

CAN THESE BONES LIVE?

Rediscovering What Matters

THE APCE ANNUAL EVENT

PORTLAND, OREGON | JANUARY 27-30, 2027

Workshop Worksheet

As you register for the pre-events, workshops, and post-events you'd like to participate in at this year's Annual Event, you will have limited time for selecting them. We strongly encourage you to browse all of the incredible opportunities available before you register, making notes of your favorites, so that when you are registering you are ready!

A complete list of the events and workshops, with their full descriptions, is provided in this document. Feel free to print this cover page and fill it out as a 'cheat sheet' for when you are registering. Happy browsing!

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Workshop Block A Options

A101 Faith in Everyday Life

ae online

Workshop Leaders: Sean Chow & Shawn Kang
Offering Notes: Online & In-Person
Description: This workshop equips leaders to cultivate Christian practices through relational, community-based expressions of faith embedded in everyday life. Informed by the PC(USA)'s 1001 New Worshiping Communities movement and shaped by experience from the Presbytery of San Diego, it focuses on forming communities with those outside the church, where faith is lived through daily rhythms and relationships.

As participation in congregational life continues to shift, many remain spiritually curious yet disconnected from established patterns of church involvement. This moment calls for a renewed vision of Christian education, not primarily as curriculum delivery, but as formation through shared practices that shape everyday life. This workshop explores how Christian education can move beyond program-centered models toward practices rooted in homes, neighborhoods, and accessible community spaces. Participants in these groups will engage practices such as shared meals, Scripture, prayer, storytelling, and communal discernment that nurture belonging, spiritual growth, and faithful presence. Designed for educators, pastors, and ministry leaders, the workshop integrates theology with lived practice while offering practical frameworks for cultivating relational and sustainable faith communities.

Workshop participants will develop a contextual model for a "Faith in Everyday Life" gathering suited to their setting. The workshop also introduces approaches to identifying and developing leaders, sustaining small communities, and fostering ongoing participation. Participants will leave with an adaptable plan for implementation, practical tools for their context, and a renewed vision for how Christian education can take root through everyday practices and shared life.

Rev. Dr. Sean Chow serves as Executive Director of the Presbytery of San Diego, cultivating innovative ministries and changing culture. A leader in church planting and formation, he works at the intersection of faith, leadership, and everyday life.

Rev. Shawn Kang serves in the PC(USA)'s 1001 New Worshiping Communities initiative, helping launch and nurture new faith communities. He is dedicated to developing leaders and creating spaces where people can encounter faith in fresh and meaningful ways.

Workshop Block A Options

A102
Linking the Stories of God's People

ae online

Workshop Leaders: Erika Funk
Offering Notes: Online & In-Person
Description: When you wonder how the stories of scripture could possibly connect to your own. When you long for youth to see themselves in the disciples, the Israelites, or the story you're teaching this week. When you want to build deeper community within your congregation, your small group, your family, or among newcomers to the faith.
The story-linking process places our stories in dialogue with faithful disciples we know, and with those we encounter in scripture. Not just Bible stories.
Not just stories about famous saints or heroes of the faith.
But the stories we are living—right now.

Rev. Erika Funk is the director of CROSS Missions in Charlotte, NC. Erika has created and led service learning experiences for youth in Philadelphia and Charlotte for a combined 15 years. She also serves on the CREDO faculty in the vocation component and as the Co-Director of the Catawba Clergy Network.

A103
Can You Be a Progressive Evangelical?

UKIRK COLLEGIATE MINISTRIES

ae online

Workshop Leaders: Gini Norris-Lane
Offering Notes: Online & In-Person
Description: If faith is not primarily about going to heaven or avoiding hell, what is it about? How we articulate the answer to this question matters. What also matters, maybe even more so, is learning to understand the stories of those who have been hurt by the church, who are deconstructing faith, or whose fundamental questions - and yearnings - for God and for community are different than we think they are.

Jesus starts his ministry by proclaiming in Luke 4:18-19 that his purpose was to "proclaim good news to the poor, freedom for the prisoners, sight for the blind and to set the oppressed free." Workshop participants will explore what this verse can mean in our contexts. We will discuss how we are called to meet those who are hurt, skeptical, and questioning with compassion, and shape our programming around their needs and questions.

Rev. Dr. Gini Norris-Lane serves as the Executive Director of the UKirk Collegiate Ministries Association. She is passionate about helping college students and all of God's beloved children experience God's all encompassing love in community and explore how that love can shape who they are and how they serve. She loves watching football, going to soccer games, and going for coffee.

Workshop Block A Options

A104 Grandparents in the Faith Formation Journey

ae online

Workshop Leaders: Jaime Staehle & Anne Hagerman Wilcox
Offering Notes: Online & In-Person
Description: In many congregations, family faith formation has rightly focused on parents, but what about grandparents? Increasingly, grandparents are asking how they can more intentionally share faith with the children they love. They are present, invested, and often spiritually curious about their role.

This workshop explores how churches can equip and include grandparents as vital partners in intergenerational faith formation. Drawing on real-life examples and emerging practices, we'll consider how to adapt existing parent-focused initiatives to engage grandparents in meaningful, accessible ways.

At a time when the church is rediscovering what matters most, this conversation invites us to reconnect generations, honor the wisdom already present in our communities, and imagine how faith can be nurtured across the full span of life. Participants will leave with practical ideas, adaptable models, and renewed vision for engaging grandparents in the life of the church.

Jaime Staehle is a Certified Christian Educator and Director of Christian Education at Fifth Avenue Presbyterian Church in NYC. She is excited to be able to present this workshop alongside her mom – grandparent to her two kids!

Education Professor Emerita, Anne Hagerman Wilcox, serves as Pedagogy Specialist for Whitworth University's Office of Church Engagement (Spokane, WA). The current Formed in Faith Project explores vibrant practices of intergenerational church life and creative family participation in faith formation.

Workshop Block A Options

A105 Good Bones: Evaluating and Adapting Children's Curriculum

micro-credential

ae online

Workshop Leaders: Rebecca Davis
Offering Notes: Online & In-Person, Micro-Credential
Description: Choosing curriculum that fosters life-long faith and discipleship with children is an essential aspect of our ministry. Sometimes the curriculum's approach to scripture matches our perspectives, but the activities won't work in our context of ministry. Other times the theme, music, and presentations are exciting, but the theology is inconsistent with our tradition. The reality is every curriculum must be adapted for our congregational setting. Let's explore how to evaluate the key elements of curriculum and how to adapt it when we cannot find the exact right one.

Rev. Dr. Rebecca Davis is the Sarah Belk Gambrell Professor of Christian Education, Director of the MACE degree and the Center for Excellence in Christian Education at Union Presbyterian Seminary. She is a Teaching Elder and a Certified Educator in the PCUSA. She has served the Church as an educator, pastor, associate presbyter, and in ecumenical non-profits.

A106 Partnership with Indigenous Communities

Workshop Leaders: Gord Brown
Offering Notes: -
Description: The Christian Church has a complex history with the peoples indigenous to North America. All too often, this history has been bound up in the colonialist project of European settlers. And yet Indigenous Communities do come with deep Spiritual resources, especially regarding ecology, and these resources can be reconciled with and are strongly compatible with the broader Christian tradition and message. Consequently, we can all learn from the experiences of Post-Colonial Communities and thereby grow and move into God's intention for all God's peoples and all of God's good creation. This workshop developed by APCE's Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Council will help participants to appreciate of the joys and challenges in Post-Colonial ministries of and with Indigenous Communities.

APCE's Justice, Equity, Diversity and Inclusion Advisory Council has been tasked with helping APCE live into its commitment to all of God's Children for a Biblically-based Justice. This ministry is outlined in APCE's 2022 Diversity Statement found under the Diversity Tab at apcenet.org.

Workshop Block A Options

A107 More Than a Mirror Ball: What Disco & House Teach the Church

Workshop Leaders: Bill Buchanan & Jackson Ringley
Offering Notes: -
Description: Many congregations have statements of inclusion and may even fly inclusion flags as a symbol of welcome. But what does true inclusion look like? Join Jackson Ringley and Bill Buchanan (aka DJ5) for a discussion on the history of disco and house and how they give us a model to be a more inclusive and affirming body of Christ.

Bill Buchanan is a Presbyterian Pastor, Christian Educator and lifetime music nerd. He's also known as DJ5 and has hosted dance parties at numerous conferences and retreats. He lives in Asheville, NC.

Jackson Ringley is the Minister to Youth & Families at United Church of Chapel Hill, as well as the Director of Digital Ministries at Youth Mission Co. He has led numerous workshops on theology in pop culture, and is a rising leader in conversations about queer theology.

