Introducing Forward Together in Faith -- Customizable Newsletter Articles and Talking Points

You can use these articles to spread the word about Forward Together in Faith in your newsletters, website, e-news, or as outlines for short “temple talks” during worship.

* Articles are perfect for your newsletter and website.
* Teasers are useful in e-newsletters (linked to the article on your website or to [www.forwardtogetherinfaith.org](http://www.forwardtogetherinfaith.org))
* Social media posts are short sentences you can use on your Facebook and Twitter feeds.

You can edit and personalize these messages, but please don’t change the meaning of the message.

Keep link your messages to our Synod messages:

* The Synod hashtag is **#sepaforward**. Please use it in your posts and encourage your members to use it as well.
* The campaign website is [www.forwardtogetherinfaith.org](http://www.forwardtogetherinfaith.org). You can also use bit.ly/sepafwd in social media.
* The Synod Facebook page is **Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod (SEPA), ELCA**, at [www.facebook.com/SEPASynod](http://www.facebook.com/SEPASynod).
* On Twitter, the Synod is @sepasynod.

Always include links, especially in electronic communications. If you prefer, link to where you have posted information on your website. Or link to the campaign website at <http://www.forwardtogetherinfaith.org>.

Announcing a congregational information session or adult forum:

What’s Forward Together in Faith All About?

Forward Together in Faith is reshaping our Synod as a network for equipping leaders, innovating ways of being church together, and communicating what God is doing through us. Join our connector(s), (names), for a/an presentation and discussion/adult forum on (date), (time) in (location).

Tweet:

Learn about #sepaForward Together in Faith (day, time) at (place).

What is Forward Together in Faith?

(Your congregation name) is participating with the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod in the Forward Together in Faith Campaign. This initiative will focus on four key areas:

* Equipping – The church is changing, and our Synod will help leaders learn how to be more effective and creative in this environment. The Synod will also increase financial aid to seminarians, so that new pastors do not have so much education debt in their first calls.
* Innovating – Our Synod will continue to start new faith communities, many of which will serve people on the margins of society. Congregations will be encouraged to start new ministries that reach people not engaged in the church.
* Communicating -- The Gospel story is powerful, and we have to connect with people where they are – even if that is on the Internet. As our Synod explores new communication channels, we’ll train the congregational leaders who tell their stories via the web, email and social media – and new channels that will emerge.
* Networking – We can do so much more *together.* Our Synod will help congregations to work together around shared ministries. Congregations are encouraged to find partners in the church and community to make a difference in the world.

The Forward Together in Faith Campaign will raise $2.5 million so that we can build networks to develop new equipping opportunities, create innovative ministries, and help congregations communicate better.

For more information contact (your connectors) at (phone/email) or visit [www.forwardtogetherinfaith.org](http://www.forwardtogetherinfaith.org).

Teaser:

(Your congregation name) is participating with the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod in the Forward Together in Faith Campaign. This initiative will build networks to develop new equipping opportunities, create innovative ministries, and help congregations communicate better.

Tweet:

(Your congregation) is partnering with @sepasynod to go Forward Together in Faith. <http://bit.ly/sepafwd> #sepaforward

Facebook:

Equipping. Innovating. Communicating. Networking. These are the ways we’ll m ove Forward Together in Faith as the Southeastern Pennsylvania Synod. (link to <http://www.forwardtogetherinfaith.org>)

Forward Together in Faith: A Shared Vision

*I am confident of this, that the one who began a good work among you will bring it to completion by the day of Jesus Christ. – Philippians 1:6*

This Scripture affirms the good ministry we’re doing in Southeastern Pennsylvania, and challenges us to adapt to the new ways God is working here today.

To move Forward Together in Faith, our Synod listened to hundreds of leaders from congregations like (your congregation). Together we hope to reshape the Synod as an interactive network that equips the saints, innovates ways of being church, and communicates what God is doing through us.

The result is the Forward Together in Faith campaign, which will raise $2.5 million by 2018 to help all of us live into this vision.

This is not the Synod’s vision for us – it is *our* vision, together.

For more information contact (your connectors) at (phone/email) or visit [www.forwardtogetherinfaith.org](http://www.forwardtogetherinfaith.org).

Teaser:

(Your congregation) has a shared vision with SEPA Synod to reshape the Synod as an interactive network that equips the saints, innovates ways of being church, and communicates what God is doing through us.

Tweet

Share our vision to network, equip, innovate and communicate! @sepasynod #sepaforward (link)

Facebook:

We’re partnering with SEPA Synod to move Forward Together in Faith to network, equip, innovate and communicate for ministry. #sepaforward (link)

Forward Together in Faith – Innovating

“It’s always important for the church to experiment and try different things, because that’s the example that Jesus gave to us.” – Pastor Violet Little, Welcome Church.

