

A DIALOGUE

'We, the people of the United States'

An approach to studying the Preamble of the U.S. Constitution.

By Eric H. F. Law
and Lilline Dugan

In the October issue, we provided a process to study and dialogue on the Declaration of Independence. To continue the series of studying important texts of the United States of America, we now focus on the Preamble of the Constitution, which was adopted by a Convention of the States on September 17, 1787, with ratification completed by all thirteen states on June 21, 1788. (They didn't have e-mail then.)

The Preamble consists of well-thought-out action verbs and themes. If you listen to it carefully, you will see how they work together and support each other to create a well-balanced approach to the governance of this country. Of course they continue to be relevant to us today.

(Please see the text on page 4.)

Again, the key tools for ensuring a dialogue process that includes everyone in the group

Please see DIALOGUE, p. 4

Using our fears as a ministry opportunity

Analyze your fears, and you just might find openings for new ministries. In this excerpt from his forthcoming book, 'Finding Intimacy in a World of Fear,' Eric Law explains how linking our fears to their worst-case destinations causes us to see them in their wider context.

By Eric H. F. Law

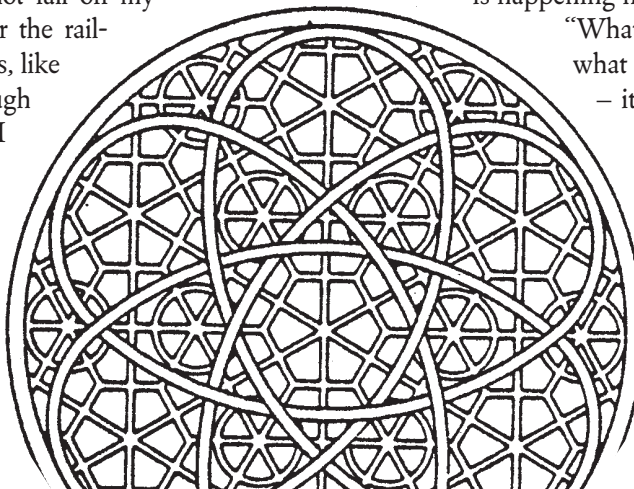
Eric's new book, Finding Intimacy in a World of Fear, is due to be published in February, 2007.

I went to an open house of a condominium for sale on the 30th floor of a beautiful building in Vancouver, British Columbia. It had a fairly good-sized balcony, which, according to the realtor, was a major selling point of this property. Gingerly, I stepped onto the balcony, making sure that it was solidly built and that the floor was not wet or slippery. As I moved toward the railing, I noticed that my heart was pounding a little faster. I pushed against the rail with my hand, making sure that it was also secured before I would lean on it. I held onto the rail with one hand while my other hand automatically moved up toward my face. With my index finger pressed against my glasses to make sure they would not fall off my face, I looked over the railing and down. Cars, like toys, moved through the streets below. I thought to myself: No one would survive a fall from this high up. I looked out and I saw the magnificent view of the city, with the snow-capped mountains

servicing as a backdrop. This was why I stepped out on this balcony on the 30th floor.

I have a fear of heights. I used to be embarrassed to admit it until I started doing research for my new book: *Finding Intimacy in a World of Fears*. The intuitive signal of fear invites us to think and then act in ways that will help us avoid the danger, if there is danger ahead. It should not cause us to panic. Gavin de Becker, author of *The Gift of Fear*, wrote: "The very fact that you fear something is solid evidence that it is not happening. Fear summons powerful predictive resources that tell us what might come next. It is that which might come next that we fear – what might happen, not what is happening now."