A108 Growing Pride in God's Word: Teaching LGBTQIA2S+ Justice to Children Using the Bible

Workshop Leaders: Jimmy Hoke
Offering Notes: -
Description: This interactive workshop will help Children's Ministry leaders develop lessons and teaching strategies that can introduce young learners to queer and trans stories in the Bible. We will focus on making connections between Bible stories and stories of LGBTQIA2S+ leaders in the past and present. This workshop is based on the instructor's successful experience creating and then teaching an LGBTQIA2S+-centered Sunday School curriculum that makes the depth of trans and queer biblical scholarship accessible and life-giving for young learners. After a presentation on how to create lesson plans using these forms of storytelling, participants will work together in small groups to put these skills into action to create mini lessons using resources and curated starting tools given to them by the instructor. In addition to the mini lessons they create together, participants will leave will sample lesson plans (provided by instructor), a list of resources, and skills to continue to create their own lessons to help children build their faith and discover more trans and queer stories in and around the Bible.

Dr. Jimmy Hoke is a freelance scholar and Christian educator who brings to life queer folks in and around the Bible for audiences as young as age 4 in addition to college, seminary, and adult learners. Dr. Hoke is passionate about helping children develop lifelong curious and creative engagements with the Bible (that they won't have to "unlearn" as adults). They are the Director of Children and Family Ministry at the House of Hope Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). Dr. Hoke teaches courses in New Testament and Biblical Studies at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities and Augsburg University. They are eagerly awaiting the publication of their second book, Queering the Lectionary: Proclaiming the Gospels Subversively—forthcoming this summer from Fortress Press.

Workshop Block A Options

A109 Fertility, Faith Formation, and Pastoral Care

Workshop Leaders: Lauren Hood
Offering Notes: -
Description: As Christians, our Scripture is not silent about fertility journeys, especially when deep pain from infertility is present. Sarah, Rachel, and Elizabeth point us to the complications of age with fertility and all the feelings when prayers for a child are not answered - the disappointment, self-esteem issues, and anger. In the bleeding woman who reaches for Jesus's cloak, we see the distress that severe bleeding can cause and the desperate need for healing. Even in deep pain and hopelessness, she takes the risk of trying one more time for healing. Lastly, the birth of Jesus is crucial to our faith AND can invoke jealousy that becoming pregnant was "so easy" for Mary.

Approximately 17.5% of people worldwide experience infertility. No fertility journey looks the exact same, even when treatments are the same. Infertility can be experienced for a variety of reasons, and often it is difficult to make sense of such an experience. These complications often lead to only worshipping digitally, avoiding communal activities until a pregnancy can be announced, or leaving the church completely.

This workshop will provide you with space to consider the needs of those who will, who are, and who have experienced fertility journeys that are untraditional or filled with complications- miscarriages, queer family planning, IVF, IUI, childless by choice, childless due to infertility, health diagnoses, egg/sperm donation, still birth, egg freezing, and more. You will leave this workshop with ideas for faith formation, considerations for worship and sermons, and practical ideas for pastoral care for families on a fertility journey.

Lauren Hood is the Director of Youth and cCollege Ministries at Preston Hollow presbyterian Church in Dallas, TX. She also recently graduated with MDIv and MACE degrees from Union Presbyterian Seminary. She passionate about accessible discipleship, practical theology based in feminist and queer theology, and the complicated relationship between faith and fertility.

Workshop Block A Options

A110 When Dry Bones Speak: Creative Practices for Hearing Overlooked Voices in the Church

Workshop Leaders: Nicole Newton
Offering Notes: -
Description: What if some of the most important insights about faith, belonging, and the life of the church are coming from people we have not yet learned how to hear?

This workshop explores creative listening practices that help congregations hear the spiritual wisdom carried by voices often overlooked in church life, including neurodivergent individuals, children and youth, caregivers, older adults, people with disabilities, immigrants, and others whose experiences may not fit traditional forms of communication.

Through guided arts-based practices using drawing, symbol, metaphor, and visual storytelling, participants will experience new ways of listening that make space for people to share how they encounter God, community, and belonging. These practices create pathways for expression when words alone feel difficult, limited, or insufficient.

Rather than offering a packaged curriculum, this workshop invites participants into adaptable practices that can be used across many ministry settings. Together, we will explore what becomes possible when churches honor multiple ways of communicating, learning, and knowing.

Grounded in Ezekiel's vision of dry bones receiving breath and rooted in the belief that every person bears the image of God, this workshop invites congregations to listen differently so that overlooked stories can become living testimonies. In doing so, communities may discover that the voices they once struggled to hear are not on the margins of the body of Christ, but essential to its wholeness.

Participants will:

- Experience an arts-based listening practice
- Explore ways to hear voices often overlooked in church life
- Identify adaptable practices for their own ministry contexts

Nicole Newton is an Associate Pastor at Independent Presbyterian Church and DMin candidate at Wake Forest University School of Divinity. Her research explores arts-based practices that help neurodivergent people and their families share their experiences of faith and shape more inclusive congregations.

Workshop Block A Options

A111 Room for Wonder: Child-Friendly Worship Spaces

Workshop Leaders: Kathy Pittenger
Offering Notes: -
Description: What if our worship spaces truly reflected the value that children belong in worship? This workshop explores how the design and use of space across a variety of worship settings can invite children into meaningful participation while enriching worship for the whole community. Participants will discover practical and adaptable ideas for creating worship spaces that make room for wonder, movement, and intergenerational belonging.

Rev. Kathy Pittenger is the Associate Director of Faith Formation and Leadership Development with the Michigan Conference of The United Methodist Church. She is a co-executive director of a children and worship initiative and loves building with Lego.

A112 Every Age Holy: Finding the Story of Older Adults in the Scriptures

Workshop Leaders: Rachel (Rae) Watson
Offering Notes: -
Description: The lens we use when reading scriptures colors how we understand ourselves and our place in the story of the people of God. This workshop will help participants focus on the story of older adults in scripture. We will practice finding the older adults, whether named or hidden in between the words, and considering what their story teaches us about aging, changing bodies and minds, the community of faith, and how we live our faith every day of our lives. The participant will leave with several ways to introduce, build, and nurture older adult ministries that involve biblical interpretation, mission, and worship.

Rae Watson is the Associate Pastor of Christian Formation at Covenant Presbyterian Church, Staunton, VA. Rae is passionate about helping everyone, from our youngest to our oldest members, find their place in the ever-unfolding story of the people of God.

A113 Reconciliation Across Generations: Revisiting the Confession of 1967

Workshop Leaders: John Wilkinson
Offering Notes: -
Description: The adoption of the Confession of 1967 sixty years ago in Portland – along with the creation of a Book of Confessions – signaled a sea change in American Presbyterianism. The confession ("C67") offered new understandings of Jesus and the Bible, and invited Presbyterians to consider social justice issues – race, militarism, gender and poverty – through the framework of reconciliation (II Corinthians 5:18-19). For some, the confession was a breath of fresh air, while others viewed it much more critically. The adoption of the confession, and the Book of Confessions, also marked the beginning of a particularly contested period in Presbyterian life. In this workshop, we will... Briefly review the timeline that led to the confession's creation, dive into the content itself, explore its relevance for today's church, including how it may be used in worship and educational settings.

John Wilkinson serves as Vice President and Director of Stewardship and Funds Development for the PC(U.S.A.) He has served in diverse denominational and congregational settings, and his vocational and academic interest centers on the church's confessions and how they help shape faithful mission and ministry.

Workshop Block A Options

A114 Holy Imagination Studio

Workshop Leaders: Kim Jones & Dorcas Cheng-Tozun
Offering Notes: -
Description: Jesus regularly turned tradition upside down for the sake of God's kingdom. In the centuries that followed, the church has relied on their God-given imagination to create radical, life-changing programs like universal schooling, modern healthcare networks, and civic safety nets.
This fast-paced, highly interactive workshop is designed to break church leaders out of traditional mental ruts, helping them strengthen their "imagination muscles" to address any challenges faced by their congregation and broader community. Participants will engage in a series of collaborative, fun activities designed to stretch creative thinking and see new possibilities.
You'll leave with a toolbox of activities to use with teams, volunteers, and congregants to expand their imagination, creativity, and sense of hope for what the church can do.

Kim Jones is Cofounder and Executive Director of The Changemaker Initiative in Los Altos, CA. After working 20 years as a pediatrician, Kim experienced a new calling to spark and catalyze people to come alive through meaningful passion and purpose.

Dorcas Cheng-Tozun consults with The Changemaker Initiative in San Jose, CA. Her background includes teaching social innovation to high schoolers. She is the author of Social Justice for the Sensitive Soul and several small group studies.

Workshop Block B Options

B201 What Matters: Unlock your Church's Hidden Potential

ae online

Workshop Leaders: Yvonne Murray & Kim Jones
Offering Notes: Online & In-Person
Description: What if the secret to revitalizing a church isn't a slick new program, but unleashing the passions already alive in the pews?
Come be part of an interactive experience that reveals the cares, callings, and social concerns God has stirred within you–and meaningfully connects you with others who share kindred dreams for a better world. This flips the script, encouraging us to live out our faith where it matters most to us and inspiring us to build a community of purpose and justice in our churches and beyond. You'll leave fully empowered with the blueprint to recreate this profound encounter in your own church, galvanizing your people's passions and talents toward God's good work.

