



Wrestling with God and Church Toward a More Beloved Community

The APCE Annual Event
January 29 - February 1, 2025
The Peabody Hotel, Memphis, TN

APCE Annual Event 2025 Workshops

Workshop Schedule

Thursday, January 30

2:45p.m. – 4:15p.m.	Workshop A
2:45p.m. – 5:45p.m.	Workshop B
4:45pm – 6:15pm	Workshop C

Friday, January 31

10:30a.m. – 12:00p.m.	Workshop D
4:00p.m. – 5:30p.m.	Workshop E

Workshop Selection Tips

Choose carefully! You will be able to attend only the workshops for which you are registered. Rooms have space limitations, and leaders prepare materials in advance based on actual registration numbers.

It is important to plan for second (and possibly third) choices as some workshops have limited spaces available. Workshops will be closed to registration once the maximum number of participants have registered. If a workshop does not appear as available for you to select, that workshop is full and has been closed.

To continue through the registration process, you must select a workshop in each block. If you choose not to register for a workshop in a block, select "No Workshop."

Please note that Workshop B is 3.0 hours long and overlaps with Workshop A and C. You may choose a workshop in A and one in C or choose a workshop in B. You cannot choose workshops in both A and B or B and C.

Thursday, January 30 – Workshop A

2:45p.m. – 4:15p.m.

100. Jesus' "I AM" Statements in the Gospel of John

Jann Treadwell

Over three workshop blocks, this in-depth Bible study will dig below the surface of the seven I AM declarations in the Gospel of John. The sayings, such as "I AM the Bread of Life," "I AM the Light of the World," are remarkable, yet appear in no other gospel. Why? Who is the audience? What is the context? How does the author use familiar concepts and settings to hammer home the importance of Jesus and God being one? Over and over the writer of John uses these particular images to reveal the reality of God come to earth through Jesus. Bring your Bible and join us as we explore together these rich statements and more.

*This workshop is a three workshop block workshop. It is continued as workshop 300 in Workshop C and workshop 400 in Workshop D. You will register for all three sessions.

Jann Treadwell, retired Certified Christian Educator, APCE 2010 Educator of the Year, author of "Unbound: The Transformative Power of Youth Mission Trips," past service on Grace Presbytery Parish Life and Examinations Committees, past moderator of Awards and Scholarships Ministry Team, past service on GA's Educator Certification Council.

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

101. How to Create a Multi-sensory Space on a Budget

Michelle Junkin and Heather Selement

Discover cost-effective ways to create inclusive church experiences that remove barriers while enhancing children's engagement by incorporating ear defenders, weighted toys, sensory lights, tactile manipulatives, and beyond. This session will offer advice, go over best practices, show ways to adapt materials while showcasing DIY instructions and recipes so you can make resources to offer children an environment with sensory friendly activities that go beyond fidget spinners and coloring pages.

Michelle Junkin, MACE, M.Div, D.Min, is the Pastor of Spiritual Formation at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Michelle holds a Certificate in Non-Profit Management. She is a professional artist, and the focuses of her thesis was "A Fuller Palette of Praise: Exploring God's Gift of the Creative Arts to Renew Engagement in Worship, Congregational life, and Mission."

Heather Selement is Director of Children's Ministry at Westminster Presbyterian Church and oversees programing for Special Needs ministry including seasonal Sensory Friendly Worship services. Prior to WPC, Heather served as the Director of Family Ministry at the City Rescue Mission homeless shelter.

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

102. Unboxing the Church: Becoming Courageous Congregations

Laurie Lyter Bright

1 John 3:18. *Let us love not in word or speech but in deed and truth.*

We're interested in co-creating a more peaceful world, but how do we do that with only an hour together on Sundays? The Presbyterian Peace Fellowship can help!

This workshop engages congregations of the peace-curious, those already steeped in justice work, and those seeking a roadmap to move from book club to actionable change. Together, we'll reimagine mission alongside any congregation of any size and demographics as we seek to take seriously the call to follow Christ in the path of resisting violence.

This workshop offers an introduction to three core resources from the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship to equip congregations for the journey from theory to action. Resources include gun violence prevention ministry, engaging conscientious objection to violence for all ages, and moving from mission trips to accompaniment journeys, all as expressions of our faith. This workshop is interactive and invites participants to explore the opportunities and challenges in their particular community as we consider our collective calling to be peacemakers.

Rev. Laurie Lyter Bright, Ph.D., is the executive director of the Presbyterian Peace Fellowship. She's an author, preacher, and adjunct professor. She lives in Milwaukee with her husband and chaos muppet children, Tillie and Sonora.

Category: Mission and Social Justice/Outreach

Intended Participants: Other

103. Advanced Care Planning: Not For the Faint of Heart

Denise Shannon

Incorporating a spiritual perspective, the presentation will focus on advanced care planning in the context of a church ministry by emphasizing the role that faith communities can play in having meaningful conversations about end of life choices and navigating the spiritual dimensions of healthcare decisions. This session provides guidance on integrating advanced care planning discussions into pastoral care, and promoting compassionate communication within congregations. We will explore the intersection of spirituality and medical decision-making and will aim to equip church leaders and members with tools to initiate thoughtful conversations, fostering a supportive environment where individuals can align their values with their healthcare preferences.

Denise Shannon, MDIV is the Pastor at Weldon Valley Presbyterian Church, Weldon, CO. Denise is passionate about introducing people to Jesus and journeying with them along the spiritual journey using new and creative ideas. She has worked in End of Life care for over 30 years.

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

104. Reclaiming Confirmation: Stirring the Souls of Youth

Kirsten Trachsel

Research shows that adolescents seek relevant learning, place less value in organizational membership, and often stop trying if understanding is not immediate. How might the confirmation process be reshaped to be experiential, relevant, relational, and inspire young people to claim their baptismal identity? What approach might lead teens who have experienced the trauma and disillusionment of a pandemic toward faith and understanding in the mystery of the divine? This presentation will explore these questions and propose a process and potential new structures through which faith communities may reclaim confirmation as a launchpad for a life of discipleship instead of an outcome-based program in the church.

Kirsten Trachsel works with children, youth, and adults at St. Andrew Presbyterian Church in Denton, Texas in both faith formation and music. She earned a Master of Arts in Christian Education from Union Presbyterian Seminary in 2024.

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer

105. Genesis 32:28 - An Interfaith Bible Study Model with a Jew and a Christian

Julia Boyce and Rabbi Shawn Zell

When we wrestle with God, we allow our faith to be tested and our trust in God to grow. What about God's faith and trust in us? This workshop will model a respectful and enriching interfaith dialogue between a Jew and a Christian. We will examine Genesis 32:28 and consider the many ways to think about this text from both the Jewish and the Christian perspectives. While we may "wrestle" over the text we will do so honoring one another and the treasures of our faith traditions that we bring to the conversation.

Julia A. Boyce is a PCUSA Certified Christian Educator, Elder at First Presbyterian Church, Dallas, Texas and a past President of APCE. Julia teaches various adult groups at FPC Dallas.

Rabbi Shawn Zell, is retired from congregational life but still actively involved and author of several books. Rabbi Zell teaches in many Jewish contexts but also for 10 years by Zoom for an adult class at First Presbyterian Church, Dallas, Texas.

Rabbi Zell and Julia Boyce have worked together for years collaborating in book writing/editing and a tour in Israel while always enjoying mutual respect and appreciation for one another and their faith.

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

106. Inclusion is Worship

Marijo Hockley and Hunter Steinitz

Including people with disabilities in worship is often a challenge Join Presbyterians for Disability Concerns as we explore the journey from exclusion to inclusion in scripture, worship, and society.

Marijo has worked with older adults with disabilities, helping them remain in their own homes for as long as possible. God called her to ministry, and she obtained her MDiv. from the Ecumenical Theological Seminary in Detroit, Michigan. Marijo worked for First Presbyterian Church of Warren as the Inclusion Ministry Coordinator. As the Inclusion Ministry Coordinator, she worked with High School students with cognitive disabilities and older adults by developing a mentor program and work-study program. Currently, Marijo serves as Community Life Coordinator for New Life Presbyterian Church. Marijo's goal for ministry is to demonstrate and encourage all God's children to actively serve God by sharing every individual's unique and important spiritual gifts.

Hunter Steinitz, MDiv. is a graduate of Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, a Candidate for Ordination, and Ruling Elder at Riverview Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh. She is also a contributor to the Presbyterian Outlook and disability liberation theologian. Hunter is the oldest woman in the United States with her rare genetic skin condition, and she advocates for the diverse beauty of all beloved children made in the Image of God.

Category: Worship and Music

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

107. Stewardship and Faith Formation in the Church: Resources and Perspectives for All Generations

John Wilkinson and Lauren Rogers

“To know that with all that we are and all that we have we are God's stewards is the answer to a particularly deep yearning of the time in which we live...” ~Hanns Lilje

Stewardship is defined as the cultivation and nurture of the abundant gifts given to us by a gracious God, and the generous use of those gifts for the common good. Those gifts include our time, our relationships, our work, our skills, our space and yes...our money.

Jesus talked about money...a lot. Yet the church is reluctant and hesitant to have those same conversations, often relegating them to one Sunday of the year in the name of “making” the budget. How can we have vital conversations about faith and money that are biblically and theologically informed, and that engage church members in this cultural moment?

How can we involve all ages in the church in a healthy and hopeful discussion about faith and money, providing us perspectives and tools for everyday lives, within and beyond the church walls?

This interactive workshop will begin with an exploration of a few key biblical and theological concepts, and then move to offering practical resources (focusing on worship and education) that will speak to children, youth and adults. Come to learn, and come to share.

John Wilkinson serves as Director of Ministry Engagement and Support for the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), a position that focuses on mission interpretation, supporting denominational connections and funds development. John began this work in 2023; prior to that he served Presbyterian congregations in Chicago, Rochester, and Philadelphia. He has served on the boards of McCormick Theological Seminary and the Presbyterian Historical Society, presbytery and denominational task forces and committees, and also helped to launch the Covenant Network of Presbyterians and Next Church.