"What you fear is rarely what you think you fear – it is what you link to fear. Take anything about which you have ever felt profound fear and link it to each of the possible outcomes. When it is real fear, it will either be in the presence
See FEAR, p. 2



Fears: The opportunities they provide

Continued from page 1

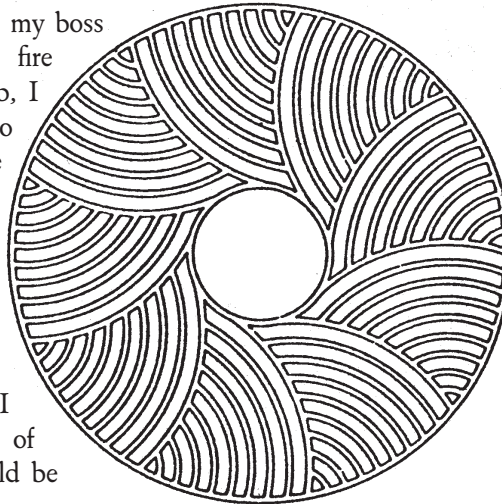
of danger, or it will link to pain or death. When we get a fear signal, our intuition has already made many connections. To best respond, bring the links into consciousness and follow them to their high-stakes destination – if they lead there.” This discipline of linking the fear to the high-stakes or worst-case destination does three things:

1. It helps us determine whether the danger is imminent and therefore requires immediate action. For example, my fear of heights is linked to the physical danger of slipping and falling down 30 stories, which is then linked to the fear of ending up smashed on the pavement below. It takes two links to death. No wonder my heart rate went up, my system went into high alert, and I therefore proceeded with greater caution—checking the balcony floor to make sure it was not slippery and making sure that the railing was solidly built—before I leaned on it. Was I overly cautious? Perhaps. But the bottom line was: I did not trust the railing, the balcony or the building because I was unfamiliar with it. My fear, which led to my cautious behavior, was justified.

2. Linking a fear to its most terrible destination helps us discern an unwarranted fear and therefore alleviate the anxiety that may be triggered by the fear. For example, if I have a fear of speaking in public, this fear could be linked to the fear of being perceived by my audience as incompetent. This

would get back to my boss and she would fire me. Without a job, I would not be able to pay the mortgage of my home or provide for my family and loved ones. My family would reject me. I would be homeless and alone. I would lose sight of who I am. I would be perceived by others as useless and a burden to society. I might die of hunger or catch some nasty disease. I would have not insurance to pay for my needed care and I would die. Although I may link the fear of public speaking to death, I can also see that it would be a long and unlikely trip. Linking a fear to its ultimate terrible destination helps alleviate that anxiety associated with that fear when we discovered that the fear is unwarranted.

3. When we are able to link a fear to its ultimate horrible destination, we can begin to see the fear in its wider context. This is like “going on a ‘train ride’ of inquiry: probing the depths of your fear to the final stop or destination, and then widening fear’s story from this end point.” Continuing with my example of my fear of speaking in public. I took the long train-ride and arrived at the final destination, which is death. Now I knew that it was unlikely that I would die from speaking in public; however, I needed to ask myself: what was the wider story



emerging out of this fear? Perhaps it has something to do with me not trusting my own ability—a lack of self-esteem. This one is easy to deal with. I may take a public-speaking class and learn the skills and techniques to give good speeches and be prepared when I am invited to speak in the future. But there is something deeper in this story of fear. It may have something to do with the fear of being rejected by a community. This is linked to my need for a community that accepts me. But doesn’t everybody need to have a loving accepting community independent of one’s ability to perform? This wider context of this fear caused me to spend my time and energy to learn how to develop affirming, accepting communities not just for myself but for others as well. By pondering the wider story of this fear of public speaking, I discovered an area in my personal life about which I can do something to improve. I also discovered a greater need of others which

then becomes a call to the ministry to develop inclusive communities.