Yvonne Murray is the Director of Community Engagement for The Changemaker Initiative in Los Altos, CA. Previously employed in the tech sector, Yvonne is passionate about cultivating relationships and collaborations for positive community change.

Kim Jones is Cofounder and Executive Director of The Changemaker Initiative in Los Altos, CA. After working 20 years as a pediatrician, Kim experienced a new calling to spark and catalyze people to come alive through meaningful passion and purpose.

B202 Sexuality and Faith: Talking with Chldren

micro-credential

ae online

Workshop Leaders: Debbie Gline Allen & Sarah Lohrbach
Offering Notes: Online & In-Person, Micro-Credential
Description: In this workshop, we will discuss the importance of age-appropriate, faith-based conversations around sexuality, bodies, and identity with children of all ages, particularly early elementary-aged children. If we can move beyond our discomfort to engage in these conversations with young people, we will help them grow up to have healthy relationships with their bodies and respect for their own and others' boundaries. We will look at some common myths around sexuality education and engage in dialogue about why faith and the church should not be removed from these conversations. Whether you are a parent, a faith formation leader, a pastor, or someone simply interested in this topic, we invite you to join us for lively conversation and the sharing of resources to aid in these conversations at home and in your place of worship.

Rev. Debbie serves as pastor of the Madbury (NH) United Church of Christ, and has served as Minister of Christian Formation at five UCC congregations in NH and MA and on their conference staffs. She has written for three United Church of Christ-based curriculum resources, and resides in Derry, NH.

Rev. Sarah Lohrbach is the AUCE Board Secretary. They've served as a Youth and Children's Pastor in several UCC churches and currently work for the Illinois Conference UCC. They are a lover of outdoor ministries, an avid reader, and LGBTQ+ advocate.

Workshop Block B Options

B203 Accessibility in Ministry: Trauma and Disability Informed Ministries in Practice



Workshop Leaders: Christy Miller White
Offering Notes: Online & In-Person
Description: We know that being trauma and disability informed is vitally important, but actually implementing strategies that work can be a challenge. In our time together, we will journey through a brief overview of trauma and disability awareness in ministry. In addition, we will learn practical applications and hone how to best utilize them in various ministry settings. You will walk away knowing better how to care for all people in your ministry and be ready to put these new skills into practice.

Rev. Christy Miller White is the Minister of Children and Families and Clarkston United Methodist Church, Clarkston, Michigan. Christy is passionate about making the good news of God's love accessible to all people, of all ages, stages, and abilities.

B204 Faith through Adversity: A Roadmap for Resilient Leadership



Workshop Leaders: Meredith Montgomery & Anne Wilson
Offering Notes: Online & In-Person
Description: This workshop seeks to foster thought provoking reflection on the resilience of the human spirit and the quiet courage it takes to stand up for what's right. We are living through turbulent times where political polarization, economic disparities, and social and safety concerns have led to widespread anxiety as a nation. How do we find the strength to endure without losing our sense of purpose when the path forward seems unclear?

Together we will look to history for inspiration and offer an actionable roadmap for modern resilience. We'll first explore the story of how one Japanese American family navigated another challenging chapter in our nation's history—World War II. Hear the story of a teenager who was incarcerated in an internment camp after being uprooted from life as she knew it. Her future husband faced his own adversity, fighting in some of the war's fiercest battles to defend a country that deemed him the enemy. Told by their daughter and granddaughter, these stories of grace and dignity through atrocious acts of discrimination and injustice illustrate how maintaining one's identity and values can become a radical act of resistance.

Inspired by this couple's experiences, we'll then explore the Stockdale Paradox as a tool to navigate our own obstacles. This concept focuses on how to honestly acknowledge the hardships we face while holding onto the unwavering belief that we can—and will—overcome them. Attendees will leave with a renewed perspective that will ground them in their everyday lives and serve as a powerful mindset for courageous leadership.

Meredith Montgomery is the Executive Director of Walk Bike Nashville, a nonprofit advocacy organization dedicated to making Music City a place where all people have the freedom, dignity, and choice to move through a comprehensive and safe network of sidewalks, bikeways, and transit routes. Originally from Houston and a graduate of Kenyon College, her free time is spent at the soccer fields and camping with her family of four and their two rescue pups.

Anne Wilson is a seasoned educator who currently serves on several boards of non-profit, church-related or educational institutions. She is a Past President of APCE and recipient of a Sustain Life Achievement Award. She has served in numerous leadership roles in APCE.
NOTE: Meredith Montgomery is Anne Wilson's daughter.

Workshop Block B Options

B205 Youth, Mission, and Faith Development in Polarized Times

Workshop Leaders: Greg Allen-Pickett
Offering Notes: -
Description: In many congregations, youth faith formation can feel disconnected; belief separated from practice, learning detached from lived experience. At the same time, polarization continues to divide communities along political, theological, and cultural lines. What if mission and service could become the place where faith comes alive and where division gives way to shared purpose?

This workshop explores how mission can breathe new life into youth ministry. Through hands-on service and intentional reflection, young people encounter a faith that is active, relational, and deeply rooted in the love of Christ. Drawing on the presenter's experience in a "purple church"—and insights from "Purple Church, Red State" participants will explore how youth-led responses to community crises became catalysts for congregational transformation. After the Sandy Hook Elementary School shooting, youth helped lead efforts to address gun violence through prayer, service, and community engagement. Following the murder of George Floyd, youth again inspired faithful action, inviting the congregation into conversations and acts of justice and reconciliation. In both moments, mission and service created space for unity across difference.

Participants will leave with:

- A simple, repeatable action-reflection model for youth mission experiences
- Tools for helping youth theologically process service and justice work
- Strategies for building inclusive, relational youth communities across differences
- Ideas for connecting local and global mission to ongoing faith formation
- Practical examples from youth trips, service projects, and community responses

By reconnecting action and reflection, this workshop equips leaders to nurture a youth ministry where faith is lived and where even in divided times, God brings new life.

Greg Allen-Pickett serves as Senior Pastor of Lake Grove Presbyterian Church (OR). Author of "Purple Church, Red State: Finding Common Ground in an Age of Polarization", he helps congregations navigate polarization through faithful dialogue and shared mission.

Workshop Block B Options

B206 Your Church's 'Welcome' Banner ... Is It Lying?

COVENANT NETWORK OF PRESBYTERIANS

Workshop Leaders: Brian Ellison
Offering Notes: -
Description: This interactive workshop is about creating truly affirming spaces for LGBTQIA+ people — and understanding why the gap between intention and experience matters so much. "All Are Welcome" sounds right. But people who've been hurt by the church have learned to read the fine print, and LGBTQIA+ people in particular know how to spot a welcome that doesn't quite mean it. Drawing on experience with a wide range of congregations, seasoned church leaders will guide participants through practical strategies for making welcome real and legible across every dimension of church life: educational programming, worship, publicity and communications, physical spaces, practices of hospitality, and community outreach. Participants will leave with concrete ideas, honest self-assessment tools, and a renewed sense of why this work matters — not just for LGBTQIA+ people, but for everyone the church has ever left standing at the door.

Rev. Brian Ellison (he/him) is Executive Director of the Covenant Network of Presbyterians, an organization dedicated to LGBTQIA+ inclusion in the church. A seasoned leader, educator, and preacher, he has worked with congregations across the country on creating authentic welcome.

B207 These Living Bones: Writing for Renewal

Workshop Leaders: Julie Hester
Offering Notes: -
Description: In Ezekiel's vision, God breathes new life into dry bones, and depleted bodies are renewed. In this workshop we'll use writing as a spiritual practice, paying attention to the wisdom our bones and bodies hold, and noticing where God is breathing new life into us. With creative prompts from poetry, art, memory, and more, we'll write about what matters: what has left a scar, where God meets us in our valleys, and what delights and inspires us. We'll also share some of our words with one another, building connections and community during a busy conference. You can take home prompts and practices to use in your ministry context, or just come to nurture yourself. No writing experience is needed.

Julie Hester (she/her) is a pastor and writer in North Carolina, currently serving as transitional pastor of a small church with a big heart for inclusive, justice-minded ministry. She leads workshops on writing through grief, and writing as a spiritual practice, and scribbles online at https://writingincompany.substack.com

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Workshop Block B Options

B208 Using LEGO in Ministry

Workshop Leaders: Bill Lane
Offering Notes: -
Description: We will look at how the simple age-old LEGO bricks can be used for more than building cities and Star Wars ships. We will explore how they can be used for community building, Bible lessons, and mental health. For churches, LEGO bricks are an effective, engaging tool for ministry, community outreach, and spiritual reflection, and can be utilized to build community, explore Bible stories, and facilitate discussion. See how these bricks bridge the generational gaps and connect us through fun, hands-on brick play.