Lauren Rogers serves as a Ministry Engagement Advisor with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) – serving the Synods of the Covenant, Lincoln Trails, and Living Waters – resourcing and encouraging congregations and mid councils as they engage with Presbyterian mission and ministries. Prior to this role, Lauren served as the Project Manager for Digital Fundraising at the PC(USA) and a Partner Success Strategist with FreeWill. She has her BA in Religious Studies from Centenary College, her MA in Conflict

Resolution from Georgetown University, and her Executive Certificate in Religious Fundraising from the Lake Institute of Faith & Giving.

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

108. Holy Listening with Preschoolers

Karen-Marie Yust and Erin Reibel

What happens when an adult invites a young child to practice centering and reflection? They participate in an act of holy listening. The Children's Spirituality Research & Innovation Hub at Union Presbyterian Seminary has been experimenting with Holy Listening in church-based weekday preschools for the last four years. We've seen how 3-5 year olds grow spiritually when they have regular opportunities to meet 1:1 with a caring adult who facilitates a ritual of breathing, tracing a finger labyrinth, choosing conversation stones, and receiving a blessing. Come hear more about our findings and learn how to implement a Holy Listening practice in your ministry context. We'll share stories about children's experiences, demonstrate the ritual, explain the developmental and educational theories behind it, highlight potential pitfalls you might encounter, and provide take-home resources and advice to help you get started.

Karen-Marie Yust is Rowe Professor of Christian Education and Director of the Children's Spirituality Hub at Union Presbyterian Seminary. She is ordained with standing in the UCC and Disciples traditions and writes for www.RealKidsRealFaith.org.

Erin Reibel is the Associate Director of the Children's Spirituality Hub at Union Presbyterian Seminary. She facilitates the Hub's innovation projects and helps religious educators understand the social science behind effective ministry practices.

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer

109. Youth & Mission: Wrestling with our Past in Memphis

Bill Buchanan

In addition to service, the "mission" of our youth mission trips includes learning the history of systemic injustice that brings us to this present moment. Join Bill Buchanan and Jenita Nakamura, staff of Memphis Youth Mission, in a discussion of the past and present of Memphis. Together we will consider ways that your youth group can uncover the hidden histories of your own contexts and challenge your congregations to engage in God's call for justice and equity for all people.

Bill Buchanan is the Executive Director of the non-profit ministry Youth Mission Co, as well as an ordained pastor and Christian educator. He loves music, BBQ, and trivia night with friends.

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship, Leadership, Mission and Social Justice/Outreach

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

110. No Change Without Conflict

John-Peter Smit

You can't have growth without change. You can't have change without conflict. As we wrestle with God and Church, conflict will come. The purpose of this workshop is to understand the role of conflict in change, to encourage healthy conflict, to discourage unhealthy conflict and to discover tools to help us navigate these challenges.

John-Peter Smit is passionate about leadership. While not a fan of conflict he has come to realize the significance of conflict in the change process and the need to understand it if we desire to see effective and meaningful change.

Category: Leadership

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

111. This Book Stirred My Soul!

Anne Wilson

Be part of a fast-paced, highly interactive workshop! Bring a favorite book that helped you through your strife and struggles. Share how it impacted you and then be willing to give it away! We'll each leave with a different book and inspiration for the days to come. A list of all books will be provided.

Anne is a seasoned educator who has served 3 different churches in Houston, TX. She is a past president of APCE, Life Achievement Award recipient, and current co-chair of APCE's strategic planning task force.

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship, Leadership

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

112. After Deconstruction

Matt Frease

Many emerging adults in Christian communities, particularly those within the post-evangelical world, have undergone a process they call deconstruction, in which they question and "deconstruct" the faith in which they were raised. For most of us, this process of questioning one's faith occurs during the college years of emerging adulthood and is developmentally appropriate. What is unique about this is that it is occurring in greater numbers and with greater emotional ferocity, leading to larger numbers of individuals leaving the church. This workshop explores how communities of faith can support the process of faith after deconstruction.

Matt Frease, ThD, LMFT, is an ordained Presbyterian Minister and a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist. He currently serves as the Campus Minister at UKirk Tallahassee. He and his spouse, Ame, have two boys and two hound dogs. He enjoys spending time outside with his family and reading whenever he can find free time.

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor

113. Ida B. Wells and Justice in the Beloved Community

René Prager

“The way to right wrongs is to turn the light of truth upon them.” Ida B. Wells

Teaching proposition: We will seek to better understand the call for justice by Ida B. Wells by exploring her life and her work so that we may be equipped to share her story with those in our home communities.

Wells, born into slavery in Mississippi, moved to Memphis, where she worked as an educator. She then began a career as an investigative reporter, exposing the injustice of lynching in the south. Wells co-owned a Memphis newspaper, which was destroyed by an angry mob after Well’s lynching article was released. The prolific contributions of Wells included substantial efforts for the women’s suffrage movement. Wells is recognized as a founding member of the NCAAAP.

We will spend a portion of our workshop time taking a walk to the Ida B. Wells statue, which is just 0.3 miles from the Peabody Hotel.

I am a Union Presbyterian Seminary student, pursuing a MACE degree while I work full-time serving a congregation as the DCE. I learned about Ida B. Wells in 2020 while studying the suffrage movement with my Girl Scout troop and continue to learn more about her!

Category: Mission and Social Justice/Outreach

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

114. Paper Bag Pageant - Creating Intergenerational Joy

Karen Hammond and Jinny Smanik

Is it time to rethink or refresh your Christmas pageant? Come learn this fun technique that is simple, budget-friendly, requires no rehearsal and minimal preparation, involves all ages (children and adults), and is lots and lots of fun. Two experienced church educators will share the approach we’ve developed. What started as a simple experiment has grown into a wonderful, fresh storytelling method. We’ve used this very flexible framework with different congregations in different worship settings, and this workshop will include time and space to consider how each participant can modify and personalize for their own church setting. Participants will leave this workshop feeling comfortable with how to lead this version of a Christmas pageant, and also how to adapt and apply this technique to any story so it becomes interactive and participatory. Come join the fun!

Karen Hammond is the Director of Faith Formation at Westminster Presbyterian Church in West Hartford, CT. Her background in elementary education and love for children has grown into a passion for intergenerational faith formation.

Rev. Jinny Smanik is a PCUSA pastor whose primary focus has been faith formation for children and families. Jinny's passion is creating worship experiences that are engaging and inclusive.

Category: Creative Arts/Recreation

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

Thursday, January 30 – Workshop B

2:45p.m. – 5:45p.m.

201. Palestine and Israel 101

Dee Roberts and Gail Doering

This workshop seeks to provide a historical overview, basic tools for engagement, a shared common language, and information on the current reality of the situation on the ground in Israel/Palestine - the land and people of the Christian, Muslim and Jewish faiths.

The goals of the Israel/Palestine Mission Network of the PCUSA are to:

- 1) Encourage involvement of individuals, congregations, presbyteries, task groups and other entities in the search for a just peace in Israel/Palestine.
- 2) Educate the church about the facts on the ground.
- 3) Find constructive avenues to change conditions that erode humanity of both Israelis and Palestinians, especially those living under colonial occupation in East Jerusalem, the West Bank, and Gaza.

Bring your questions, curiosity, and an open heart and mind. Leave with a toolkit for ways to move out of this space in prophetic action.

Deanna (Dee) Roberts (she/her) holds advanced degrees from Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary, Union Theological Seminary (UTS) in the City of New York, the University at Buffalo, State University of New York. She currently the Reference and Outreach Librarian at Pitts Theology Library, Candler School of Theology at Emory University in Atlanta and a member of the Steering Committee for the Israel Palestine Mission Network of the PC(USA).

Gail Doering, Mid Council Leader, Presbytery of Southern Kansas, A lifelong learner and recent participant in IPMN/Sabeel Solidarity Pilgrimage to Jerusalem, Bethlehem and Ramallah.

Category: Mission and Social Justice/Outreach

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

202. Building a Real Welcome for All God's People: LGBTQIA+ People and the Church

Brian Ellison and Slats Toole

This workshop offers biblical and theological foundation and practical help in ensuring the church's full welcome and embrace of LGBTQIA+ people. We'll acknowledge the different ways our churches have addressed issues of sexual orientation and gender identity and how views have changed. We'll consider particular acts of hospitality we can take with our words and deeds to strengthen our congregations and our common life for all people. The workshop includes a basic overview of terminology, deeper theological reflection, and practical help. Participants will share ideas and shape the content through their own interests, experiences and needs.

The Rev. Brian Ellison (he/him) has served as Executive Director of the Covenant Network of Presbyterians since 2012, preaching, teaching and providing overall strategic leadership in implementing the organization's mission. Brian also serves as stated clerk of the Synod of Mid-America. He has served

previously as pastor of Parkville Presbyterian Church (near Kansas City, Missouri) and is host/contributor at KCUR, Kansas City's NPR affiliate. He and his partner, Troy Lillebo, live in Kansas City with their two dogs, the recalcitrant Willoughby and the dopey Sage.

