

## CrossOver Blog Guidelines & Suggestions

Thank you for agreeing to contribute content to support the various groups taking part in this CrossOver year across our Greater Northwest Area. The following guidelines are provided to help to make this as smooth as possible for all those involved. If you have questions, please feel free to send me (Patrick Scriven) an email ([pscriven@pnwumc.org](mailto:pscriven@pnwumc.org)) and I'll do my best to answer them.

**Assignments:** We are using the platform Slotter to allow leaders to sign up for their preferred writing weeks in advance. Here is the link to sign up for your week: <http://www.slottr.com/sheets/13288272>

**Deadline:** Submissions should be received on Tuesday at Noon before your scheduled week. This will allow us to publish before the weekend with CrossOver subscribers receiving content immediately. Followup posts on social media and in conference newsletters will often occur the following week. **Send them to: [pscriven@pnwumc.org](mailto:pscriven@pnwumc.org)**

If you like to work ahead, please receive this permission to turn in your homework as soon as you would like. In rare cases, you may be asked to work in advance in anticipation of holidays and church events. We've tried to reflect that on the sign-up sheet as much as possible.

When you sign up, please use your personal calendar to note this opportunity in a way to help you to complete this task. Tardy contributions may not be able to be published.

**Include Chapter Number in File Name:** Please include your assigned Chapter Number (or Special Day) in the file name you submit. It will help us in keeping track of submissions particularly for those blessed souls who like to work ahead. Example: *Chapter-13-Scriven.doc*

**Length/Content:** An ideal length for a short blog reflection is 300-700 words. It would be great if posts could expand upon the study topics in ways that make them useful beyond the audience of those that are doing the study.

While a short reflection might serve as something of a default, **other creative responses** like poetry, photography or videography are welcome as well. In addition a short prayer, call to worship, prayer of confession, or other liturgical resource might resource small groups and local churches alike.

Please try to think of the primary audience as you develop your contribution. Will this add to the experience of a small group that is reading through McLaren's book? Does it draw helpful connections between that work and what is happening in our denomination, our local churches, or the diverse mission fields they find themselves in? Will it open doors, minds, and hearts to dialogue more than it might close them?

A word on authorship. While it should go without saying, do your own writing. When quoting McLaren or another author in your blog post be sure to clearly indicate the quote and cite it. Quotes should be in quotation marks. Quotes longer than three sentences should be in an indented paragraph.

**Start Strong:** Lead off with something compelling. A great opening paragraph can make all the difference in whether the audience will read what you wrote, or something else in their inbox or on another browser tab.

Speaking of paragraphs, keep them short. Long paragraphs are harder to consume as people read things on screens of various sizes, with diminished attention spans.

**Provide a Title:** Again, something compelling is best, under 70 characters.

**Editing:** Please submit content that is ready to publish but know that we will read it and reserve the right to edit all submitted content. Consider sharing it with a second set of eyes before you submit it to us. We will attempt to contact you if such changes might impact original intent, or if there is some question over what that intent was.

**Images:** It's really helpful to have a visual image to accompany blog posts to draw people's attention. Please submit an image (either your own or something without copyright restriction) or an idea(s) for what we might use. If you submit photos of people you've taken, particularly children, please make sure you've attained express permission before sending it.

Images you found in a Google image search typically are not ones we can use. The following website offers a number of good suggestions for where you can find images:  
<https://www.makeuseof.com/tag/top-5-websites-for-free-stock-photographs/>

**Engage:** Visit your post the week it is published. Respond to comments and questions people leave. If you are on social media, share your post there once it is published and encourage people to read and respond.

AND consider doing the same for all of the other contributors to this project. Community is formed by participation!