Bill Lane is the Pastor at Gonzales Community Presbyterian Church, Gonzales, California. Bill loves board games, kayaking, and yes, LEGO. He is also LEGO Serious Play facilitator.

B209 How Can Community Input Create Spirit-filled Flesh?

Workshop Leaders: Megan LeCluyse
Offering Notes: -
Description: Some might call campus ministry, and often young adult ministry, a revolving door. This description has truth to it - with students graduating every year, the group is often completely different every 3 to 4 years. Young adults are also frequently moving for grad school or jobs. When there isn't much history for "We've always done it this way," there is a lot of room to be responsive to what students are wanting to learn about and do, yet we also need some constants to our ministry that ground us in our identity as disciples of Jesus. In campus ministry, we need to offer something that is both anchored as well as nimble and creative. What can we learn from this work to apply elsewhere?
This workshop will use lessons learned from almost a decade and a half in campus ministry to help participants explore how they might apply these lessons in their own contexts. How do we identify what is core to our community, both in identity and in what we offer, and use that as our foundation, while also finding room for adaptive responses to the present day needs and interests of our community, allowing for a greater sense of relevance? How do we figure out what input from our community will actually be helpful in shaping what we offer? Participants will explore this for their own context through opportunities for individual reflection and journaling along with conversation in pairs and small groups at different points during the workshop. They will leave knowing what questions they want to take back to their community to explore as a group, allowing for a practical application of what was discussed in the workshop that will hopefully bring revitalization to the communities we lead and nurture.

Rev. Megan LeCluyse is the Executive Director and Campus Minister of the Christian Association at the University of Pennsylvania in Philadelphia, Pennsylvania. She is the author of "You're Not the Only One: Reflections on Faith, Doubt, Growing Up and the College Experience," a book to help college students explore their experiences at school through a lens of faith.

Workshop Block B Options

B210 How Will We Run Our Bell Laps: Living Faithfully in the Last Quarter of Life

Workshop Leaders: Mary Marcotte
Offering Notes: -
Description: What choices and practices sustain our spiritual and emotional lives as we move through our last quarter of life? The title takes its name from the practice in track and field or ringing a bell as racers begin the last lap of the mile run. Runners must train for not only speed but endurance and the wisdom to know how and when to draw upon reserves of strength after having already raced long and hard.
As pastors and educators we face particular challenges as we consider how and when to use our gifts for ministry in ways that both nourish our souls and further the work of the church by supporting the work of a new generation of leaders. What does it mean at this stage of life to 'run the race that is put before us'? How do we navigate the change from being the one in charge to becoming an authentic cheerleader for the new? Can we learn when to answer a fervent yes and when to assert a firm no? In a society that encourages us to define ourselves by the work we do, how do we redefine ourselves once again as simply a child of God who loves us?
In this workshop we will draw upon wisdom from James Fowler, Richard Rohr, Parker Palmer, and the vast wisdom in the room. We will talk honestly about our soul work alone and in community. We will consider the practice of creating an ethical will and living out our legacy in word and deed.

Mary Marcotte is a Ruling Elder and Certified Christian Educator who has served congregations in Texas and Virginia and served as Associate General Presbyter for the Presbytery of New Covenant for 13 years. She is humbly proud to have received APCE's Sustain Award for lifetime achievement.

B211 Wonder of Worship - Encountering the Divine through Children's Eyes

Workshop Leaders: Meri Kate Marcum & Natarsha
Offering Notes: -
Description: Natarsha and Meri Kate serve on the planning team for the Wonder of Worship Lilly Initiative at Columbia Theological Seminary and have been part of the project since its inception. Join us to explore what we have learned through podcasts with experts on child development, music, theological exploration; regional gatherings with faith formation practitioners across the country; our website that continues to grow and develop; fruits of Quick Wins grants churches have received. This will be a time of hands-on, practical learning and sharing of resources as we seek to more fully integrate children into the worship lives of our faith communities.

Natarsha and Meri Kate serve on the planning team for the Wonder of Worship Lilly Initiative at Columbia Theological Seminary and have been part of the project since its inception. Join us to explore what we have learned through podcasts with experts on child development, music, theological exploration; regional gatherings with faith formation practitioners across the country; our website that continues to grow and develop; fruits of Quick Wins grants churches have received. This will be a time of hands-on, practical learning and sharing of resources as we seek to more fully integrate children into the worship lives of our faith communities.

Workshop Block B Options

B212 Connecting to Self and Creator: Fueling our Commitment

Workshop Leaders: Jessica Maudlin & Eileen Schuhmann
Offering Notes: -
Description: The first thing we learn about God is that God makes things. Then we're told humanity is made in God's image. The Hebrew word for image is tselem- a visible expression of an invisible reality. Which means being made in God's image is not just about ontology. It's about creativity. Bringing life where there was none, reflecting God's love and justice for the world through us and giving the world a glimpse of God. From the very beginning of the story, God invites us to join in the work, constructing in places where heaven and earth. Our creativity is not a side note in the story of God. It is a critical part of it. When we get so busy with "doing" God's work and forget that we are God's work we lose the connection to our divine embodied wisdom. This workshop space will offer participants a chance to slow down and participate in guided meditation that will allow reconnection to Self and Creator, reflection through journaling to reflect on that experience of reconnection and then move into a time of free creative expression. Paint and art supplies will be provided, up to 25 participants.

Jessica Maudlin has been with the Hunger Program since 2009. She's currently the PC(USA)'s Associate for Sustainable Living and Earth Care Concerns. She resources Presbyterians as they address issues of faith, lifestyle choices and sustainability. She works with Earth Care Congregations, congregations that made special commitments to care for God's earth in four categories: worship, education, facilities, and outreach. Her background includes an emphasis on Liberation Theology.

Eileen Schuhmann joined PHP staff in 2006. She manages the international grant process and amplifies the voices of our international partners. Eileen also creates educational resources on international hunger issues and mobilizes Presbyterians to take action on those issues. She has her BA in International Economics and French from the University of Kentucky and her MA in Sociology from the University of Louisville. Eileen was trained as an organizer at the Midwest Academy and teaches yoga

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B213 Leading While Waiting: Ministry in the In-Between

Workshop Leaders: Gary Noonan
Offering Notes: -
Description: Much of ministry takes place in seasons of waiting. We wait for growth, for change, for healing, for clarity, and sometimes for the next chapter to emerge. Yet church culture often rewards action, certainty, and quick results.
Drawing on experiences of leadership through transition, uncertainty, and institutional change, this workshop explores how leaders can remain faithful and effective when outcomes are unclear. Together we will consider practices that cultivate resilience, sustain hope, and help communities navigate the space between what was and what comes next. Rather than viewing waiting as passive, participants will be invited to see it as a vital season of discernment, formation, and faithful leadership.

The Rev. Gary Noonan serves as senior pastor of First Presbyterian Church of Kirkwood, Missouri. Originally from Scotland, he brings a passion for adaptive leadership, pastoral care and progressive theology. He writes regularly about ministry, vocation and immigration, and is a contributor to both U.S. and international theological publications.

Workshop Block B Options

B214 Experiencing to Teach Spiritual Practices

Workshop Leaders: René Prager & Heather Woolard-Lawson
Offering Notes: -
Description: Spiritual practices are often what helps restore, ground, and guide us through seasons of faith. As faith leaders, we need to be active participants as well as proficient teachers of a variety of spiritual practices.

In this workshop, we will guide you through two different spiritual practices. While experiencing these practices, you will be equipped with resources and tips to teach the practices in your own context. You will learn a few (and share your own!) adaptations that allow the content to be delivered to children, youth, adult, and intergenerational audiences. We hope that you will leave this workshop renewed by participating in the spiritual practices and prepared with the resources to teach these life-giving practices to people in your own ministry context.

It is an experiential workshop, so we invite to bring your own journal or electronic device to record responses. Extra paper for those that do not bring their own journals will be available. All other workshop materials will be provided– along with some fun goodies!

René is a Certified Christian Educator and serves at Selwyn Avenue Presbyterian Church as the Director of Christian Education and Formation for Adults, Children and their Families. She is a graduate of Union Presbyterian Seminary (M.A.C.E.) René enjoys hiking, photography, and spending time with family.

Heather is an avid hobbyist– you can find her gardening, sewing, or baking– all with her beloved dog, Milo, by her side. She lives in Columbia, SC with her husband, Garrett, and serves as the Associate Pastor for Children & Families at Shandon Presbyterian Church. She also a graduate of Union Presbyterian Seminary with M.DIV & M.A.C.E. degrees.