*Slats Toole (they/them) is a writer, musician, preacher and theater professional currently based in Minneapolis, MN. Slats' Lenten poetry series has been compiled in the collection *Queering Lent*, and their work has also been published in places like *Call to Worship*, *The Presbyterian Outlook* and *Sacramental Life*. Slats has led workshops on expansive language and queer theology (with a particular emphasis on gender identity) throughout the United States and Canada, and is proud to serve as co-moderator of the Covenant Network Board of Directors.*

Category: Mission and Social Justice/Outreach

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

203. An Indigenous Way of Peace: Honesty, Grace, and Walking Respectfully

Irvin Porter

The world doesn't look like us, exclusively. God has shown us what is good. God calls for actions that are impartial, love for compassion, and walking respectfully with God. Native American Presbyterians continue to be some of the most overlooked constituencies in Christianity. Often only considered when a "mission trip" is on a church's agenda or during Christmas when considering doing something "nice" for the least among us. Toward a Just, Compassionate and Respectful Pathway with Native Americans is not a history lesson but a real-world example of that journey of understanding with God and our neighbors. It presents cultural awareness between the Native American cultures of this country and those who came after them. The workshop uses five-hundred years of documented information to reveal what most have never heard concerning the lack of honesty, grace and respect toward Native Americans and shows the pathway Micah describes for all God's children. God emphasizes value in moral and spiritual obedience more than ritual and ceremony. Micah 6:8 isn't just referring to humility; Micah is inviting us to give, sacrifice and empty ourselves into our world. This leads to restoring God's image not only in us but inspires us to be instruments of change to everyone, not just family and friends, not just to those who look like us.

This workshop should be our first step on a journey, "El Camino", of understanding —with God and with our neighbors. The actions Micah is sharing are a heavenly roadmap for living honestly, showing grace, and walking respectfully in our faith journey.

Irvin is descended from three Native American tribes: Pima, T'hono O'odham, and Nez Perce. Church of the Indian Fellowship in Tacoma, Washington called Irvin as a Commissioned Lay Pastor in September of 2001. He was ordained as a minister of the Presbyterian Church, USA, in October of 2003 and is the first Native American pastor since the church was founded by a Presbyterian missionary among the Puyallup Indians in 1876. He has worked as Associate for Native American Intercultural Congregational Support 3/4 time and 1/4 Pastor at Church of the Indian Fellowship since 2013. He has served on the Native American Consulting Committee, Committee on Ministry - Olympia Presbytery and committees of Synod of Alaska-Northwest.

Category: Mission and Social Justice/Outreach

Intended Participants: Staff of church or organization

204. Tour the Civil Rights Museum

Noted as one of the nation's premier heritage and cultural museums, the National Civil Rights Museum in Memphis, Tennessee, is steadfast in its mission to share the culture and lessons from the American Civil Rights Movement and explore how this significant era continues to shape equality and freedom globally. Established in 1991, the National Civil Rights Museum is located at the former Lorraine Motel, where civil rights leader Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. was assassinated on April 4, 1968. You will have a 90-minute private tour through the exhibits to learn more about a tumultuous and inspiring period of change.

The museum underwent a \$27.5 million renovation in 2013 and 2014, adding more than 40 new films, oral histories and interactive media to the already robust galleries. The result is a one-of-a-kind experience that has been featured on the History Channel and CNN, in USA Today and as the focus for the Academy Award-nominated documentary *The Witness: From the Balcony of Room 306*. Additionally, the museum is among the top 5% of institutions to be accredited by the American Alliance of Museums and is a founding member of the International Coalition of Sites of Conscience, which brings together historic sites, museums and memory initiatives from all around the globe that connect past struggles to today's movements for human rights and social justice.

Fee: \$36

Category: Mission and Social Justice/Outreach

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization, Other

205. Crosstown Concourse: A New Way of Building Community

Todd Richardson

Tour this once deserted "disaster" of 1.5 million-square-foot building that now anchors a thriving neighborhood in Memphis. Built between the World Wars to be a Sears store and shipment center, Crosstown Concourse has been readapted as a "vertical village." The building houses a YMCA with a pool, a health clinic for the working poor, a high school, condos and apartments, offices, restaurants, bars, shops, a theater and a contemporary art center. We will explore the building and hear about the years-long redevelopment of this property from one of the developers, art history professor and MDiv, Todd Richardson. During the visit, there will be an opportunity to visit a stall or two on your own for shopping, coffee, or a snack.

Fee: \$40

Dr. Todd Richardson is a co-founder of Crosstown Arts and President/CEO of Crosstown Concourse. Since 2010, he has led the effort to transform the historic, 1.5 million-square-foot Sears Crosstown building into a vertical urban village anchored in arts, education and healthcare. The \$210 million project has garnered local, national, and even international attention including winning the grand prize from the 2018 Congress for New Urbanism and a gold medal from the 2019 Rudy Bruner award. Todd cut his teeth as a Youth Director at Idlewild Presbyterian Church In Memphis and earned a MA in Religious Studies (Memphis Theological Seminary) M.A. in Art and Religion (Graduate Theological Union) and a PhD in Art History, Criticism and Conservation (Universiteit Leiden)

Category: Mission and Social Justice/Outreach

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization, Other

Thursday, January 30 – Workshop C
4:45p.m. – 6:15p.m.

300. Jesus' "I AM" Statements in the Gospel of John

Jann Treadwell

Over three workshop blocks, this in-depth Bible study will dig below the surface of the seven I AM declarations in the Gospel of John. The sayings, such as “I AM the Bread of Life,” “I AM the Light of the World,” are remarkable, yet appear in no other gospel. Why? Who is the audience? What is the context? How does the author use familiar concepts and settings to hammer home the importance of Jesus and God being one? Over and over the writer of John uses these particular images to reveal the reality of God come to earth through Jesus. Bring your Bible and join us as we explore together these rich statements and more. *This workshop is a continuation of workshop 100.

Jann Treadwell, retired Certified Christian Educator, APCE 2010 Educator of the Year, author of "Unbound: The Transformative Power of Youth Mission Trips," past service on Grace Presbytery Parish Life and Examinations Committees, past moderator of Awards and Scholarships Ministry Team, past service on GA's Educator Certification Council.

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

301. Presbyterian Women/Horizons Bible Study: Finding Resilience, Joy and Our Identity in Jesus Christ
Rhashell Hunter

Sometimes we take on more than we can accomplish. But, reconnecting to our spirituality is a path that offers us the ability to spring back into shape and to find our resilience. The 2025–2026 PW/Horizons Bible study author, Rhashell Hunter, will lead participants in learning about Biblical women and exploring Jesus’ witness to faithfulness. You don't have to be a PW to benefit—everyone will enjoy rediscovering our joy and our identity in Christ.

Rev. Dr. Rhashell Hunter is author of the 2025-2026 PW/Horizons Bible Study and has written the worship materials for "Celebrate the Gifts of Women" for multiple years. She served as Director of Racial Equity & Women's Intercultural Ministries for 14 years and currently teaches the Presbyterian polity course at Louisville Seminary.

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

302. All Are Beloved, All Belong: Creating LGBTQIA+ Affirming Ministries

Sarah Leer

Working and living in Beloved community requires engaging theological discussion, creativity, collaboration, and vulnerability. Church workers are often asked to lead ministries which deftly navigate the intersections of culture, politics, and faith formation. Dr. Sarah Leer (she/her), an educator, former

youth worker, and practical theologian, will invite participants to engage in practical conversations of LGBTQIA+ affirmation and belonging through the lens of abundance. In this interactive workshop, we will wrestle with what it means for all to know they are Beloved. We will discuss power-sharing with youth and young adults, LGBTQIA+ affirming terminology, and resources to affirm and celebrate LGBTQIA+ people in our midst. Sarah will create a space for participants to learn together while also equipping them with resources to deepen and express belonging in their ministries.

Dr. Sarah Leer (she/her/hers) is a native Arkansan who has served PC(USA) churches in Austin, Dallas, and NW Arkansas. Sarah is a graduate of Wake Forest University, Columbia Theological Seminary, and the Clinton School of Public Service. She is a practical theologian and educator who is living into her call to seek liberation, justice, and belonging in solidarity with those living on the margins. Sarah enjoys singing Broadway songs in her car, random road trips, traveling, hanging out with her family, SEC college football, and youth conferences that include energizers.

Category: Mission and Social Justice/Outreach

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

303. Wonder of Worship: Listening to a Diversity of Voices about Intergenerational Worship

Kathy Dawson

Wonder of Worship has completed its first year of the five year, Lilly Endowment funded grant regarding nurturing children through worship and prayer. We've done a lot of listening this first year and are ready to share what we've learned from child research projects, sub-grants awarded to churches for their own projects, new ideas from Quicksheets and podcasts, and our first Godly Play training sessions. We look forward to engaging workshop participants in these conversations and activities and learning from each other in the process, so that we may get closer to forming beloved community that includes all ages and abilities in corporate worship.

Kathy Dawson, Ph.D., teaches at Columbia Theological Seminary. She is ordained and certified as an educator in the PCUSA. Kathy directs the Wonder of Worship project, is friends with Gracie, the fish, and enjoys spending time with her dog, Hope.

Category: Worship and Arts

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Other

304. Children's Ministry that Forms Faith: Abandoning the Entertainment Model

Jill Benson and Lesli van Milligen

We all want church to be fun and enjoyable for children. But what happens when our goal in children's ministry is to entertain instead of to form faith? What effect do entertainment models and curricula have on children's long-term faith formation? In this workshop, we'll explore how to form faith in your children's ministry through the following:

- Engaging the history of children's ministry with particular attention to what Scottie May refers to as the, "Carnival Model," and exploring her suggested alternatives to this model.
- Exploring how theology matters when choosing children's ministry curriculum and how various curricula views children and their capacity for deep conversations about faith.
- Examining a variety of curricula, evaluating whether it emphasizes forming faith in children or represents more of an entertainment-based approach.

- Experiencing activities that encourage faith formation as we try out elements, such as wondering questions, that are included in faith-forming curricula.

Participants will be introduced to a variety of resources, including Sunday school and children's worship materials, that create space for children not just to learn about God, but to encounter God. It is our hope that participants will leave fully equipped to create children's ministry spaces that form lifelong faith in their children.

Jill Benson works for Thrive, an agency of the Christian Reformed Church, serving as a Resource Developer with a focus on curriculum. She is passionate about bringing the big story of the Bible to kids of all ages. In her current role, she creates and curates resources with a particular focus on the DWELL curriculum, equipping DWELL volunteers, parents, and coordinators as they enter God's Big Story each week. Jill enjoys in-depth study of God's Word and holds degrees in Biblical Languages and Old Testament from Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary.