Jesus challenged the disciples, and the religious authorities, to have a larger vision of what God is up to in the world. As people yearn for spirituality and community today, yet disconnect from the church, innovation in ministry is just as important.

Our Synod has planted out-of-the-box faith communities with unhoused people and those returning from incarceration and places of service for young adults. Congregations are birthing theology pubs and coffee talks, feeding the hungry, providing medical care for Africa, and more. This activity sends us to “go and see” what God is doing in our midst.

Forward Together in Faith will raise funds to launch innovative faith communities and help congregations create their own new ministries. For more information contact (your connectors) at (phone/email) or visit [www.forwardtogetherinfaith.org](http://www.forwardtogetherinfaith.org).

Teaser:

Jesus challenged the disciples, and the religious authorities, to have a larger vision of what God is up to in the world. Innovation in ministry is just as important today. (link)

Tweet:

Help us help @sepasynod innovate new ministries by supporting #sepaforward campaign! (link)

Facebook:

Jesus challenged the disciples, and the religious authorities, to have a larger vision of what God is up to in the world. Join with us and SEPA Synod to innovate ministry for the future by supporting Forward Together in Faith. #sepaforward

You can make a difference by supporting (congregation)’s appeal for Forward Together in Faith coming on (dates) (link)

Forward Together in Faith – Equipping

We listened to hundreds of leaders across our Synod and you've shown us that you’re ready to change, and we are ready together to try new things, to take some risks, and to move forward.” – Bishop Claire Burkat

In the good-old days of the 20th Century, being visible and creating new programs helped churches like (congregation name) to grow. Today, surrounded by “Nones” and “Dones” and the spiritual-but-not-religious, we have to try new things to connect.

That’s not what we’ve all learned in church or in seminary. So our Synod’s Forward Together in Faith campaign will raise money to equip congregational leaders to understand and thrive in this rapidly changing ministry landscape. And together we’ll provide support for seminarians so tomorrow’s professional leaders aren’t laden with educational debt.

“This is a campaign to make ministry happen,” says Dan Scharnhorst of Bear Creek Camp. “The Synod is bringing people together, empowering them, equipping them and turning them loose” to change lives.

For more information contact (your connectors) at (phone/email) or visit [www.forwardtogetherinfaith.org](http://www.forwardtogetherinfaith.org).

Teaser:

Leaders from across our Synod are ready to try new things in order to move forward, Bishop Burkat says. Together we’re developing new ways to equip our leaders for the challenges of 21st Century ministry.

Tweet:

@sepasynod is working to equip the saints for 21st Century ministry. Help us support the #sepaforward campaign. (link)

Facebook

Do you know who “Nones” and “Dones” and “SBNR” are? What needs in your community can our church help to meet? Our Synod will equip us to answer these questions and meet the challenges of 21st Century church through the Forward Together in Faith campaign.

Help make this possible by supporting (congregation)’s appeal for Forward Together in Faith on (dates). (link)

Forward Together in Faith – Communicating

“This is an exciting time to be a communicator… But it takes money, and time, and creativity to tell God’s story.” – Pastor Matt Staniz, St. Luke, Devon

“Communicating” used to mean putting out a newsletter. Today there are so many channels used by God’s people – email, video, web, Facebook, Pinterest, Snapchat…not to mention the platforms not invented yet. There’s no simple formula; we have to try multiple channels and learn how to use them effectively.

It’s time to embrace these possibilities, Bishop Burkat says. Through Forward Together in Faith we will ensure the Synod’s ability to keep on top of rapidly changing technologies and share that expertise with the people working on telling (congregation)’s story.

“People are communicating in languages of selfies, of videos and livestreams, of Facebook and social media interactions,” says Bob Fisher, assistant to the bishop for communications. “We want to help our congregations tell their stories in all of those languages, and more.”

For more information contact (your connectors) at (phone/email) or visit [www.forwardtogetherinfaith.org](http://www.forwardtogetherinfaith.org).

Teaser:

There are so many ways of communicating inside and outside our church. Through Forward Together in Faith our Synod will help us learn to tell our story across the many platforms and channels people use today.

Tweet:

Help @sepasynod Lutherans tell God’s story. Support Forward Together in Faith. #sepaforward. (link)

Facebook:

You can help Lutherans in Southeastern PA tell God’s story by helping us support our Synod’s Forward Together in Faith campaign.

Watch for (congregation)’s appeal for Forward Together in Faith on (dates). (link)