Workshop Block C Options

C301 Wonderfully Wired: Nurturing Children's Faith Through a Neurodivergent Lens

micro-credential

ae online

Workshop Leaders: Michelle Junkin
Offering Notes: Online & In-Person, Micro-Credential
Description: Come discover practical, inclusive ways to help every child connect with God, no matter how their mind works. In this workshop you will learn how neurodiversity shapes children's spiritual lives and reimagine how our faith formation setting might need to be adapted in order to include the nurturing of all minds. Participants will reflect on current practices, explore inclusive teaching strategies, and gain practical tools to nurture the spiritual growth of neurodivergent and neurotypical children, so every child feels seen, valued, and spiritually empowered. By the end of this session, participants will recognize how differences in attention, sensory processing, and communication influence children's faith experiences. You will learn how to identify barriers in traditional faith formation settings that may unintentionally exclude neurodivergent children and explore how to apply practical strategies that honor diverse ways of learning by exploring ways to implement neurodiversity-informed approaches in their ministry.

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 Director of Big Faith Resources, a Lilly Foundation, Inc. initiative supporting and equipping churches to minister to neurodiverse.

Workshop Block C Options

C302 Creating Accessible Worship for All God's Children

ae online

Workshop Leaders: Sarah Leer & Lisa Hancock
Offering Notes: Online & In-Person
Description: What does it mean to create accessible worship? What are some ways you can nurture children through worship using anti-ableist principles? What does it mean to be anti-ableist anyway? Come and learn from the Growing in Grace team. We'll share lessons learned, practical tips you can use in your church or faith organization, and ways you can talk about disability and theology with the folks in your context. "Growing in Grace," is a Lilly grant funded Wesleyan institute that exists to assist local churches and organizations in the work of forming all children into anti-ableist Christians through worship. Growing in Grace believes we can help children learn and believe that all God's creation is God's good creation. A program of Discipleship Ministries, an agency of The United Methodist Church, Growing in Grace seeks to equipping world-changing disciples with anti-ableist programming and resources created with an intentional intergenerational lens.

Dr. Sarah Leer (she/her/hers) is a native Arkansan and lifelong Presbyterian, who has served non-profits for over a decade including Presbyterian Church (USA) churches in Texas, and Northwest Arkansas. Currently, she is Owner/Founder of Sarah Leer Consulting, LLC, the Transitional Youth and Young Adult Developer for the Presbytery of Arkansas, and is the project manager for Growing in Grace, a Wesleyan institute focused on anti-ableist worship practices with Discipleship Ministries and the United Methodist Church. She is a practical theologian who is living into her call to deconstruct systems and disrupt the status quo in order to seek liberation, justice, and belonging in solidarity with those living on the margins.

Dr. Lisa Hancock, Director of Worship Arts at Discipleship Ministries, is a lifelong United Methodist whose passion for worship and the arts began at 3.5 years old when she started singing in church choirs. Lisa received her B.M. in Church Music from Wayland Baptist University before attending Perkins School of Theology, where she received a Masters of Sacred Music and Masters of Theological Studies. In 2021, Lisa earned her PhD in Religious Studies from Southern Methodist University. In addition to coordinating and writing worship resources, Lisa is the Project Lead for Growing in Grace, an initiative of Discipleship Ministries that seeks to equip, and empower leaders and organizations to form all children as anti-ableist Christians through worship by helping them learn and believe that all God's creation is God's good creation.

Workshop Block C Options

C303 Planning and Facilitating Brave Conversations with Youth

ae online

Workshop Leaders: Christy Williams
Offering Notes: Online & In-Person
Description: Whether it is politics, money, sexuality, or a dozen other topics, there are ways to have tough, awkward, even controversial discussions with youth that will assist them in developing a deeper understanding of how to live out their faith more fully. Using the Brave Conversations on Sexuality resource produced by the Presbyterian Youth Workers Association as a model, workshop participants will explore how to prepare the congregation, families, and youth for having brave conversations and then how to facilitate those discussions with youth and their parents.

Dr. Williams is a graduate of the Presbyterian School of Christian Education, and Columbia Theological Seminary. She has spent her career serving as a Director of Christian Education and as an Adjunct Staff person for the Montreat Youth Conferences. She currently serves as the Director of Dogwood Acres Camp and Retreat Center for the Presbytery of Florida.

C304 Effective Ministry Policies to Prevent Abuse and Maintain Proper Boundaries

Insurance Board

ae online

Workshop Leaders: Jennifer Perri & Chad Cunningham
Offering Notes: Online & In-Person
Description: The church should be a safe place for people to worship, work, connect and receive care and support in a manner that is free from abuse. Protect your ministry by learning policy best practices and boundary training to prevent abuse and provide a safe environment for everyone. This workshop will cover how churches can protect their ministry against the potential of abuse through proper policies, as well as the importance of background checks and screening, and state of the art training.

Jennifer Perri is Vice President of United Church Insurance Services at Insurance Board. She's a tenured member of Insurance Board's team and is very knowledgeable on the various products and services offered by the company. She's also certified in Youth/Elderly boundary training and has previously presented at the APCE conference.

Chad Cunningham is the Director of Loss Control at Insurance Board. Prior to joining Insurance Board, Chad worked for Navigate360 (ALICE Training Institute) as the VP of Education and Curriculum. Chad also served in law enforcement for 24 years. Chad lead the community policing and training division of the department.

Workshop Block C Options

C305 Reclaiming Justice from the Bible

Workshop Leaders: Gord Brown
Offering Notes: -
Description: The Bible provides a different vision of justice. The Biblical definition of justice is biased toward the oppressed and marginalized, promotes true equity and recognizes the dignity of all of God's creation. As Christians in a polarized political environment, we need to return to Scripture to understand justice and stake our claim on behalf of the "least of these." But the good news is that Scripture, the text of the Bible as understood in the long Christian tradition, provides the resources to understand and promote real inclusion and real equity. This workshop will allow for an interactive examination of the resources available to understand Biblical justice and promote this to an indifferent if not hostile world. It will also provide an opportunity to consider common ground across different traditions and understandings of justice to help in dialogue with potential allies in real and sustainable justice practices.

Gord Brown serves on APCE's JEDI Advisory Council and was a founding member of the Diversity Task Force. He has served APCE in various other Ministry teams. He has two Masters Degrees from the University of Toronto and serves part time as the pastor of a rural Ontario church.

C306 APCE Retired Educators LIVE!

Workshop Leaders: Roberta Dodds-Ingersoll & Bonnie Edwards
Offering Notes: -
Description: APCE Retired Educators have been meeting on zoom for years. This is now the time and place to have a face-to-face encounter. All APCE Retired Educators are welcome to participate in this informal gathering to share around the dynamic topic of JOY. As we explore this multidimensional concept together, you'll have an opportunity to re-connect with long-time friends while making new ones. We promise rich connections, inspiring conversations, and even door prizes!

Roberta Dodds-Ingersoll, retired Pastor/Certified CE, enjoyed serving PC(USA) churches in Louisiana, Texas, and Illinois. She now splits her time between Chicago (enjoying the city, outdoor concerts, and local forest preserves), and Houston (enjoying silver sneakers, audio books, and kids/grandkids).

Bonnie Edwards, retired Certified CE, enjoyed 30 years serving PC(USA) churches. She is a certified Texas Master Naturalist, avid birder and drum circle enthusiast. A downsizing survivor, she still has too many books and unfinished quilting projects.
Bonnie and Roberta have been making good CE mischift together for 25+ years.

Workshop Block C Options

C307 Sometimes Church Looks Like....

Workshop Leaders: Kat Green
Offering Notes: -
Description: Hive minded revisionist through a social media photo essay: following the global pandemic and open ended photo essay project helps recognize, celebrate, and articulate "the new normal for now." The bones don't just rise again, they dance with the power of the Holy Spirit!

Kat Green is a Certified Christian Educator with over 35 years of experience working with small rural churches to large metropolitan congregations. She holds Masters degrees in pastoral studies, information literacy, and education/social emotional learning, trauma-informed transformational teaching and learning, meditation and yoga for the classroom. She explores human intelligence and belonging through somatic storytelling.

C308 Terra Divina: Intergenerational Lament and the Outdoors

Workshop Leaders: Valerie Grissom
Offering Notes: -
Description: Sea, Sand, Sky, Grass, Dirt, Trees, Flowers, Birds, Wind, Snow, Rain, Sun - all of these can help us practice Terra Divina.
Terra Divina ("divine earth"/"terra"=earth) is the spiritual practice of connecting to the divine Creator while engaging with God's creation. Valerie Grissom's ongoing research project, Lament with Children and Youth in Worship and Daily Life, includes interviews from over 41 ministry leaders, therapists, teachers, researchers, and theologians, as well as a plethora of biblical and sociological research, but it also is a curation of multi-sensory, embodied practices of lament to empower youth and children to lament in Christian communities. One theme that recurs in Valerie's research is the power of connecting people of all ages to God's divine earth (or the outdoors) to engage in spiritual practices of lament. This collaborative workshop will invite participants to share and learn from one another, and to experience a variety of ideas for enabling people of all ages to practice intergenerational lament through terra divina. These embodied terra divina practices can be adapted to be used in small groups, youth group, children's ministry, adult ministry, congregational worship, spiritual direction, and so much more. Come to connect yourself in these powerful embodied terra divina practices, so that you might facilitate lament through terra divina with others.

