

Congregations Building Bridges: Renewing Civic Engagement as Our Common Purpose

Americans today are deeply divided. As the Commission on the Practice of Democratic Citizenship recently noted, “When Americans are asked what unites us across our differences, the increasingly common answer is *nothing*.” Nowhere has this seemed more true than when it comes to religion. Religion has played a crucial role in promoting conflict and polarization, yet religious communities are an essential part of bridging current social and political divides. This panel of religious leaders and experts intends to foster thinking about ways that religious communities might become spaces that bridge divides, rather than make them deeper—bridge building that is located in a larger sense of civic engagement and community. The panel is inspired by the recent report published by the Commission convened by the American Academy of Arts & Sciences, “Our Common Purpose: Reinventing American Democracy for the 21st Century.”



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