



Red and Blue Make Purple

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“Roses are red; violets are blue...” It’s February already, and time for creating Valentines. I’ve started the poem. How will you end it?

As a child, I seem to recall this poem was completed with some “smelly monkey” references. If instead we tap into our Caring Relationships theme, maybe we could make something a little less insulting and a little more loving. “Roses are red; violets are blue. Jesus loves you, and I sure do too!” [Send me your best Roses & Violets poem](#) to reflect what it means to be in a caring relationship, and we’ll share some of them during Valentine’s week.

In the last few years, being **red** or **blue** hasn’t always been so lovey-dovey. We take seriously our political affiliations and the values they reflect. Though we acknowledge the artistry of **blue** and **red** combining to make **purple**, I wonder sometimes how well we are mixing together. We speak of our “**purple**” churches, in which the breadth of the political spectrum or sometimes theological diversity make up the membership. But, are we actually **purple**, or just siloed **red** and **blue**? Do we live contentedly together because we’ve reduced our conversations to the weather and funny stories about our pets? Is there a way to find common ground that doesn’t require compromise on matters of integrity? Can we have civil dialogue that allows us to dream about a better future that we build together?

At our upcoming Presbytery Gathering on Saturday, February 19 (9 am to noon), we will learn about a Wisconsin community that took on the challenge of becoming “purple” – not to lose their identity or integrity, but to build connection that helped them to see the value and humanity in each person. Their experience was filmed and became a short documentary (22 minutes), titled “Purple.” You can watch an even [shorter trailer](#) to get a glimpse of their experience and the communication methods.

The co-founding executive director of Resetting the Table, Rabbi Melissa Weintraub will facilitate our viewing of “Purple” and have us practice two communication exercises that we can use in our congregations, our affinity groups, or our families – anywhere roses and violets grow together. We will not tackle political topics ourselves at the Gathering, but will simply observe what this other community did. Depending on your interest, the Presbytery Planning Commission is prepared to offer these workshops in the Presbytery, using trained facilitators at the Presbytery’s cost. The time at our Presbytery Gathering will be a taste of what a full workshop might include.

Everyone is welcome at our Presbytery Gatherings. Although we have voting members for our short business meeting, we invite everyone to come for the whole Gathering and especially to join in our worship and **Purple** program. By scheduling our Gathering for Saturday morning, we are hoping to broaden participation for those who have a difficult time making a weekday meeting.

Watch our website, Facebook, or Fresh Impressions for the registration link. Because we are meeting by Zoom, we need your advance registration, so we can let you in from the waiting room. No matter what your political views, you are invited to join in this respectful, joyful conversation of God’s beloved community.

*Roses are **red**; violets are **blue**. For us to be **purple**, we’re welcoming you!*