RIPPLE REPORT
RETELLING SYNOD EVENTS & THEIR IMPACT

SOUTHWESTERN PENNSYLVANIA SYNOD EVANGELICAL LUTHERAN CHURCH IN AMERICA

Storytelling is a different form of reporting than the journalistic approach upon which many of us were trained. Forget the "Five W's," there is an entirely different set of criteria for being an effective storyteller. This cheat-sheet will help you write an impactful and memorable Ripple Report.

Stories have a hero. Put a person or organization in a more prominent role than the event itself. Tell the story either in first-person from your own perspective, or third-person about the hero.

Stories have a conflict. "Everything was perfect and continues to be" is not very compelling. Don't be shy to admit what was hard or less than ideal, it will increase the celebration of your resolution.

Stories have a beginning, middle, and end. It's a craft to retell your memories in the form of a story arc and doesn't always come naturally. Here are some prompts to help you structure your report:

Beginning
- What instigated the idea? There is often a "pain point" that is a catalyst for what comes next. Set the scene for where the story begins.
- What were your hopes? Speak to the emotion behind the desire to make this happen. What did you hope people would think, feel, or experience as a result?

Middle
- Take us on the journey. What obstacles had to be overcome to make this happen? Who did you need to partner with?
- What was it like? Yes, the event itself is actually just the middle of this story. Tell us what happened.

End
- What resulted? Whether tangibly, intangibly, or emotionally, what will last beyond the moment? Were your hopes realized? Was something else realized instead?
- What is different? Reflect back on the beginning of the story, how has the scene changed from that instigating factor?

Send Ripple Reports to:
Lauren Wolcott, Communications Director: lauren.wolcott@swpasynod.org

(Note: Lauren may edit your report to match the grammatical style of the Chicago Manual. If you want a head start, this includes use of Oxford commas and does not capitalize common nouns.)