Taking the time to ponder my fear often points to opportunities for ministry. Miriam Greenspan, in her book, *Healing Through the Dark Emotions*, said, “Joyful living is not the same thing as living without fear. It’s about living fully with fear. Joy is what we find when we act with our fear for the sake of life. Mindful fear moves us to act with courage and loving-kindness, in the service of ourselves and others. And these acts of compassion and service are the quickest route to dispelling fear. If you’re afraid of illness, serve someone who’s ill. If you’re afraid of disability, serve someone who’s disabled. If you’re afraid of not having enough, money, work for the poor. If you’re afraid of death, volunteer at a hospice. If you’re afraid of loneliness, work with the elderly shut-ins in nursing homes. Then you will discover the alchemy of fear. Facing into our worst fears – of death, loss, pain, vulnerability, isolation and chaos – takes as much courage as trekking in the wilderness in a snowstorm . . . finding the core of our fear, we find our way.

¹ Gavin de Becker, *The Gift of Fear* (New York: Dell Publishing, 1997), p. 341.

² *Ibid.*, p. 342.

³ *Ibid.*, pp. 342-343.

⁴ Miriam Greenspan, *Healing through the Dark Emotions* (Boston & London: Shambhala, 2004), p. 199.

⁵ *Ibid.*, p. 196.

**SUGGESTED QUESTIONS FOR NOVEMBER
AND THE FIRST SUNDAY OF DECEMBER 2006**

Community Bible Study

By Lilline Dugan, Rondesia Jarrett and Peter Schell

NOVEMBER 12, 2006: *Mark 12:38–44*

✦ What does Jesus teach you in this passage about how to measure your contribution?

NOVEMBER 19, 2006: *Mark 13:1–8*

✦ What does this passage say to you about holy transformation?

NOVEMBER 26: *John 18:33–37*

✦ How does this passage help you to understand what you were born for?

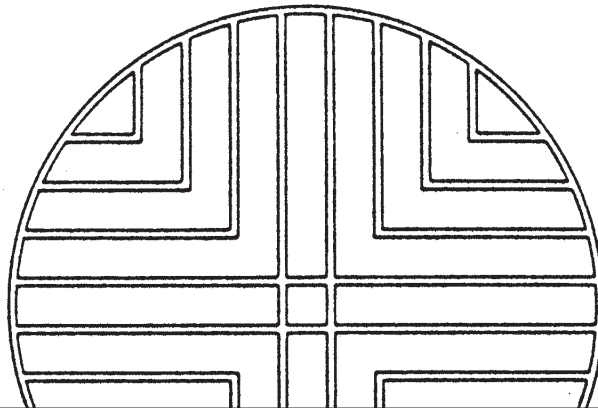
DECEMBER 3, 2006: *Luke 21:25–36*

✦ As a Christian, what does it mean for you to be alert at all times?

We suggest that you study the Gospel passage one week ahead. For example, for the week of Nov. 13–18, study the text for Nov. 19. This way, the participants will go to church on Sunday having already listened and reflected on the Gospel for that Sunday.

These questions are suggestions only. As a leader of the Community Bible Study process, you need to keep the theme of the biblical text and the context of the participants in mind as you determine what is the most appropriate reflection question for your group.

(Go to our website at www.ladiocese.org/ki to download the Community Bible Study process.)



Interested in training at the Winter Institute? (No ski clothes or heavy jackets required.)

There are five people so far interested in a Kaleidoscope Winter Institute (KWI) training similar to the one we did in August, 2006.

We need at least seven more people in order to schedule this event.

If you're interested or know someone who might be, please let us know as soon

as possible at kscopeinstitute@aol.com.

At this point, the format, time and place have not been finalized. However, we are exploring the month of January, 2007. The cost would be \$500 per person, not including room and board, for the six-day course.

—LILLINE DUGAN

Dialogue

Continued from page 1

are the Respectful Communication Guidelines and the process of Mutual Invitation. For this process, a group of 6 to 12 people will be optimal. You can estimate the time needed for the whole process by multiplying the number of participants by five minutes. For example, if you have six participants, the time allotted for the process should be 30 minutes, and for a group of 12, one hour. For groups larger than 12, divide participants into groups of 6 to 12 and make sure you have facilitators who know the process to facilitate each group.