Lesli is Director of Congregational Ministries-Canada and oversees Thrive Regional Connectors. She is ordained in the CRC and has co-pastored in both Canada and the US with her husband, Tom. Along with supporting local congregations in strengthening their cradle to grave faith formation practices, Lesli is passionate about building into the next generation of leaders through leadership workshops for youth, young adults, and church councils.

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer

305. Manifold Witness: Hope for the Exhausted

Lisa Hickman

One more thing? Are you kidding me? This workshop is designed as practical hope for church workers who are exhausted. The theology of scripture reveals an inexhaustible God but that does not propel or compel us to run on empty. Come to study and share, to pray and to learn new practices. Come for a framework that offers hope beyond burnout, compassion fatigue, and exhaustion.

Lisa Nichols Hickman is a Presbyterian pastor and author. Her books include Writing in the Margins, Mercy and Melons, and The Worshiping Life. She finds great joy in serving as an associate pastor for children and their families.

Category: Leadership

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

306. Equipping Parents for Intentional Faith Formation

Stephen Ingram

Through recent research efforts by Springtide, CYMT, and other organizations we know that parents feel ill-equipped, ill-informed and unsupported as the primary nurturers of their children's faith. In this workshop we will take proven methodology, innovative processes, and practical tools to train Christian educators to equip and inform as well as create communities of care and support for parents in their contexts.

Stephen is a dad, husband, writer, and foodie. He has served in churches since 1998 and also has served as a lead consultant with Ministry Architects since 2009. Currently he serves as Pastor of Students and is

the Sr. Director of Resource Development at the Center for Youth Ministry Training. He lives in Birmingham, AL with his wife Mary Liz and their three kids. Stephen has his undergraduate from Samford University where he majored in Religion and his Masters of Divinity from McAfee School of Theology. Stephen is a conference speaker, youth ministry consultant, and author. His books include Hollow Faith: How Andy Griffith, Facebook, and the American Dream Neutered the Gospel, ExtraOrdinary Time: 365 Ordinary Moments with an Anything But Ordinary God; and Organic Student Ministry. Stephen deeply loves working with students and equipping youth ministers, helping both answer the questions: Who am I and why am I here?

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Staff of church or organization

307. What We're Learning from the Families of the GenOn Parenting Project

Brittany Sky

In 2023, GenOn Ministries received a grant to work with parents and caregivers, families, and churches to create resources that support the three systems collectively. Since June 2024, we've been hearing from the 213 families participating in the testing of these resources. Join me for a session on what we're learning from the families and what your church community can do to connect with caregivers, kids, and youth.

Brittany Sky is a mama, writer, kids pastor, and researcher who loves kids and the adults who care for them. She holds a BA and MA in Christian Education and an MBA for good measure. Brittany is the author of Raising Good People, the Celebrate Wonder Bible Storybook, the Bible Basics Storybook, the Deep Blue Bible Storybook, and countless curricula. She is the Project Director of the GenOn grant-funded Christian Parenting Project (genonfamilies.genonministries.org) and serves at St. Ann's Episcopal Church. She lives in the land of the Cherokee (Nashville, TN) with her child, Rowan, her dog, Lily, and her two bunnies, Carl and Ellie.

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship, Leadership

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

308. There is No "I" in Team

Joel Winchip

Leadership teams, committee members, and ministry staff are all groups that need to work together. Team building is not just something we do for youth groups. There are activities that are designed to help adult groups develop effective communication and problem-solving skills. During our time together, we will look at different exercises that help group members broaden their abilities and work together.

Joel Winchip is the Executive Director of the Presbyterian Church Camp and Conference Association and the Campfire Collective. He also serves on the adjunct faculty of Columbia Theological Seminary (Decatur, GA), where he teaches their camp/conference ministry and recreation courses. Before taking his current position, Joel served on the staff of Presbyterian camps and conference centers in Florida, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina.

Category: Creative Arts/Recreation

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

310. Sharing and Creating Quality Adult Ed Resources!

Greg Allen-Pickett and Damen Jensen-Heitmann

One of the things we wrestle with is finding high quality adult education resources that are theologically sound, context appropriate, engaging, and affordable. This is particularly hard for smaller and rural churches that may not have a large adult ed budget or staff to search for and screen resources for bible studies, adult Sunday School classes, and other adult ed opportunities. First Presbyterian Church of Hastings in Nebraska was wrestling with this, so we decided to create our own adult ed resources. We are blessed with a Millennial pastor, a Gen X pastor, and a retired religion professor who serves as our “scholar in residence.” None of us knew too much about technology, but all three of us were willing to learn. Over the course of the last five years, we have generated more than 400 digital video resources that include bible studies, classes on a variety of topics, book studies, and more.

Our workshop aims to equip churches to create their own adult education resources while also sharing free resources that are already available. In our workshop we will teach Christian educators how to record podcasts and adult education classes. We will include recommendations on equipment and suggestions on how to effectively record and share these resources. In addition, we created a website called “Abundant Harvest” www.midwestministryhub.org to make the resources that we have created at FPC Hastings accessible and searchable. We hope to make these resources available for free to any church that is looking for a source of high quality, theologically sound, context appropriate adult education resources.

Greg is the senior pastor at FPC Hastings and previously worked for Presbyterian World Mission, but he is an educator at heart. He loves to teach and learn and puts curiosity and love at the center of his ministry.

Damen is the associate pastor at FPC Hastings. He also served as the Chaplain at Hastings College. Damen approaches scripture and the church with a deep reverence and slightly off-kilter and humorous point of view. He tries to offer unique and innovative perspectives which can open discussion in fresh ways.

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

311. Crafting Communities

Jessica Foy

Come gather and participate in handicrafts to knit communities together and build relationships. Have you felt the desire to craft new avenues to engage and serve your community? This is sew the spot for you! Let's weave our ideas together and engage in conversations around crafting as a tool for ministry as fellowship, worship, justice work, study, and good old-fashioned fun. Some simple supplies will be provided, but feel free to bring your own works in progress.

Cost: \$15

Jessica Foy is the Presbyterian Youth Coordinator for the Presbyterian Church in Canada. Jess adores sharing the chaos of life with her husband and son. Gardening, photography, felting, and reading bring her much joy.

Category: Creative Arts/Recreation

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

312. Finding the GIFTS: Flipping the Paradigm for Intergenerational Worship Planning and Creative Worship Arts

Valerie Grissom

What would it look like to flip our current mindset for worship planning to operate more out of a mindset of abundance, rather than scarcity? What if we began by finding the gifts in “what is,” right here, right now? At the heart of being intergenerational is a practice of receiving with gratitude each and every person as a unique gift from God. As we plan worship, how would this fundamental practice help us flip the tables, opening us to a new paradigm, when it comes to finding the gifts of our faith communities, and designing and planning creative worship arts?

In this interactive, collaborative space, we will discuss flipping the worship planning paradigm in these ways:

- Flipping from a program-oriented design process toward spiritually formative practice-mindset for both worship designers and participants
- Flipping from a scarcity mindset to an abundance mindset when assessing worship gifts and practices
- Flipping from a closed position to an open position, utilizing my method of “Finding the GIFTS” (an assessment tool that helps teams be more open to finding and including the various gifts of their communities)
- Flipping from a top-down (1 or 2 leading) approach to an empowerment model for worship (leadership of many).

We will also brainstorm how we might practically take these ideas into our own unique communities, seeking to create a collaborative “wrestling” with ways we might flip the tables in our own worship communities. Come ready to discuss, create, share, collaborate.

Valerie M. Grissom, MDiv, DWS, has been a worship pastor for over 20 years and is certified for ordination as Minister of Word and Sacrament (PC-USA), near Seattle, Washington. She serves as Chair of the InterGenerate Team and recently edited the book All Ages Becoming: Intergenerational Practice in the Formation of God's People.

Category: Worship and Arts

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

313. Religious Trauma and Emerging Adulthood

Matt Frease

A recent study found that 1 in 3 Americans experience religious trauma at some point in their lives. The lasting impact of these traumas varies for most, with the exception of those in the LGBTQ+ community who experience more numerous and lasting effects. Though there is no reliable data on the percentages of emerging adults with religious trauma, many are more aware of its presence in their lives and the lives of their friends. This workshop discusses what religious trauma is and how ministry leaders can become more aware of its impact, provide safe spaces for individuals to process and name their experiences, and explore avenues toward healing.

Matt Frease, ThD, LMFT, is an ordained Presbyterian Minister and a Licensed Marriage and Family Therapist. He currently serves as the Campus Minister at UKirk Tallahassee. He and his spouse, Ame, have two boys and two hound dogs. He enjoys spending time outside with his family and reading whenever he can find free time.

Category: Leadership

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer

314. Youth LEAD: A Mission Approach to Education

Kathy Gillmore and Anne Dillon Loflin

Can you remember a time when you were a child, and you had an idea about how to help someone in your community? Imagine a place where your inspiration was cultivated, like the seeds from the Parable of the Sower that fell on fertile soil. Then imagine how it would have felt seeing your idea make a difference in your community. LEAD is a faith formation method designed to be youth-led and hands-on where participants learn about God's call to serve as they design and implement small mission projects. This method provides youth with important relationship-building opportunities that are necessary for a strong church community, as adults mentor youth and older youth mentor younger youth. Most importantly, youth learn how the congregation works together to accomplish its mission, by actually leading the congregation in mission tasks.

Kathy Gillmore is a Certified Christian Educator currently serving First Presbyterian Church in Huntsville, AL, having previously served Wildwood Presbyterian Church in Grayslake, IL for 22 years. She served on the Leadership, Education and Development committee for the Presbytery of Chicago. She is passionate about finding new ways to engage today's children, youth, and adults with educational opportunities that bring together content, context, and change.