Rev. Dr. Valerie M. Grissom is Chair of InterGenerate and a PC(USA) Pastor, near Seattle, Washington. Valerie edited All Ages Becoming: Intergenerational Practice in the Formation of God's People. Her ongoing research projects are the IYS Youth Story Project, and Lament with Children and Youth in Worship and Daily Life. See valeriemgrissom.com.

Workshop Block C Options

C309 Can These Bones Live?

Workshop Leaders: Ellie Johns-Kelley
Offering Notes: -
Description: Portland knows that life shows up in surprising places. In "Can These Bones Live?" we'll explore how faith, legacy, and planned giving can become acts of hope for future generations. Rooted in Ezekiel 37, this workshop invites us to trust the God who brings life—even in dry places.

The Rev. Ellie Johns-Kelley serves as Ministry Relations Officer for the Presbyterian Foundation in the Allegheny and Chesapeake region, partnering with congregations to grow generosity through coaching and workshops. She is a preacher, parent, and a wannabe prolific gardener.

C310 Sharing God's Stories: Blending the New with the Familiar

Workshop Leaders: Carol Jones
Offering Notes: -
Description: Explore new ways to communicate Bible stories to the children of today within a worship context using only Biblical words, tell the basic stories from the Hebrew Scriptures and Jesus' parables which are as relevant today as when they were spoken. Using multi-sensory materials, these stories may be used with all age levels, including neurodivergent students either at church or at home within the family circle.
Whether you prefer to tell the selected story directly from your favorite Bible translation or choose to use one of the published Montessori based curriculums, you will discover something new to use with your congregation. Choose a Biblical story to craft for the group and find a new way to share the stories of God.
Participants will have the opportunity to craft stories from materials that will be provided to tell a story. A variety of materials will be available to study for inclusion in each person's unique worship environment.

Carol Jones has been a Children and Worship trainer for the Reformed Church in America since 2001, serving Protestant churches throughout Southern California. She served as volunteer leader in children's ministry for both small and large congregations and currently shares Bible stories in multi-sensory ways for small, intergenerational groups and women's Bible studies.

Ellen Vellenga has been a Children and Worship trainer for the Reformed Church in America since 1990, serving churches across the United States and in various countries in Africa and in Europe. She currently leads Bible studies at her home church, St. Andrews Presbyterian in Tuscan, AZ.

Workshop Block C Options

C311 Returning to the Heart of Leadership: Rediscovering What Matters in Christian Education

Workshop Leaders: Stefanie Marsden
Offering Notes: -
Description: Leadership in Christian education is more than strategy—it is stewardship of people, purpose, and faith. This session focuses on renewing the heart of leadership by reconnecting with God's call, biblical values, and the mission of Christian education. Educators will be encouraged to pause, reflect, and realign their leadership practices with what matters most: faithfulness, service, and transformational impact.

Stefanie is an expert relationship grower, legacy planning professional, and generosity advocate. As Relationship Manager at Texas Presbyterian Foundation since 2010, Stefanie is responsible for working closely with TPF's Partners to grow relationships, as well as their assets. Additionally, Stefanie identifies and cultivates new partnerships in and around the United States to educate churches and nonprofits on expansion of their mission efforts.

C312 Reading Your Context: Why Start Something New?

Workshop Leaders: Joyce Martin Emery
Offering Notes: -
Description: Every new C.E. program or worship experience started because a person or group of people were inspired (think of VBS, church libraries, after school programs, youth ministries, disability ministries, healing services). During her years of ministry service in New Jersey, Joyce had access to originating documents for so many ministries that we keep trying to emulate today. Do we need to keep doing "what we've always done?" Or, are we being called to new patterns of ministry? She got excited in ministry during COVID when the church had to finally leave the building and discover new faith formation patterns. Come learn the questions to ask and the mental models to change as God births new ministry models with us.

Joyce M. Emery, Certified Educator. Ordained for 45 years in the PCUSA. Parish pastor. Honored to have served Christ in different contexts from sea to shining sea. Continues to work with the PCUSA 1001 to assess people called to start new worshipping communities.

Workshop Block C Options

C313 Adventure Play: A New Kind of Children's Ministry

Workshop Leaders: Andy Rausch
Offering Notes: -
Description: In this workshop, participants will be introduced to "Risky Adventure Play," a different way of doing children's and youth ministry that helps develop spirituality in children away from adult-guided activities and screens. Participants will see how our "new kind of VBS" worked to foster this development, and they will have an opportunity to engage in a little "adventure play" themselves, with ropes, pipes, and giant LEGO bricks! Children today are more and more tied to screens-computer screens, tablets, and especially phones. In his book The Anxious Generation, Professor Jonathan Haidt makes the argument that children are facing a mental health crisis because of their reliance on screens for information, entertainment and companionship. He writes, "The phone-based life produces spiritual degradation, not just in [children], but in all of us." The isolation of screen-based interactions robs children of their ability to develop spirituality, most richly nurtured through community and nature. He discusses the importance of encouraging children to discover who they are away from screens through" "risky play"; with others. Rusty Keeler, author of Adventures in Risky Play and other books and podcasts, promotes "adventure play" as a means for children to grow and develop, physically, mentally and spiritually.

Andy Rausch is the pastor of Northminster Presbyterian Church, Salinas, CA. Andy has more than thirty years experience in children's ministry, and brings his passion for children's health and spirituality to everything he does.

C314 Big Ideas for Youth Ministry

Workshop Leaders: Michelle Thomas-Bush
Offering Notes: -
Description: We all need fresh, creative ideas for day to day youth ministry. The Big Ideas board will share 10 great new ideas from games to bible study, events to retreats. This workshop will invite you to participate in activities and mixers so you leave able to lead them in your own context.



Big Ideas in Youth Ministry is a facebook group that offers practical ideas for your youth ministry. This workshop will be lead by the following youth leaders: John Weicher, Sam Perkins, Michelle Thomas-Bush, Brittany Porch and Jen Phelps.

Workshop Block D Options

D401 Reimagining Children's Faith Formation in a Changing Landscape

micro-credential

ae online

Workshop Leaders: Karen Hammond & Julie Emery
Offering Notes: Online & In-Person, Micro-Credential
Description: Have you noticed that faith formation looks different than it did a generation ago - or even a few years ago? Maybe you're seeing fewer children on Sunday mornings, more irregular attendance, or less participation in traditional Sunday School programs. You're not alone.

Many of us are navigating a new ministry landscape. We're experimenting, adapting, and trying new things, all while wondering: Are we truly helping children grow in faith? Are we creating meaningful opportunities for spiritual formation, or are we simply keeping kids occupied? How do we stay focused on our mission when the old models no longer fit our reality?

Join us as we share what we've learned while navigating these same questions in our own congregation. You'll hear from a Senior Pastor and a Director of Faith Formation who have partnered to reimagine worship and children's faith formation in a small church setting. Together, we've worked to create worship experiences where children are not just present, but engaged as full participants and offered rich faith formation opportunities.

This workshop is for anyone who cares deeply about helping our children grow in faith and wants to explore what it can look like in today's church. Together, we'll share stories, wrestle with challenges, ask honest questions, and learn from one another's experiences. We'll celebrate what's working, acknowledge what's difficult, and imagine new possibilities for the future.

Come ready to participate in a conversation with others who understand both the challenges and the opportunities of this moment. We hope you'll leave with practical ideas, a fresh perspective, renewed energy, and greater confidence as you continue the important work of nurturing faith in your community.

Karen Hammond is the Director of Faith Formation at Westminster Presbyterian Church in West Hartford, CT, where she has held that position for 21 years. Her background in elementary education and love for children has grown into a passion for intergenerational faith formation.

Rev. Julie Emery is the Pastor/Head of Staff at Westminster Presbyterian Church in West Hartford, CT. She is highly creative and has a passion for inclusive worship and preaching and a heart for social justice. She is currently pursuing her Doctor of Ministry through Pittsburgh Theological Seminary.

Workshop Block D Options

D402 Can These Church Properties Live?

PRESBYTERIAN INVESTMENT & LOAN PROGRAM

ae online

Workshop Leaders: Carl Horton
Offering Notes: Online & In-Person
Description: As ministry shifts across the church, once bustling buildings and filled parking lots now sit largely empty and underutilized for much of the week. Church properties intended for growth remain vacant and undeveloped, existing buildings become burdensome. But congregations and mid-councils across the country are approaching these property challenges as ministry opportunities, turning these liabilities into assets, breathing new life into church property for community good. We'll look at a number of visionary church property projects like affordable housing, childcare centers, healthcare centers, and other ministries that enrich and enliven both community and congregation. We'll overview the church-repurposing process, dig into the theological and biblical basis for this work, and explore the spiritual formation and practices of congregations committed to a new and innovative future life for their properties.