The dialogue process

1. Read the Respectful Communication Guidelines (refer to October newsletter) and invite members of the group to affirm them for their time together.
2. Inform participants that the Preamble of the Constitution of the United States will be read three times. After each reading, participants will be invited to share their reflections using the Mutual Invitation process. If participants have not been introduced to the Mutual Invitation process, describe it clearly (refer to October newsletter.)
3. Invite participants to capture a word, a phrase or image that stood out for them from the

Constitution of the United States

Adopted by convention of States,

September 17, 1787;

Ratification completed, June 21, 1788

PREAMBLE

We the People of the United States, in Order to

form a more perfect Union,

establish Justice,

insure domestic Tranquility,

provide the common Defense,

promote the general Welfare, and

*secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves
and our Posterity,*

do ordain and establish this Constitution for the United States of America.

Preamble.

4. Invite someone to read the text.

5. Observe a moment of silence to capture a word, a phrase or image that stood out from the document for them.

6. Using Mutual Invitation, invite each person to share his or her word, phrase or image briefly. (This should take no more than five minutes.)

7. Review the main themes of the Preamble. You might want to write them on a flip-chart or project them on a screen.

MAIN THEMES IN THE PREAMBLE:

Form a more perfect Union.

Establish Justice.

Insure domestic Tranquility.

Provide common Defense.

Promote general Welfare.

Secure the Blessings of Liberty to ourselves and our Posterity (future generations.)

8. Invite someone to read the document a second time.

9. Invite participants to take the time (5 minutes) to:

a. Select one main theme and share how you have experienced it living in the United States, and

b. Select one main theme and share how you have not experienced it living in the United States.

10. Using Mutual Invitation,

invite each person to share his or her reflection.

11. Invite participants to consider the following question while listening to the document again.

As a result of listening to this document, what are you being called to do or change as a person living in the United States today?

12. Observe a moment of silence to reflect on the question.

13. Using Mutual Invitation, invite each person to share his or her reflection.

14. End the session in a circle: Invite participants to join hands in a circle. Invite each person to mentally complete these sentences:

For a Non-Religious Community:

I am thankful for...

My hopes are...

For a Christian Community:

I thank God today...

I ask God today...

The leader will begin by sharing his or her prayers. After he or she has shared, the leader then squeezes the hand of the person to the right. That will be the signal for the next person to share his or her prayers. If the person does not want to share, he or she can simply pass the pulse to the next person. When the pulse comes back to the leader, he or she can end the dialogue with a closing thought, or (for Christian group) start the Lord's Prayer and invite everyone to join in.

Become a member of the Kaleidoscope Collective

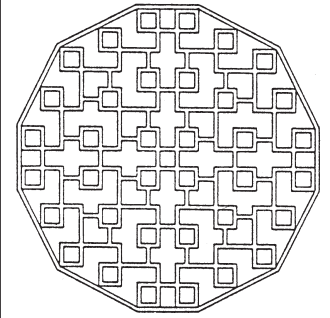
As a member of the KALEIDOSCOPE COLLECTIVE, your church community will receive:

1. **A monthly newsletter** with helpful suggestions on facilitating meaningful dialogue sessions on hot issues of the month, thoughtful questions for weekly Community Bible Study group, information on the latest learning opportunities, book reviews and more.
2. **An annual retreat** (8 hours) facilitated by Kaleidoscope Institute Associates for your vestry. Think of it as an annual check-up on the health of your church community. Based on your ministry goals for the coming year, the Kaleidoscope Institute will strive to meet your leadership training needs by providing monthly training programs that members of the Collective can participate in at a discount rate.
3. **Ten additional hours of consultation/coaching** via telephone and internet with a Kaleidoscope Associate
4. **One scholarship** for the **Kaleidoscope Summer Institute**

Whenever possible, we encourage you to join as a cluster of three to five churches. The clustering of churches can be based on geographic location, and/or common needs and concerns.