Anne Dillon Loflin is a lifelong member of First Presbyterian Church, and is now the Youth Director at the church that has been one of the greatest blessings of her life. The intentional care shown for each person that walks through the door is beautiful to witness and experience. She says, "Working with our youth members is a pleasure and a joy. Their faithful hearts and generous spirits are clear reflections of God's work in this church!"

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer

Friday, January 31 – Workshop D

10:30a.m. – 12:00p.m.

400. Jesus' "I AM" Statements in the Gospel of John

Jann Treadwell

Over three workshop blocks, this in-depth Bible study will dig below the surface of the seven I AM declarations in the Gospel of John. The sayings, such as "I AM the Bread of Life," "I AM the Light of the World," are remarkable, yet appear in no other gospel. Why? Who is the audience? What is the context? How does the author use familiar concepts and settings to hammer home the importance of Jesus and

God being one? Over and over the writer of John uses these particular images to reveal the reality of God come to earth through Jesus. Bring your Bible and join us as we explore together these rich statements and more. This workshop is a continuation of workshops 100 and 300.

Jann Treadwell, retired Certified Christian Educator, APCE 2010 Educator of the Year, author of "Unbound: The Transformative Power of Youth Mission Trips," past service on Grace Presbytery Parish Life and Examinations Committees, past moderator of Awards and Scholarships Ministry Team, past service on GA's Educator Certification Council.

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

401. New Members...An Intergenerational Approach

JoAnne Sharp

When a new family comes into our faith community, we typically invite the adults (parents) to a New Members class. There they learn all about our faith community and being Presbyterian. Yet, when youth and children come into faith communities, we send them off to Sunday school, Youth group, or Mid-week programming without an opportunity to learn. The assumption is that they will get it in Confirmation! This workshop will give you some ideas on how to have an intergenerational gathering to welcome the whole family into the faith community!

JoAnne Sharp is a Certified Christian Educator serving Hodges Presbyterian, Jacksonville, FL. They have a passion for educational ministry, especially bringing all the ages together. They will gladly share pictures of their grandchildren or their kitty, Casper.

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

402. Reading the Bible Queerly: Beyond the Basics!

Jimmy Hoke

This workshop will help participants dig deeper into trans and queer approaches to the Bible in ways that can help them transform their teaching, preaching, and personal interpretation/devotional practices. The workshop goes "beyond the basics" by skipping over the traditional "clobber passages" and questions of "what the Bible says about LGBTQ people." Instead, it will use unexpected passages to help participants understand how trans and queer approaches can inform how they read and teach any story or text from the Bible. These approaches are heavily informed by current, cutting-edge work being done in trans and queer Biblical Studies, including but not limited to the workshop leader's work on queer approaches to Paul's letters and the New Testament. The workshop will be highly interactive in order to show participants how they might incorporate these methods into their work with adults, youth, or children. Instead of telling them what a queer or trans approach to a text is, the leader will challenge participants to learn and embody these approaches using guided examples and collaborative learning techniques. Participants will leave feeling empowered to dig deeper into the Bible using these approaches and skills--and with resources that help them adapt and apply these reading techniques to their many different contexts for faith formation.

Although this workshop is pitched as "beyond the basics"--in order to be a resource to LGBTQ leaders and allies who have already done the equivalent of "Inclusion 101"-type workshops--the workshop

welcomes folks with all levels of experience--with the note that we will not be going over basic concepts of gender, sexuality, or usage of pronouns.

Dr. Jimmy Hoke teaches, writes, researches, and brings to life the queer folks in and around the Bible--for audiences as young as age 4 as well as seminary and adult learners. They are the Director of Children and Family Ministry at the House of Hope Presbyterian Church, St. Paul, MN, Affiliated Faculty in New Testament at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities, the author of Feminism, Queerness, Affect, and Romans: Under God?, and the creator of "Queering the Lectionary."

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship, Mission and Social Justice/Outreach

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

403. Pop Culture Faith: Teaching the Gospel through TV and Film

Cassie Waits

Pop culture influences the clothes we wear, the music we listen to, the attitudes we hold, and even the language we use. In fact, the average American spends two hours per day consuming digital media! Yet church educators are often unsure how to leverage television and film in their adult faith formation groups. Through this workshop, we will examine three real-life groups who have successfully used shows like "Ted Lasso," "The Good Place," and "Good Omens" as a catalyst for faith formation. Participants will then consider their own context: what shows would speak to their congregation, what setup would be most appropriate, and what buy-in would be needed. Finally, participants will learn how to design and execute an 8-session adult small group study that explores faith through the lens of popular television or film.

Rev. Cassie Waits is the Associate Pastor of Discipleship at First Presbyterian Church in Marietta, GA and treasurer for APCE's SOAP region. When not at the church, she can be found paddleboarding at the lake, catching up on Doctor Who, or hanging out with her family.

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer

404. Lament WITH Children and Youth: Practices, Rhythms, Rituals that Empower Faith Communities to Address Loss and Injustice

Valerie Grissom

My story: In 2021, I lost both of my parents suddenly to Covid within 10 days. As a worship leader, I was immediately struck with how little room our faith communities provided for grief, let alone a framework or language for offering Christian lament. Interestingly, my children became my worship leaders, teaching me the rhythms and practices of daily lament, as we grieved together.

Proposed Workshop Content: Like adults, children and youth experience loss, trauma, transition. They encounter deep disappointments and grief, sometimes even the loss of a family member, or friend, or a special pet. Like us, younger generations often learn to inhabit the liminal spaces of waiting, disappointment, illness, moving, divorce, and so much more. We live in a world full of bullying, violence, racial injustice, poverty, and discrimination. But do we, as God's children, no matter our age, know that we can approach God honestly with our pain and confusion? Do we realize that God invites us to practice daily rhythms and rituals that allow us to lament with one another, no matter what age, in

community?

In this workshop, we will discuss the following:

- a brief theology of lament as a spiritual practice for worship and daily life that enables us to approach God and community with honesty, vulnerability, and authenticity
- an exploration of how we might make room for lament in our faith communities and at home
- new language to aid us in practicing lament with children and youth together utilizing the Psalms of lament and biblical examples (Job, David, Hannah, Jesus)
- practical resources drawing from culturally diverse faith communities and experts (over 22 interviews I conducted in 2023) in this field to facilitate and create practices of lament through rhythms and rituals.

Valerie M. Grissom, MDiv, DWS, has been a Worship Pastor for over 20 years and is certified for ordination as Minister of Word and Sacrament (PC-USA), near Seattle, Washington. She serves as Chair of the InterGenerate Team and recently edited the book All Ages Becoming: Intergenerational Practice in the Formation of God's People.

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization, Other

405. "Dying With Dignity...A Workshop with Regard to Protecting Life in Death"

Dana Moulds

The reality is that we know very little about death. It's the greatest mystery known to humankind! The certainty that we will die, coupled with the complete uncertainty of when, how, or what (if anything) happens next is truly a fantastic paradox. We live in a death-denying culture. Our personal relationships with death impact how we show up on behalf of others during times of death and/or the dying process. How the church responds to the particular needs of its congregation, its community, as it relates to caregiving and walking alongside those directly affected by death, or are in the dying process themselves, is reflective of who the church is called to be "on earth as it is in heaven" (Mt. 6:10b) – as the living embodiment of the "new heaven and new earth" (Rev. 21:1).

Through critical discussion as a means to explore the theory and practice of group talk, this workshop aims to achieve the following purposes:

- To help participants reach a more theologically and critically informed understanding about death and dying.
- To act as a catalyst in helping people take informed action in journeying alongside others - as spiritual caregivers - during times of death and dying.

Centering the question, "What must one do to be at peace with themselves so that they may live presently and die gracefully?" participants will engage in theologically-grounded, critical discussion as a way to build connections; with the goal of learning how to identify and use their spiritual gifts in support of care seekers during their most vulnerable time of need.

Dana Moulds is a recent, dual degree -M.Div/MACE – graduate of Union Presbyterian Seminary (Charlotte campus). Dana has occasionally served as Minister at CN Jenkins Presbyterian Church and has been invited to guest preach throughout the city of Charlotte. Dana is the Founder of Break'ingFast Ministries, an online platform dedicated to helping Black women flourish. Vocationally, Dana is a Death Doula and currently on the path toward becoming a Board Certified Chaplain.

Category: Other

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Staff of church or organization

406. Put Me In, Coach! Nurturing Faith in the Beloved Community of Athletics

L. British Hyrams

In today's society, where the demands of organized sports often collide with ministry programming, finding harmony between the two can be challenging. This workshop delves into the intersection of ministry with college students and young adults with athletics. One key focus is to explore how the Church can be a presence in the lives of young athletes and the athletic world. Participants will learn about the vital role of chaplains and a ministry presence in the sports community, whether you know everything about sports or nothing at all. Attendees will gain practical insights into athletic chaplaincy and how it can positively impact the lives of young athletes, fostering personal growth, resilience, and a sense of purpose both on and off the field. We also explore how to incorporate elements of athletic chaplaincy into your ministry. Perhaps we no longer have to wrestle with ministry versus athletics!

Rev. Dr. L. British Hyrams, D. Min '24, M. Div/MACE '16, is the Associate Chaplain for Presbyterian College, including serving the athletic department and being closely aligned with the Men's Basketball team. She has previously served in campus ministry, as director of Christian ministries, and as an associate pastor.

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

407. Love Thy Neighbor as Thy Cellphone: Games for the Digital Age

Joel Winchip

People are constantly texting, taking pictures, and checking social media with their smart phones. What if we took people's preoccupation with this technology and used it for games and team building activities? This session will explore the recreation that can be led with youth or adults and their cell phones. Please come join the fun (and don't forget to bring your phone)!

Joel Winchip is the Executive Director of the Presbyterian Church Camp and Conference Association and the Campfire Collective. He also serves on the adjunct faculty of Columbia Theological Seminary (Decatur, GA), where he teaches their camp/conference ministry and recreation courses. Before taking his current position, Joel served on the staff of Presbyterian camps and conference centers in Florida, Virginia, North Carolina, and South Carolina.