Carl Horton is the Mission Direction Officer with the Presbyterian Investment and Loan Program (PILP) working specifically with affordable housing and church-based social impact initiatives. With the rest of his time he is a Realtor, dog-wrangler, Dahlia grower, and sourdough bread baker.

D403 These Bones Still Preach: Reclaiming the Spiritual Authority of Older Adults

POAMN
Presbyterian Older Adult Ministries Network

ae online

Workshop Leaders: Denise Shannon
Offering Notes: Online & In-Person
Description: Too often, older adults in the church are seen primarily through the lens of care, decline, or nostalgia—rather than as vital spiritual leaders whose voices, stories, and theological insight are essential for the present and future of the church. Drawing on the imagery of Ezekiel's dry bones, this workshop invites participants to reconsider what has been dismissed or overlooked and to recognize the enduring spiritual authority carried by older adults. These are not "dry bones," but lives shaped by decades of faith, resilience, loss, and hope—lives that still have something to say.
Together, we will explore how congregations can move beyond passive or programmatic engagement to actively elevate older adults as teachers, storytellers, mentors, and leaders. Participants will be challenged to name and dismantle age-based assumptions while discovering practical ways to create spaces where older adults are not only included, but are recognized as essential voices in shaping the church's witness.

Rev. Denise Shannon is the pastor at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Westminster, CO, a certified spiritual director, owner of Sassy Preacher Lady Ministries and the Co-moderator for POAMN. Her work centers on developing meaningful ministry practices, especially with older adults.

Workshop Block D Options

D404 Culture Change and Centering Children: After the Bones, Two Sticks

ae online

Workshop Leaders: Patrick Reyes
Offering Notes: Online & In-Person
Description: Just after the dry bones rise, God hands Ezekiel two sticks and tells him to hold them together until they become one in his hand, a sign of divided people made whole. This workshop takes that image as a blueprint for culture change, and it puts children at the center of the work. Too often we treat culture as something the adults sort out and the children inherit. But the two sticks only become one when someone is willing to hold the tension long enough for it to bind. Children do this instinctively. They cross the lines we have hardened, they ask the questions we have learned to stop asking, and they refuse the false choice between this stick and that one. Together we will explore what it means to build communities where children are not the recipients of a culture handed down but active hands in the joining, and we will leave with practical, embodied ways to let their wisdom reshape how our congregations and classrooms hold what has come apart.

Rev. Dr. Patrick B. Reyes is the President of Auburn Theological Seminary, founded in 1818 and dedicated to building community, bridging divides, pursuing justice, and healing the world.
Patrick is also our Plenary Speaker for this Annual Event.

D405 When Dry Bones Break

Workshop Leaders: Sarah Bishop
Offering Notes: -
Description: This workshop will allow APCE Annual Event participants to create a sacred space to share those moments of defiant and disarming laughter or clear the lungs with screams of holy rage that they have experienced as leaders in the church when their bones of ministry have become brittle or possibly broken. There are moments in ministry that need to be shared with help carrying the burden and also, you cannot make it up, uniqueness. In creating such a space to open up, share, realize one is not alone, they can name the holy rage or bold need to respond with laughter and then receive just a little antibiotic, and accept that first tentative bandage or splint then, when ready, allow another to share the peace of Christ and the kiss of reconciliation. This will be a space to share healing resources. And some out of the box responses, i.e., like those who have joined an improv group or annual memberships to theme parks or poetry writing or.... This can be a space to creatively resource with others in this unique calling or just hold moments of silence. This would be a space to encourage boldness, daring, and audacious laughter with a God who can hold our rage and continue to be a source of hope. Indeed, these dry bones can live.

Rev. Sarah Bishop is the Associate Pastor for Family Ministry at Westminster Presbyterian Church, Springfield, IL. Sarah enjoys roller coasters, long walks with her pups, Charlie and Chauncey and claiming Rev_Sarahb handle on all social media. Whether she uses it or not. And yes, she wants to see pictures of your pets too.

Workshop Block D Options

D406 Rediscovering What Matters: Reclaiming Artmaking in our Spiritual Practices

Workshop Leaders: Vilmarie Cintrón-Olivieri
Offering Notes: -
Description: Why do many of us put away the crayons once we hit adulthood? We might have heard—or even believed—that "coloring is for kids" or "art is for professionals." But the church has used visual expression to connect with the Divine for millennia—and it remains a staple of our children and youth programs—so why should our personal prayer lives be any different?
Join us as we reclaim artmaking as a vital spiritual practice. Making art is more than a hobby; it is a powerful way to pray, reflect, and bring your authentic self before God. As Episcopal priest Brian C. Taylor says, “Engage in practices that enliven you, not the ones you think you should do.” Come rediscover art within your spiritual being as we explore how it can deepen your faith. This is a hands-on workshop, and we will share practical ideas for your own practice or to share with others. No "artistic talent" is required—just an open heart to play and pray.

Vilmarie Cintrón-Olivieri is a Presbyterian ruling elder, educator, and "pray-artist." She was Co-Moderator of the 223rd PC(USA) General Assembly (2018) alongside the Rev. Cindy Kohlmann and currently serves with Presbyterian Life & Witness as a Global Ecumenical Liaison (GEL). Since embracing art as a spiritual practice, she has found a beloved form of prayer in watercolor painting. Along with serving as a GEL, she feels called to share with others the spiritual gift found in the act of making art.

D407 Making Meaning When Reading is Hard

Workshop Leaders: Lauren Hood & Faith Kemmler
Offering Notes: -
Description: How often do you ask people to popcorn read? Or call on someone to read aloud? Have a handout with small print? Share a bulletin that is filled to the brim with text? Our faith community life, especially as we age, is centered around reading. Mainline denominations highly value academically based faith formation. Often our Sunday School classrooms, pews, and Bible studies center around the ability to see and read. Yet, reading is not a simple task for all people. Dyslexia, literacy differences, loss of eye sight, dysgraphia, and more create a barrier for all to engage in the Scriptures within community.
You’ll leave this workshop with practical ways to make engaging with Scripture easier for all, tips and tricks for more readable church resources, and ideas for how to center Scripture (especially in youth and children’s ministry) without outcasting anyone.

Lauren Hood is the Director of Youth and College Ministries at Preston Hollow Presbyterian Church in Dallas, TX. She recently graduated with MDIV and MACE degrees from Union Presbyterian Seminary. She's passionate about practical theology, accessible discipleship, and ministry through the lens of feminist and queer theology.

Faith currently serves as the Director of Children’s & Family Ministry at Westminster Presbyterian Church in Pittsburgh, PA. She holds a MACE from Union Presbyterian Seminary and is currently working on her MDiv. Faith also serves as Student Fellow for the Center for Excellence in Christian Education.

Workshop Block D Options

D408 Conversations with Creation

Workshop Leaders: Ted Huffman
Offering Notes: -
Description: Story, poem, and prayer have been used throughout human history to express connections with God. Through our conversations with creation, we become more fully aware of and deeply connected to the Creator. In the Valley of the Dry Bones, Ezekiel at first perceives that all around him is inanimate, but God urges him to preach to the dry bones and they live.
In this time of climate crisis, we can imagine ourselves to be entering a valley of dry bones. In place of creation care, human greed and overconsumption have resulted in melting glaciers, bleaching coral reefs, catastrophic weather events, drought, famine, and fire. The effects of the climate crisis are not being shared evenly. Creation justice is at the center of all social justice. But this is not a time without hope. When we learn to listen and respond to Creation, the resiliency of creation comes forth and hope is rediscovered.
Participants will be guided through a series of exercises to express the stories, poems, and prayers that matter most in their ongoing conversations with creation..

Ordained minister, certified specialist in Church Education, recently retired after 44 years serving as pastor and teacher. He is the author of "Conversations with Creation."

D409 The Child in Us ALL: Rethinking Children's Sermons

Workshop Leaders: Sarah Logermann
Offering Notes: -
Description: What if the "children's sermon" became a moment of transformation for the entire congregation? This workshop explores how the traditional children's sermon can be reimagined as an engaging spiritual practice for all ages, while still centering and honoring young people. Instead of watered-down theology, trite object lessons, or moments of performative cuteness, we'll experiment with ways to cultivate imagination and play around the scripture or theme of the day.
Drawing on eight years of experience implementing this approach in multiple congregational settings, the facilitator will share practical frameworks for turning this brief moment in worship into a meaningful intergenerational encounter. Attendees will explore adaptable formats that invite storytelling, curiosity, participation, and embodied engagement, helping both children and adults encounter scripture in fresh ways. Grounded in insights from theology, pedagogy, and developmental psychology, we'll consider why playful, childlike engagement with scripture deepens attention, strengthens memory, and creates moments of shared discovery within congregational life. This interactive workshop includes real-time examples and shared practice, so you can experience these approaches, not just hear about them. You'll leave with 25 concrete ideas to bring directly into worship, along with strategies that work in congregations of varying sizes and leadership structures. Together we'll rediscover how a few minutes of wonder can open the whole congregation to new ways of encountering the divine.

