

Local Pastor, Certified Lay Minister & Advanced Lay Speaker Training Preaching/Worship Resources

Updated February 2022

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Preaching/Presenting Resources

- *Communicating for a Change: Seven Keys to Irresistible Communication* by Andy Stanley and Lane Jones – ME/WE/GOD/YOU/WE model and preaching without notes
- *The Naked Presenter: Delivering Powerful Presentations With or Without Slides* by Garr Reynolds – covers basics of presenting/public speaking in any venue
- *Preaching* by Fred Craddock – a classic guide to every aspect of preaching, from context to scripture study to selecting a form to delivery
- *A Sermon Workbook: Exercises in the Art and Craft of Preaching* by Leonora Tubbs Tisdale and Thomas H. Troeger – exercises in preaching skills
- *Unleashing the Word: Preaching with Relevance, Purpose & Passion* by Adam Hamilton – how to plan & prepare series
- *What Do They Hear?: Bridging the Gap Between Pulpit & Pew* by Mark Allan Powell – illustrates differences between the way the people & preacher interpret scripture
- Workingpreacher.org – Resources for preaching. Lectionary/non-lectionary, includes scripture resources and a podcast called “Sermon Brainwave.”

General Exegesis Sites / Dictionaries

- blueletterbible.org – a helpful resource for exploring the Bible in the original languages using Strong’s numbers
- *Dictionary of Biblical Imagery* – describes how an image (e.g., water) is used throughout the Bible
- *HarperCollins Bible Dictionary, Revised* – an affordable one-volume Bible dictionary
- wesley.nnu.edu/john-wesley/john-wesleys-notes-on-the-bible – Wesley’s Explanatory Notes on the Bible

Worship Planning / Lectionary

- [Breakthrough](#) Manual and Worship series, published by Greater NJ Annual Conference – based on the Andy Stanley model
- textweek.com – helpful resource for lectionary-based preaching & worship planning
- theafricanamericanlectionary.org – a resource for lectionary texts from an African American perspective. Though no longer being updated, resources continue to be available.
- re-worship.blogspot.com – liturgy & prayer resources arranged by topic, lectionary & scripture (no longer being updated).
- lectionaryliturgies.blogspot.com – liturgies organized according to the lectionary
- leadinginworship.com – liturgies by Carol Penner, including offertory resources (Mennonite)
- umcdiscipleship.org/worship/worship-planning – lectionary planning tools, including lectionary-based series, hymn suggestions & offertory prayers
- *The United Methodist Music and Worship Planner* – published annually, includes the text of all the lectionary readings for each week and hymn suggestions
- marciamcfee.com/worship-design-studio – Marcia McFee resource for worship planning (paid service). Sanctifiedart.org is a similar resource.
- lectionary.library.vanderbilt.edu – Vanderbilt Library lectionary resource

Other Models of Preaching

- *Determining the Form: Structures for Preaching* by O. Wesley Allen – looks at several alternative forms for sermons
- *The Homiletical Plot: The Sermon as Narrative Art Form* and *The Sermon: Dancing the Edge of Mystery* by Eugene Lowry – describes a method for preaching based on ideas from plot development in drama that came to be called the “Lowry Loop”
- *The Four Pages of the Sermon* by Paul Scott Wilson – an alternative method of preaching that moves from trouble in the text/in the world to good news in the text/in the world

Commentaries

- *HarperCollins Bible Commentary, Revised* – an affordable one-volume commentary
- *The Good News According to Matthew / Mark / Luke* by Eduard Schweizer – though dated, helpful commentaries for preaching
- *Women’s Bible Commentary, 3rd edition* by Jacqueline Lapsley, et al.
- *New Daily Study Bible* (17 volumes, New Testament) – an affordable (\$215), helpful commentary for preachers, though the scholarship is 50+ years old
- *The New Interpreter’s Bible Commentary* (10 volumes) – though pricey (\$400) this is a complete and relatively up-to-date commentary set that is used by many UMC pastors
- *Invitation to Mark* by Paul J. Achtemeier – a tiny, insightful commentary for preaching
- *Speaking Parables: A Homiletic Guide* by David Buttrick – helpful commentary and sermons on the parables by a great preacher (who preaches incredibly short sermons)
- *The Gospel in Parable: Metaphor, Narrative and Theology in the Synoptic Gospels*, by John R. Donahue – helpful when preaching the parables
- *The Africana Bible: Reading Israel’s Scriptures from Africa and the African Diaspora* by Hugh R. Page, Jr., et al. – African & African American perspectives on the Old Testament
- *True to Our Native Land: An African American New Testament Commentary* – Mitzi J. Smith, et al.
- *Feasting on the Word* – A lectionary-based resource, again pricey (\$400) but well done.
- *The Women’s Lectionary: Preaching the Women of the Bible Throughout the Year* by Ashley M. Wilcox – A year’s worth of texts and commentary focused on women of the Bible and feminine imagery of God.
- *The Queer Bible Commentary* by Deryn Guest – brings together academic voices specializing in gender, sexuality, and Biblical studies

A Suggested Process for Building a Commentary Library

It’s good to buy individual titles rather than a full set because the quality of the authors will vary across ANY series. If you buy individual titles, you will get the best commentaries on each individual book of the Bible.

You might start your search at a website like bestcommentaries.com which rates different titles (though it skews more white & evangelical in its approach). Then go to Amazon.com to see how the top-recommended commentaries are rated & reviewed there. If you can, download a Kindle sample before you commit. Many commentaries are overly technical and not super helpful for preaching if you don’t have a strong background in Greek or Hebrew. Don’t forget that many books are available either USED or on Kindle at a significant discount.

Depending on what parts of the Bible you tend to preach the most, to get started, you will probably need:

- a Bible Dictionary,
- at least 2 commentaries on each of the gospels and Acts
- 2 on Genesis,

- 1 on Isaiah,
- 1 on Psalms,
- 1 for each of the New Testament letters (often you can find one that covers several letters at once),
- PLUS a one-volume commentary for everything else.

Pastors under appointment can use their reimbursement account to purchase reference books. Plan your purchases and gather a library little by little. If you know someone who is retiring, ask if you can take a look through their library!

More Ideas:

- 1) Include ministrymatters.com
- 2) Also emphasize the need for multiple VOICES when constructing a preaching commentary library