COST: \$300–\$1,200 annual fee per church depending on the availability of your resources.

See the application included in this newsletter (on page 6) or visit our website, at www.ladiocese.org/ki to download an application.

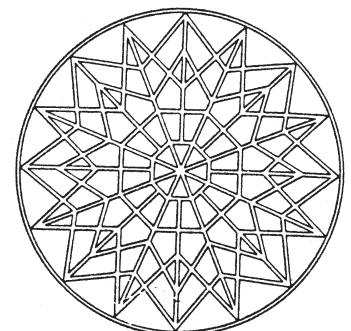


*If you only
want the
newsletter,
not the entire
package*

If you want to receive the monthly newsletter only, the subscription fee is \$60 per year.

Please send the subscription fee to the Kaleidoscope Institute with the following information:

Your **NAME**, **CHURCH AFFILIATION**, **ADDRESS** where the newsletter is to be sent, and **E-MAIL ADDRESS** if you prefer the newsletter to be sent electronically.



Kaleidoscope Collective

Fill out this application and become a member

Church: _____ Denomination: _____

Address: _____ City: _____ State: _____ ZIP: _____

Contact Person: _____ E-mail: _____

Telephone: *(day)* _____ *(evening)* _____

We will contribute \$ _____ for the year 2006–07 to be a member of the Kaleidoscope Collective.

Describe your weekly worship services:

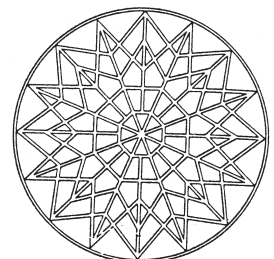
<i>Day of the week</i>	<i>Time</i>	<i>Average attendance</i>	<i>Language(s)</i>
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____	_____

We are joining the Collective with the following church communities:

<i>Church</i>	<i>City</i>	<i>Denomination</i>
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____
_____	_____	_____

Please return the application to:

KALEIDOSCOPE INSTITUTE
840 Echo Park Avenue
Los Angeles, CA 90026-4209



If you have any questions, please contact us at kscopeinstitute@aol.com

Anti-Racism Orientation

Training that offers a positive, constructive approach to addressing a difficult topic

Come and experience a positive constructive approach to addressing this difficult and often emotional topic. You will find out how dealing with the issue of racism can be a life-affirming, mutually challenging and supportive experience. You will also take home practical skills and tools that you can apply to your personal life, your ministry, and your community.

TOPICS TO BE SHARED AND EXPERIENCED

- ♣ What is racism?
- ♣ How has racism affected our lives?
- ♣ How does the Gospel challenge us to address the power dynamics in interracial encounters?
- ♣ What can we do to orient ourselves toward working to dismantle racism?

This workshop will next be offered on:

FEB. 3, 2007

9 a.m.–6 p.m. at the Cathedral Center of St. Paul, Echo Park

Cost: Between \$50 to \$100, depending on the availability of your resources.

KALEIDOSCOPE INSTITUTE
⊕ *for competent leadership in a diverse, changing world* ⊕
840 Echo Park Ave., Los Angeles, California 90026-4209
<http://www.ladiocese.org/ki> • kscopeinstitute@aol.com • 760.409.2635

For members of the Episcopal Diocese of Los Angeles, this workshop will satisfy the mandate from General Convention for all church leaders to complete anti-racism training.



⊕ REGISTRATION FORM *Anti-Racism Orientation Training*

NAME _____ MY CHURCH COMMUNITY _____

MY MINISTRY _____

ADDRESS _____

PHONE (DAY) _____ (EVENING) _____

E-MAIL _____

I would like to register for the following Anti-Racism Orientation Training, scheduled on:

DATE _____

Enclosed is the **registration fee** in the amount of _____ payable to the Kaleidoscope Institute.

Please send completed registration form to: Kaleidoscope Institute, Diocese of Los Angeles, P.O. Box 512164, Los Angeles CA 90051-0164