One of my favorite writers in the field of homiletics is Thomas Troeger. He recently published a new book entitled "Sermon Sparks: 122 Ideas To Ignite Your Preaching.

The author provides 122 "sparks" for sermons-initial ideas to ignite a sermon in a preacher's heart and mind. Each reflection is limited to two pages.

The book is indexed so you can easily find what you need, whether you are a preacher who chooses the texts for your sermons or follows the Revised Common Lectionary. So the book is user-friendly for both kinds of preachers, featuring indexes by biblical passage, by liturgical season, and by theme, image, and pastoral need.

The author has taught homiletics for over thirty years and knows how often we who preach need an insight, a new angle, a fresh perspective-a spark!-to set our mind and heart ablaze.

I pray that these sermon sparks will ignite your heart and mind so that the Holy Spirit, the source of all knowledge and creativity, will set ablaze the light and truth of the gospel in our listeners.

Dr. Barth Smith is Professor of Practical Theology Emeritus. At the time of his retirement (spring 2011) he had served the students and staff of MNU and has pastored the same church -- for over 30 years!