoral spirit. These trained facilitators will guide the group through an enriching process of engagement with sermons that come from members of the group. Retreat participants will submit a recorded copy of a sermon preached from their pulpit, in their setting, in front of their people. The facilitators will study the recorded sermons prior to the retreat, paying particular attention to the unique strengths of each retreat participant. Clips from these recorded sermons will provide touchpoints for building the various preaching skills for the entire small group. Because of the unique design of the retreat, only clergy who regularly preach are invited to register for The Preachers' Retreat.

Much care is taken in the training of the facilitators to insure that the small groups will be the kind of supportive environment in which edifying and upbuilding conversation will lead to growth. Each retreat participant is a part of a team of mutual edification, all working together toward the goal of renewal of the preacher as person and the person as preacher.

The schedule and format of The Preachers' Retreat is in large part the brainchild of Dr. Walter Wangerin. A great preacher himself, Walt has a passion for the pursuit of excellence in preaching throughout the church. The structure and design of The Preachers' Retreat takes Wangerin's long years of experience in teaching creative writing and applies it to a supportive setting for renewing the church's preachers. Each of the facilitators has been trained by Dr. Wangerin and has experienced the same process that he or she will be leading for retreat participants.

The Preachers' Retreat is sponsored by the Institute of Liturgical Studies at Valparaiso University. Long a dream of the now sainted Dr. David Truemper, the Advisory Council of the Institute began planning for The Preachers' Retreat as a way to honor the vision of Dr. Truemper. After hearing from focus groups at the Institute of Liturgical studies, and convening a small group of pastors and academics to give some initial form to the retreat, the Advisory Council gave the green light to offer the inaugural retreat in the spring of 2008.

[For information about the next Preachers' Retreat, January 25-27, 2010, please click here.](#)