Category: Creative Arts/Recreation

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

408. Lilly Endowment Initiatives Panel Discussion

Stephanie Fritz

The Lilly Endowment has funded 2 large initiatives in the last few years that have the potential to significantly contribute to what we know about faith formation and how we engage and develop programs. The Christian Parenting and the Nurturing Children through Worship and Prayer initiatives have been awarded to over 100 denominations and organizations for nearly 200 million dollars. We have

much to learn from their work and research! This workshop will assemble an ecumenical panel of several grant recipients. The panel will talk about their project, how leaders can engage and what they are learning about how to best support children and youth both at home and in the faith community.

Stephanie is the manager in the Office of Christian Formation in the Presbyterian Mission Agency of the PCUSA. Her team supports faith formation leaders connecting them to resources, inspiring with fresh ways of thinking about formation and providing opportunities for networking and training. Stephanie served as an educator in Denver area churches before coming to the national offices. She serves the national offices in Louisville remotely.

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

409. Wrestling on the Page: Writing through Struggle as a Spiritual Practice

Julie Hester

When our struggles seem overwhelming, we need spiritual practices that help us move towards wholeness. Come learn to use writing as a pathway toward healing for individuals and groups. With creative prompts from poetry, scripture, photos and more, we'll write and share as we experience a gathering of beloved community during a busy conference.

Fee: \$5

Julie Hester is a pastor and writer in North Carolina, specializing in curriculum and faith formation. She leads workshops on writing through grief and writing as a spiritual practice, and shares writing prompts at <https://writingincompany.substack.com/>

Category: Creative Arts/Recreation

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

410. Infants in Worship Part II

Lynne Pabst and Lynace Veit

A continuation of the discussion from 2024. Last year participants discussed the struggles parents, congregations, and pastors face when worshipping with infants and were presented with a Biblical, theological, and developmental foundation for including infants in the worship experience. Participants this year are presented with ways to help pastors, congregations, and parents understand the faith value of including infants in worship. Strategies (such as Serve and Return, observation, and levels of sleep) to welcome, support, and engage infants in active worship are presented and practiced. Participation in the 2024 workshop is not a prerequisite.

Lynne A. Pabst, CCE, DEdMin, is the Director of Christian Education at Grove Presbyterian Church, Danville, PA, and retired Early Childhood Education professor. Lynne is passionate about supporting parents with infants in worship.

Lynace Pabst Veit is a second generation Certified Christian Educator with a passion for children in worship. Lynace is currently pursuing ordination while serving as Director of Children and Family Ministry at First Presbyterian Church of Shreveport, LA, and caring for her husband and four children.

Category: Worship and Arts

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer

411. Partnering with Parents in Youth Ministry

Eileen VanGieson and Kiersten Hill

Student ministry is not limited to discipleship and relational time spent with students. At a time of life when students assert independence from parental figures in their lives (for good developmental purposes), there is great value in cultivating supportive and strong relationships with parents. This does not necessarily mean inviting parents into the youth ministry space. In this workshop, we will explore ways to minister to students and their families that create good boundaries, supportive partnerships, and create trust with both students and their parents/guardians. Participants will explore the value and importance of working with parents to support the faith and personal development of students. Through interactive discussions, case studies, and hands-on activities, participants will gain practical tools for developing effective communication, building relationships with parents that are positive, and addressing challenges that may arise in partnerships.

Topics we will discuss during this workshop:

- Understanding the benefits of partnering with parents
- Developing strategies for effective communication with families
- Building trust and rapport with parents
- Addressing diversity in parent partnerships
- Collaborating with parents to support student learning and spiritual development
- Managing challenging situations and conflicts with parents

Eileen VanGieson is the Associate Pastor at Christ Presbyterian Church, Carlsbad, California. She has been involved in Youth Ministry since 2003 and continues to love working with youth students. Whenever possible, Eileen will jump on a plane to discover beauty around the world, seeing God in all places and people.

Kiersten Hill is the Associate Pastor of Youth and Young Adult Ministries at Wellshire Presbyterian Church in Denver, Colorado, and the Co-Moderator of the Presbyterian Youth Workers Association. Kiersten is passionate about helping young people develop authentic faith and meaningful relationships. She enjoys karaoke, long walks, and all things pink.

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

412. Setting the Table for Transformative Formation: Using Trauma Informed Practices for Transformation

Kathryn Green

Together, we will name those places and spaces where our congregations experience stress, anxiety, or trauma that impedes creating community and being fully present. By using trauma informed practices to create transformative contexts, we can help our congregations and ministry settings be open and available to engage challenging ideas, difficult truths, and being careful/caring with ourselves and others. Transformative Teaching happens in that space where one is a bit uncomfortable, but still open to learning. For four years, Kat has studied with Breathe For Change to use the very successful TEACH method of trauma informed programming in the local church. You will learn the seven components of trauma informed teaching. Using mindfulness practices where they meet spiritual practices, teams will work together to design a class, program, or project that holds space to be an ideal context to welcome

transformative learning.

Trauma informed practices are vital to emotional and social hospitality for a post-covid-church. Hear how these practices have been implemented. Try these practices out with equity sharing protocols and a template for easy use. Wonder how these practices can serve your church as we "lead with love for beginnings, presence, inclusion, harmony, creativity, compassion, collaboration, playfulness, gratitude, communication, social justice, and inspiration" (BreatheforChange values, breatheforchange.org). These practices and principles can be used for in person and on-line gatherings.

Kathryn Green is a Certified Christian Educator and has served churches with membership for 2 to 4000 members in Texas, Appalachia, Missouri, Indiana, and Maryland. She is passionate about inclusion and making people feel safe and loved. She has written quicksheets for PCUSA and regularly posts resources for the larger church through HOPE4CE and "Let's Continue the Conversation at Home." She challenged the church to revision what it means to gather in the name of Christ through an online initiative, "Sometimes Church Looks Like..."

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship, Leadership, Creative Arts/Recreation

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Other

413. The Last Segregated Hour

Stephen Haynes

Memphis was the site of one of the longest running and most consequential church kneel-in campaigns of the 1960s. From March 1964 to January 1965 racially mixed groups of young people attempted unsuccessfully to enter Second Presbyterian Church for worship. Resistance to their efforts led to national media coverage, pressure on administrators at the local church-related college where many of the protestors were enrolled, a denominational decision to move the site of the 1965 General Assembly, and a church split. This presentation tells the story of the Memphis kneel-ins based on contemporary press reports, church documents, and interviews with those involved.

*Stephen R. Haynes is Professor of Religious Studies and Director of the Liberal Arts in Prison Program Rhodes College, where he has taught since 1989. He is author or editor of fourteen books, including *The Last Segregated Hour: The Memphis Kneel-Ins and the Campaign for Southern Church Desegregation* (Oxford, 2012), *The Battle for Bonhoeffer: Debating Discipleship in the Age of Trump* (Eerdmans, 2018), and *Why Can't Church Be More Like an AA Meeting? And Other Questions Christians Ask about Recovery* (Eerdmans, 2021). Haynes is also a Minister of Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (USA) and serves as Theologian-in-Residence at Idlewild Presbyterian Church in Memphis.*

Category: Mission and Social Justice/Outreach

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization, Other

414. The Lenten Preaching Series at Calvary Episcopal Church

Paul McLain

Calvary Episcopal Church in downtown Memphis is now into its 102nd year of offering its Lenten Preaching Series to the community and world. The series has attracted internationally acclaimed preachers, poets, writers, and scholars including Marcus Borg, Barbara Brown Taylor, James Lawson, Brian McLaren, and Padraig O' Tuama. Over the years, it has added an in-house dining ministry called "The Waffle Shop" and a pop-up bookstore. The series now includes a live conversational podcast with

speakers on Wednesday nights. The Reverend Paul McLain, associate rector of Calvary, will share the colorful history and year-round planning process of this amazing series!

The Reverend, Paul McLain, Associate Rector of Calvary Episcopal Church, guides and supports Calvary's pastoral care ministries. He is a certified spiritual director and enjoys being a spiritual companion to Calvary parishioners and community members. He is an adult reading tutor with Literacy Mid-South. Paul is past president of the Downtown Churches Association. Ruthie, Paul's wife, is a retired attorney. Paul and Ruthie enjoy reading, travel, playing chess, and being Memphis in May barbeque judges.

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship, Worship and Music

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization, Other

415. Ministry with Children and Families Through Illness and Loss

Mark Brown

What does it look like to be a helpful, loving presence with children and families whose lives are marked by serious illness, death, and other significant losses? This workshop will explore ways to accompany families living through their highest levels of pain and distress. The workshop will introduce a model for walking alongside families in such times and identify key factors to consider when planning meaningful ministry with them.

Mark Brown is director of Spiritual Care Services at St. Jude Children's Research Hospital in Memphis where he has served as a chaplain for 21 years.

Category: Leadership

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

Friday, January 31 – Workshop E

4:00p.m. – 5:30p.m.

501. The Sunday School Struggle: What's Flourishing, What's Fading, and What's in the Future?

Lisa Witherspoon

For many congregations, the "traditional" Sunday school of our childhoods is a thing of the past. Today, churches are doing Sunday School in a myriad of different ways and the choices can be overwhelming! In this workshop, we'll look at current Sunday school trends for children and youth, rundown a list of popular models and curriculum options, and discuss some things to consider when choosing what will work best in your context. (*This workshop is not a sponsorship for any particular curriculum or publisher.)

Lisa Witherspoon is the Director of Children & Youth Ministry at First Presbyterian Church in Greensboro, NC. She has a background in child development and 20+ years of experience in education and Christian formation. She is a curriculum nerd and is passionate about welcoming children of all ages and abilities into faith formation.

