**<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=uWLNYZZxbCQ&t=627s&fbclid=IwAR3v1hj4cEvmcH4HJs3qY_0CMcHvDC37M938YmX-V8uBgCXSkecJ1jWBNmI>**

**“Letter from a Birmingham Jail” – Metro DC synod + ADLA (PART 1)**

* How many of you have read this letter before? Where did you read it? (school….)
* What do you remember about it? What do you think it’s about?
* Like the Epistles, this letter was part of a conversation (talk about the letters from the white clergy that came before.

**Watch intro (00 – 6.15)**

***Some questions to think about as we listen:***

* What about this makes this feel like it was written in 2021? What resonates for you?
* What phrases jump out at you?
* What connections can we make in historical and recent news?

**Section 1. Pr. Kenneth Wheeler (ending around…)**

* What resonates for you?
* What phrases jump out at you?
* What connections can we make in historical and recent news?
* Knowing that MLK was accused of being someone who was an outsider leading these demonstrations, how did you hear this sections?
  + Compare MLK to Biblical prophets and Apostle Paul going to foreign lands, Like Paul “responding to the call for aid”

**Section 2: Pr. Lamar Bailey, Pr. Gwendolyn King, Pr. Gloria Cline-Smythe, Pr. David Trott (ending around 20:15)**

* What resonates for you? What phrases jump out at you?
* There is a lot of “Birmingham news” – What connections can we make in historical and recent news?
* This is a great time to talk about “nonviolent training” and Gandhi’s influence on MLK
* “Groups tend to be more immoral than individuals” verses “Just be kind to each other” memes and Facebook posts – how is the message of “just be kind to each other” or “I’ll be nice to you if you are nice to me” not enough?

**Section3: B. Patricia Davenport, Pr. Laura Ingersol, Pr. Andrea Walker (ending around 31:25)**

* What resonates for you? What phrases jump out at you?
* What things did you hear that are still happening?
* What is our modern version of “a cup of coffee at a lunch counter” or “Funtown is closed to colored children”?
* “Just” Laws verses “Unjust Laws”
  + Right- and Left-hand kingdom (Luther)
  + Voter suppression in current day
* What other Biblical figures come to mind who disobeyed “Unjust laws” or rulers?
  + The magi with King Herod
  + David and Jonathan
* Are you starting to notice where these wonderful pastors serve (in what synods)?
  + Did you notice that these areas are usually described as “urban”? Mostly Metro DC, SEPA (Philadelphia) Milwaukee (and others)
  + What do you think this says about the Lutheran Church?

**Section 4: Pr. Richard Steward, Pr. Tiffany Chaney, Pr. Lamont Wells (ending in 41:15)**

* What resonates for you? What phrases jump out at you?
* What connections can we make in historical and recent news?
* Name some differences between “Negative Peace” and “actual peace.”
* How do we continue to blame those who have been “robbed”?
* What does MLK see as is the danger of dismissing nonviolence protesters?

**Section 5: Pr. Tamika Jancewicz, Pr. Kelly Chatman, Pr. Albert Starr, Pr. Kenassa Shobar (ending 53:10)**

* What resonates for you? What phrases jump out at you?
* What connections can we make in historical and recent news?
* Who else would you describe as “extremist” for love or justice?
  + What kind of “creative extremist” will you be?
* What does it mean that MLK as fellow Christian pastor critiques the church’s general inaction (rather than someone on the outside)?
* Where have you heard messages similar to "Those are social issues, with which the gospel has no real concern," and why is this wrong?

**Section 6: Pr. Mona Fitch-Elliot, Pr. Kelsey Brown, Pr. Emmanuel Grantson (ending 102:40)**

* What resonates for you? What phrases jump out at you?
* What connections can we make in historical and recent news?
* What does it mean to be a church that is a “thermometer” verses a “thermostat”?
* “Every day I meet young people whose disappointment with the church has turned into outright disgust.” How is MLK’s reflection here at odds with the church’s current desperation for “youth and young families”?

**Section 7: Pr. Albert Starr, B. Leila Ortiz (final section)**

* Reflection on the entire letter.
* What was this experience like? How as it to hear these 50+ year old worlds in the mouths of our colleagues?
* Why do you think MLK sounds hopeful at the end?