



# Religious Discussion Panel at L&C to Promote Understanding

November 5 2013 4:55 PM

The Diversity Council of Lewis and Clark Community College will present a panel discussion on religion, entitled "Understanding Our Neighbors," at 7 p.m. Wednesday, Nov. 13 in the Ann Whitney Olin Theater inside the Hatheway Cultural Center on L&C's Godfrey campus.

"We encourage everyone to come together peacefully and to listen respectfully to the speakers," said former Diversity Council President Ann Davidson. "Their purpose is to inform us about their religions. This is not a debate. Learning about other faiths helps to increase acceptance and understanding of the spiritual paths of our neighbors."

Three guest speakers will discuss their belief systems as members of the Jewish, Episcopalian and Presbyterian religions, followed by a question-and-answer session facilitated by Peter Hussey, L&C associate professor of music and Diversity Council member.

Representing the Jewish faith will be Rabbi Lane Steinger. Born and raised in St. Louis, Steinger earned his master's degree and Rabbinic ordination from Hebrew Union College-Jewish Institute of Religion in Cincinnati, Ohio, where he was awarded the Doctor of Divinity degree, honoris causa, in 1998.

Steinger has served congregations in Pennsylvania and Michigan, and was the Regional Director of the Midwest Council, Union for Reform Judaism, from 1996-2009. He also has been a part-time prison chaplain and hospital chaplain, and taught at Schoolcraft College, Livonia, Mich. Currently, he teaches in the Central Agency for Jewish Education's (CAJE's) Adult Education program and in the Introduction to Judaism program in St. Louis. In 2009, he became the Spiritual Leader of Shir Hadash Reconstructionist Community in St. Louis and, since 2011, also has served Temple Israel of Alton.

Representing the Episcopalian faith will be Arnold R. Hoffman, Ph.D., who was born in 1938 and became an Episcopalian in 1961. Like Hoffman, most Episcopalians are adult converts. Before entering seminary, Hoffman spent 13 years as a college professor, concluding that career as chair of the English department and editor of the journal *Christianity and Literature*.

Ordained a priest in 1978, Hoffman retired in 2004, after serving parishes in Indiana, Illinois and Missouri. Since retirement, he has served as clergy where needed, serving one congregation for six years. He and his wife, Sharon, have lived in downtown St. Louis since July 2010.

Representing the Presbyterian faith will be David Crowley, the Designated Pastor of First Presbyterian Church, Alton. He is the author of "Time to Grieve" and a seven-part bible study on "judge not." His major religious interests are in the Old Testament, American church history and theodicy.

Crowley has been in the pastorate for more than 20 years. Prior to that, he taught political science at Illinois State and Augustana College in Rock Island, Ill. and comparative religion for one semester at L&C when he first arrived in Alton. He has two daughters Saralyn, a religious studies graduate student at Northwestern, and Jocelyn, a senior in art history and communication at Indiana University in Bloomington.

For more information on this panel discussion, contact the college's public relations department at (618) 468-3220.

This Lewis and Clark event is presented by the Mannie Jackson Endowment and Center for the Humanities and is a Lewis and Clark Arts and Humanities Project, with funding from the National Endowment for the Humanities. For more information visit [www.lc.edu](http://www.lc.edu) and search the key word diversity.