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

502. Nurturing the Mental Health of Youth

Liz Corsig and Michelle Thomas-Bush

The adolescent mental health crisis has been at the forefront of national conversation, yet it continues to plague our local communities and congregations. The church has a unique opportunity to address the adolescent mental health crisis by allowing and equipping youth to rest in their identity as beloved children of God. Yet, how can the church resist the temptation to perpetuate the toxic cycle of achievement that runs rampant in our culture? How do we as pastors and educators cultivate hope in our young people as they navigate the world? How can we equip young people with Christian practices that will ground them during life's chaotic moments? Join us as we build our mental health toolbox, exploring techniques and practices that we can bring home and share with anyone in the church who is passionate about the lifelong faith formation and flourishing of young people.

Liz Corsig is the Director of Youth Ministry at Unity Presbyterian Church in Fort Mill, South Carolina. Prior to serving at Unity, Liz served as the High School Ministry Coordinator at Myers Park Presbyterian Church. Liz attended in Indiana University and is now a third-year student at Union Presbyterian Seminary in Charlotte, where she is working towards her Master of Divinity and Master of Arts in Christian Education. When not studying or spending time with youth, Liz can be found trying new restaurants, going on walks with her dog, or teaching Pilates classes.

Michelle is the Associate Pastor for Youth and Their Families at Myers Park Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, North Carolina. She loves her job! It is a great joy for her to walk alongside young people on their faith journey. She is a mom of two teenagers, and is immersed in youth culture! She loves games, cooking, bike riding and her lab, Lola.

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

503. A.I, Faith, & You: Understanding and Using A.I. as a Tool in Ministry

Andy Morgan

This workshop is designed to explore this and other important questions by demystifying A.I., exploring both its practical uses and the ethical considerations it brings to our faith communities. You'll learn about generative A.I. programs like ChatGPT, understand their capabilities, and discuss how these technologies can be harnessed to enhance your ministry. In the first part of the class, we'll break down how generative A.I. works, what it can do, and its potential applications in your daily ministry tasks. The second half will focus on our collective response as faith leaders—how can we ethically and effectively integrate A.I. into our work while staying true to our values as faith leaders?

This workshop will be a blend of lecture, lively conversation, and hands-on praxis, allowing you to experiment with generative A.I. tools and reflect on their role in your ministry. Whether you're tech-savvy or just curious, this session will provide valuable insights and practical skills to help you navigate the digital landscape with confidence and faith. Come ready to explore, discuss, and discover how generative A.I. may become a meaningful part of your ministry toolkit.

Rev. Dr. Andy P. Morgan is the Director of Family Formation at First Presbyterian Church, Knoxville. Andy has served as a UKirk pastor, Senior Pastor, and now is living into God's call for his life through the field of Christian Education.

Category: Leadership

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

504. What's Stirring in the Soul of APCE?

Anne Wilson and Von Clemans

Interact with members of APCE's Strategic Planning Task Force and Implementation Team who have created new strategies and a new structure with the goal of ensuring that APCE remains vibrant, relevant and useful into the future. Discover how this new plan will provide support for you in your role as a leader in faith formation. Be inspired to become involved in one of the new Mission Teams. May your soul be stirred by what lies ahead!

Anne is a seasoned educator who has served 3 different churches in Houston, TX. She is a past president of APCE, Life Achievement Award recipient, and current co-chair of APCE's strategic planning task force.

Category: Leadership

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

505. Family Worship: A Recipe for Sunday Morning

David Carter-Florence and Brittany Williams

Is your Sunday School hour for children and families thriving or dying? How involved and enthusiastic are your children and families about your regular worship services? During COVID, we took the opportunity for change to begin a new program that would reach more children and families who wanted to be together on Sunday mornings. Family Worship is first and foremost child and parent friendly. That means the worship content is developmentally appropriate for all ages, specifically focusing on younger children. This is a service where all are welcome and children feel free to move about and parents do not feel judged. Children and parents engage in the liturgy through singing, prayers, retelling scripture, storytelling, sacraments, sensory activities, and a fellowship time with a snack. The worship moves through fun-loving and relaxed tones to thoughtful and deep moments. Come and experience a Family Worship service and learn how to incorporate into your own faith formation and worship contexts.

David Carter Florence, Associate Pastor of Congregational Faith Formation at Black Mountain Presbyterian Church, Black Mountain, NC. David has worn many hats in ministry and education with a focus on spiritual formation in schools, camps and churches, especially in academic, wilderness and farming settings.

Brittany Williams is the Director of Congregational Life and Children's Ministry at Black Mountain Presbyterian Church, Black Mountain, NC. She is a native of Black Mountain and has a background in recreation and community building. She enjoys using her gifts to share the love of God with all ages.

Category: Worship and Arts

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

506. A Telos for Diverse Worship

Jeremy Simpson

"A Telos for Diverse Worship" explores the concept of telos, or purpose, within the context of diverse worship practices. It delves into the idea that worship serves as a means of expressing and embodying the ultimate purpose or goal of the Christian faith. Participants engage in discussions and reflections on how diverse worship practices can contribute to the fulfillment of this telos, embracing the richness of various cultural, linguistic, and musical expressions in worship. By embracing Revelation 7:9 and Through practical insights and theological reflections, the workshop aims to inspire participants to cultivate inclusive and meaningful worship experiences that reflect the diversity of God's people and contribute to the flourishing of Christian community.

Rev. Jeremy Simpson is the Director of Diversity and Belonging for the Reformed Church in America. Jeremy is a lifelong musician and passionate advocate for social change, leveraging his platform to amplify marginalized voices and advocate for equity and justice. He is actively involved in community organizations and initiatives aimed at advancing diversity, equity, and inclusion both within and beyond the Church. He also serves the APCE JEDI Council.

Category: Worship and Arts

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

507. Beloved Me, Beloved We Initiative of the Godly Play Foundation

Cheryl Minor

The Godly Play Foundation is engaged in a multi-faceted initiative to inspire brave spaces so that every child who comes close to Godly Play encounters a felt sense of their inherent worth and dignity as uniquely and fully created in God's image (Beloved Me) and co-creates a way of being and inspiring and inclusive communities which celebrate the diversity of God and God's creation (Beloved We). This workshop will introduce the process we have used to carry out this vision on both a macro-level (organizationally) and micro-level (auditing our lessons and materials for implicit bias). We will include some Godly Play storytelling so participants can experience first-hand some of the new language and materials that have been developed as part of this process. In addition, we will share the work that has taken place to date and tips for how to update your own Godly Play materials (or any other curriculum you may be using at this time) to reflect the diversity of God's creation.

The Rev. Cheryl V. Minor, Ph.D., is the Director of the Center for the Theology of Childhood for the Godly Play Foundation. Dr. Minor has a degree in Music Education from Boston University, an MDiv. from Virginia Theological Seminary and a PhD in Psychology from Northcentral University in Scottsdale, Arizona. Her dissertation examined Godly Play's impact on children's spiritual well-being. In her role at the Center, Dr. Minor has been leading the group conducting the Equity Audit of the lessons and materials.

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship, Leadership

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

508. Visio Divina in Community

Lib Caldwell and Mollie Donihe Wilkerson

Sometimes our souls hunger for nurture in solitude. But often we are nurtured in our lives of faith in community. Come prepare your heart, mind and soul with an interactive art experience. Visio Divina is a spiritual practice of sacred seeing. It invites us to see with our hands, our eyes and our spirits what God is saying to us, what God invites us to be doing in this world. Our souls are quenched, our thirsts are satisfied when we spend time with biblical texts, engaging texts with our heads, our hearts and our creative spirits. In this workshop you'll have a chance to sit with and respond to music, poetry, and biblical texts using a variety of materials including fiber, paper, paint, beading, stitching, and simple weaving. Yes, you should come if your soul is parched. Yes, you should come if your soul needs nourishment so you can nourish others during Lent. Yes, you should come if getting messy and creative with art is what you love.

Elizabeth Caldwell enjoys reading, writing, quilting and gardening after retiring from teaching at McCormick Theological Seminary and Vanderbilt Divinity School. She is the author of Pause, A Lenten Journey with the Psalms, WJK Books, 2024. Lib especially enjoys conversations and creating with her friend and co-teacher, Mollie Donihe Wilkerson, a gifted artist.

Mollie Donihe Wilkerson is a textile artist born and raised in the shadow of the Blue Ridge Mountains of Southwest Virginia. She received a Master of Divinity from Vanderbilt Divinity School where she met Lib, her friend, mentor, and co-creator. She was selected as Creative Director and Artist-in-Residence at the 2023 General Assembly of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Working primarily with secondhand and upcycled fabrics, Mollie's pieces are often tactile, inviting interaction and contemplation.

Category: Creative Arts/Recreation

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

509. Wrestling with New Understandings of Child Development

Karen-Marie Yust and Erin Reibel

Over the last two decades, new research methods have enabled child development experts to reconsider their assumptions about how children grow and learn. They've discovered that many of the universal stage theories we've taken for granted underestimate the capabilities of children and devalue their ways of exploring and interpreting the world. This means simple linear charts outlining ages and stages according to Piaget, Erikson, Kohlberg, Fowler, and others are no longer reliable accounts of children's engagement in faith formation. Come explore the world of new developmental theories and their implications for nurturing children's spirituality. Learn to recalibrate your thinking about developmental tasks and milestones so that you can better support children's faith journeys. Imagine new approaches to teaching religious stories, ideas, and practices that lean into children's unexpected abilities. Together, we'll create new developmental frameworks to guide religious education in congregational settings and at home.

Karen-Marie Yust is Rowe Professor of Christian Education and Director of the Children's Spirituality Hub at Union Presbyterian Seminary. She is ordained with standing in the UCC and Disciples traditions and writes for www.RealKidsRealFaith.org.

Erin Reibel is the Associate Director of the Children's Spirituality Hub at Union Presbyterian Seminary. She facilitates the Hub's innovation projects and helps religious educators understand the social science behind effective ministry practices.

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer

510. Let the (Neurodiverse and Neurotypical) Children Come

Michelle Junkin and Heather Selement

This workshop is an invitation to explore how your congregation can welcome neurodivergent children and support their families. You will learn about neurodiversity and gain awareness of how the needs of neurodiverse and neurotypical children differ in congregational life. Participants will leave the workshop with practical advice, tips, and "tools in their faith formation toolkit" to include neurotypical and neurodivergent children in worship, faith formation activities, and congregational life.

Michelle Junkin, MACE, M.Div, D.Min, is Pastor of Spiritual Formation at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Oklahoma City, Oklahoma. Michelle holds a Certificate in Non-Profit Management. She is a professional artist, and the focuses of her thesis was "A Fuller Palate of Praise: Exploring God's Gift of the Creative Arts to Renew Engagement in Worship, Congregational life, and Mission"

Heather Selement is Director of Children's Ministry at Westminster Presbyterian Church and additionally, implements the new ministry programing for Special Needs including seasonal Sensory Friendly Worship services. Prior to working at WPC, Heather served at the Director of Family Ministry at the City Rescue Mission homeless shelter.

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

511. Squad Goals & Lit Insights: Understanding and Embracing Gen Z in the Church

Brittany Porch and Bianca Howard

Generational theory provides valuable insights into understanding the diverse perspectives and unique characteristics of different age groups. Within the church community, we have the remarkable opportunity to engage with all six living generations. This workshop will explore the characteristics of Gen Z (born 1995-2012); what makes them tick, what worries them, and what they are seeking in today's world. In the workshop, we will reflect on how insights from generational theory can inform our approach to being a welcoming and relevant church community for Gen Z.

Brittany Porch has a degree in Practical Theology from Columbia Theological Seminary and is a certified Christian Educator. She works as the Director of Mission & Education at Broad Street Presbyterian Church in Columbus, OH. She has the unique skill of big-picture strategic thinking and loves the details of practical ministry.

A 20+year veteran in ministry, Bianca Howard is the Director of Parent Initiatives and the Orange Specialist for Black Church Partnerships at Orange. She is an ordained minister in the Baptist tradition and served on church staff for 16 years as an Associate Pastor in Next Gen Ministry. Bianca is also currently a doctoral student studying Youth, Family and Culture at Fuller Theological Seminary. She lives in Atlanta with her husband and two toddlers. In her spare time, she loves to travel and ride roller coasters at Six Flags.

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship, Leadership

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

512. Bible Journaling: An Intergenerational Connection to God's Word and Each Other

Denise Shannon

What started out as an experiment, turned into a dynamic community at Weldon Valley Presbyterian Church in Colorado, fostering spiritual growth and connection between the different generations. Through fellowship and creative exploration of the Bible's teachings-participants engage in journaling; blending artistic expression and thoughtful reflection. The diverse range of ages (age 11-90) fosters a unique exchange of perspectives and wisdom. This group has emerged as a vibrant tapestry where the threads of faith, art and fellowship weave a richer understanding of God's word. The design of the overall program will be shared along with an opportunity to experience a shortened version of the activity along with ideas on how to adopt this to your ministry.

Denise Shannon, MDIV is the Pastor at Weldon Valley Presbyterian Church, Weldona, CO. Denise is passionate about introducing people to Jesus and journeying with them in their spiritual growth utilizing new and creative techniques and ideas.

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

513. Heathy Youth Workers = Healthy Churches

Caitlin Supcoff and Kate Satterstrom

Are you wondering if there is such a thing as a work – life balance in youth ministry? Burn-out and turnover is high in youth ministry positions, which is bad for youth workers and the congregations they serve. The health of those entrusted with guiding and nurturing the youth of our congregations directly impacts the overall health and vibrancy of church communities. The Presbyterian Youth Workers Association (PYWA) maintains that Healthy Youth Workers = Healthy Churches. That premise helps us understand that the pursuit of a healthy ministry becomes not only a personal endeavor, but also a communal responsibility. Join us for an empowering session where we'll unpack five essential pillars of healthy youth ministry...

Healthy Advocacy: Discover how (and what) to advocate for job benefits tailored to the unique needs of youth workers, and how that can enhance retention, morale, and effectiveness in ministry.

Healthy Boundaries: Learn effective techniques for establishing boundaries between work and personal life, preventing burnout, and sustaining long-term passion for serving youth.

Healthy Schedules: Develop strategies for crafting balanced schedules that prioritize ministry commitments and personal well-being, ensuring that youth workers are operating at their fullest potential.

Healthy Spirit: Create space for spiritual practices and a rich faith life beyond work, enabling youth workers to approach ministry with wholeness, authenticity, and resilience.

Healthy Community: Cultivate supportive relationships and promote vitality beyond our congregations, providing a healthy outlet outside of the church community.

This workshop is intended for BOTH youth workers and those in ministry with youth workers.

Caitlin Supcoff is the Youth and Young Adult Advocate and the Communications Director for Mission Presbytery. She lives outside of Austin, TX with her husband and two young children and enjoys reading, gardening, and baking.

Kate Satterstrom, M.Div, M.A.Youth Ministry, is the Director of Children, Youth, and Family Ministry at First Presbyterian Church in McMinnville, Oregon and Co-Director of the McMinnville Youth Collective. Kate is passionate about making sure youth know they are unconditionally loved. If she could be any animal, she would be a starfish.

Category: Leadership

Intended Participants: Educator, Staff of church or organization

514. “Won’t you Be My Neighbor?” A Simple, Unassuming Question. Or Is It?

Miatta Wilson

Presbyterian pastor and TV personality Fred Rogers welcomed everyone into his neighborhood and modeled the importance of seeing ourselves and others, listening to ourselves and others, accepting ourselves and others, loving ourselves and others. These are the basics for creating a positive community. How do we, as people of faith like Fred Rogers, grow, learn, and model peace for our communities and families? In this interactive workshop with activity and conversation, we will take time together to consider the importance of self-worth, curiosity, listening, trust, play, and solitude and then how to incorporate practices into our everyday faith, community and household life.

Miatta Wilson is an Associate in the Office of Christian Formation, Presbyterian Mission Agency, PC(USA) and a certified educator. Miatta is passionate about sharing learnings and legacy of Fred Rogers as well as connecting people to people and people to resources. She loves to be in God’s creation visiting with friends and family. Miatta is APCE’s 2025 ENRICH Educator of the Year.

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

515. Liberal Arts Prison Program

Stephen Haynes

In the aftermath of Congress’s 1994 decision to make incarcerated students ineligible for federal Pell grants, most post-secondary education programs in American prisons came to an end. With the restoration of Pell rights for incarcerated students in 2020, college-in-prison programs have begun to flourish again. This presentation highlights Rhodes College’s efforts to make liberal arts education available to incarcerated women in Tennessee by establishing a Liberal Arts in Prison Program, through which 75 women have earned over 700 Rhodes credits since 2019.

*Stephen R. Haynes is Professor of Religious Studies and Director of the Liberal Arts in Prison Program Rhodes College, where he has taught since 1989. He is author or editor of fourteen books, including *The Last Segregated Hour: The Memphis Kneel-Ins and the Campaign for Southern Church Desegregation* (Oxford, 2012), *The Battle for Bonhoeffer: Debating Discipleship in the Age of Trump* (Eerdmans, 2018), and *Why Can’t Church Be More Like an AA Meeting? And Other Questions Christians Ask about Recovery* (Eerdmans, 2021). Haynes is also a Minister of Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (USA) and serves as Theologian-in-Residence at Idlewild Presbyterian Church in Memphis.*

Category: Mission and Social Justice/Outreach

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization

516. Creating LGBTQIA+-Inclusive Youth Ministry Events

Brian Ellison and Pepa Paniagua

This workshop will help church leaders plan, organize and prepare the policies and practices that create camps, conferences, retreats and regular gatherings that are truly and authentically inclusive and fun for youth of all gender identities and sexual orientations. We'll explore the theology of authentic welcome, examine particular policies, and share creative ideas for both fun and faithfulness. We'll answer thorny questions about restrooms and sleeping arrangements, offer help navigating parental concerns, and have time for sharing questions and ideas from participants' own experiences. (This workshop emerges from an APCE-sponsored class on LGBTQIA+ youth ministry offered online in 2023.)

The Rev. Brian Ellison (he/him) has served as executive director of the Covenant Network of Presbyterians since 2012, preaching, teaching and providing overall strategic leadership in implementing the organization's mission. Brian also serves as stated clerk of the Synod of Mid-America. He has served previously as pastor of Parkville Presbyterian Church (near Kansas City, Missouri) and is host/contributor at KCUR, Kansas City's NPR affiliate. He is a frequent leader of workshops at events of APCE and other organizations, and taught an APCE-sponsored class on LGBTQIA+ youth ministry in 2023. He and his partner, Troy Lillebo, live in Kansas City with their two dog daughters, the recalcitrant Willoughby and the dopey Sage.

The Rev. Pepa Paniagua (she/her) is a pastor, facilitator, educator, innovator, writer, advocate and ally, and she is passionate about thinking outside the box and gently leading others through the challenging conversations about the vast expanse of God's love. Growing up between the Redwoods and the Pacific, Pepa believes that as much can be learned by placing your bare feet in the sand and listening, as can be learned from any book. Pepa loves a good story, good food, and good coffee. As a graduate of Austin Presbyterian Theological Seminary, and longtime member of Grace Presbytery, Pepa has learned to faithfully follow God's leadership as she has now lived more than 18 years in Texas, which is approximately 18 more years than she ever planned. Pepa is the founder of kin-dom community, a fully affirming New Worshiping Community of the PCUSA, co-founder of kin-dom camp, and she is currently serves as the Coordinator for Innovation of New Ministry Development at Grace Presbytery. She co-taught a 2023 APCE-sponsored course on LGBTQIA+ Youth Ministry. Pepa and her wife, Kelli, live in North Texas with their two dogs, Juneaux and Opie.

Category: Faith Formation/Discipleship

Intended Participants: Educator, Pastor, Volunteer, Staff of church or organization