Sarah Logemann is Co-Pastor at Fort Street Presbyterian Church in Detroit, MI. As a curriculum writer and educator, Sarah's work centers on cultivating wonder, imagination, and meaningful intergenerational engagement in congregational life.

Workshop Block D Options

D410 Facility Use Agreements

Workshop Leaders: Jennifer Perri & Chad Cunningham
Offering Notes: -
Description: Facility Use Agreements are essential for protecting ministries from the mishaps that could take place on the church property during one-time or recurring events hosted by third parties. Think of your local AA group, a scouts group, a concert, a group meeting, or even a summer outdoor gathering. While well intended by offering the church property as a place to host special events, risks can often increase and could have long-term effects if there is an accident, such as fire, an injury, or unwanted intruder. This workshop will help ministries learn best practices for creating an abiding by facility use agreements for third parties. It will include: reviewing a sample building/facility use agreement so attendees are prepared to create their own, clarity on proper insurance minimums for third parties utilizing ministry spaces/buildings and indemnification language, and how insurance is meant to cover a loss caused by a sudden, qualifying event for your ministry third parties should be responsible for their own events and risks, facility use agreement are essential.

Jennifer Perri is Vice President of United Church Insurance Services at Insurance Board. She's a tenured member of Insurance Board's team and is very knowledgeable on the various products and services offered by the company. She's also certified in Youth/Elderly boundary training and has previously presented at the APCE conference.

Chad Cunningham is the Director of Loss Control at Insurance Board. Prior to joining Insurance Board, Chad worked for Navigate360 (ALICE Training Institute) as the VP of Education and Curriculum. Chad also served in law enforcement for 24 years. Chad lead the community policing and training division of the department.

Insurance Board

Workshop Block D Options

D411 Faith Talk Practice Through Life's Milestone Moments

Workshop Leaders: Debbie Streicher
Offering Notes: -
Description: Reading the Bible, praying together, and talking about our faith daily is foundational for passing the faith from one generation to the next. Deuteronomy 6:7 commands us to "Impress them on your children. Talk about them when you sit at home and when you walk along the road, when you lie down and when you get up." The actual practice of doing this over the years has been lost and appears to be dead. It's not happening. God's vision to Ezekiel gives us hope and can bring new life to the way we encourage daily faith talk. This workshop will address "breathing new life" into being intentional and raising the bar on faith formation in the home. Recognizing milestone moments in our lives and God's presence in that moment, whether happy or sad, can be a starting point. Learning to engage in faith talk regularly in our homes takes practice!

Debbie Streicher is a writer, speaker and certified life and grief coach. She has designed faith formation resources for almost 30 years. Debbie has a passion for involving all ages in faith formation, strengthening family relationships through spiritual growth, and empowering God-given gifts to do ministry. She is the Director at Milestones Ministry, LLC. (https://milestonesministry.org/)

D412 Steal This Stuff: Tools & Ideas for Youth Ministry

Workshop Leaders: Rebekah Witt
Offering Notes: -
Description: Whether you've been working in youth ministry for a long time or you're just getting started, the amount of organization and planning it takes to make everything happen can be exhausting. Maybe you're searching for some fresh ideas, or you simply don't want to reinvent the wheel. You'll walk away with resources you can use on Sunday! Including and not limited to ideas for recreation, special events/activities, and connecting youth & the rest of the church together. We'll also think creatively about supporting youth & their families beyond the church walls. Leave with resources while also offering up your own experiences. Our hope is that this workshop will be informative, interactive, & give you practical tools that you can go home and use right away within your youth ministry! Offered in partnership with the Presbyterian Youth Workers' Association (PYWA).

PYWA
CONNECTING
UPHOLDING
INSPIRING

Rebekah Witt is the Director for Youth & Young Adults at Opequon Presbyterian Church in Winchester, VA & is the Co-Moderator of the Presbyterian Youth Workers' Association (PYWA) Board. She enjoys mountaintop views, herding cats (or kids) on the soccer field, & hanging out with youth workers!

Workshop Block D Options

D413 AI as Tool, Not Talisman: Practical Church Uses

Workshop Leaders: John Anderson
Offering Notes: -
Description: AI should not cannot replace the work of theology, and pastoral care, but it can help you prepare for session meetings, forecast budgets, and more.

Rev. John Anderson, is the lesser half of a clergy couple serving First Presbyterian Church in Joplin, Missouri. Father of the two smartest girls west of the Mississippi. Best friend to an aging chocolate lab and an even older golden retriever. Denver Broncos fan living in enemy territory.

Workshop Block E Options

E601 Adult Ed in a Purple Church: Teaching across the Divide



Workshop Leaders: Greg Allen-Pickett
Offering Notes: Online & In-Person
Description: In a time of deep polarization, many congregations feel like valleys of dry bones: fragmented, weary, and unsure how to move forward together. Political, theological, and cultural divides often surface in adult education, where meaningful conversation can quickly give way to silence or conflict.
This workshop explores how adult faith formation can become a place where communities reconnect, rebuild trust, and rediscover what matters. Drawing on the presenter's experience leading a politically diverse congregation—and insights from the book "Purple Church, Red State: Finding Common Ground in an Age of Polarization," participants will be invited to share stories from their purple church contexts and be introduced to a practical, adaptable curriculum developed for use during contentious times like election cycles. This model helped one congregation intentionally build the beloved community by integrating preaching, small groups, and adult education around shared themes and biblical texts.

Participants will leave with:

- A ready-to-use framework and sample curriculum for leading conversations across differences
- Tools for facilitating courageous, respectful dialogue in adult education settings
- Practices for building trust while engaging difficult topics
- Strategies for responding to conflict in real time while maintaining community
- Ideas for aligning worship, preaching, and education to reinforce shared learning

Through guided reflection and practical examples, this workshop equips leaders to move beyond avoidance and into faithful engagement. Even in divided times, God is still at work bringing new life to the body of Christ.

Greg Allen-Pickett serves as Senior Pastor of Lake Grove Presbyterian Church (OR). Author of "Purple Church, Red State: Finding Common Ground in an Age of Polarization" he helps congregations navigate polarization through faithful dialogue and shared mission.

Workshop Block E Options

E602 Christian Practices for Everyday Life



Workshop Leaders: Priscilla Andre-Colton
Offering Notes: Online & In-Person
Description: As human beings, we hunger for a meaningful way of life, for a faith that makes a difference in our homes, in our communities, in our world. Christian practices are the ways by which we live the Christian way of life and deepen our relationship with God, with one another, with the world. These practices include a variety of activities that both nurture faith within and reflect faith in action. This workshop will examine some practices and how they might grow our faith.

Priscilla Andre-Colton, retired Certified Christian Educator, currently serves as a volunteer at the Old Presbyterian Meeting House, Alexandria, VA. She served as secretary for APCE and was the 2020 recipient of the Life Achievement Award.

E603 Cultivating a Creative Classroom for Young Disciples





Workshop Leaders: Brianna Bamberg
Offering Notes: Online & In-Person, Micro-Credential
Description: In my workshop, I will be showing various ways to use the faith formation hour as a time for creativity and innovation. I have worked with children for almost half of my life, so I want to share tactics that I have used as well as new ideas on how to modernize children's faith formation - both with fun activities and also, with engaging content that is developmentally appropriate for specific ages (preschool through 5th grade.) The key to a successful faith formation program is to make the kids want to come so we, as the new church, must learn how to market Sunday school as something more than the ancient practice of bible verse memorization and move towards finding connections to everyday life through the teaching of biblical narratives.

Brianna Bamberg is the Children's Ministry Coordinator at Myers Park Presbyterian Church in Charlotte, NC, where she has served in a variety of positions, such a preschool teacher at their Weekday School, Manager of the Sunday Nursery program and Director of their Summer camp program, over the past eleven years. She has a passion for creating a solid spiritual and religious foundation for young children and the mental health epidemic in young adults. She is currently a seminary student at Union Presbyterian Seminary, where she will graduate in 2027 with a Masters in Christian Education.

Workshop Block E Options

E604 Vision, Understanding, and Creativity: Leadership for Educational Ministries

micro-credential

ae online

Workshop Leaders: Rebecca Davis
Offering Notes: Online & In-Person, Micro Credential
Description: The challenges facing congregations today are more than we've ever known in our lifetime. What was once unimaginable must now become imaginable. Developing leadership grounded in vision, understanding, and creativity can help us move from challenges to possibilities. Let's explore together an imaginable mindset through new patterns, models, and approaches in Christian education so that faith formation shapes identity, nurtures meaning-making and engenders faithful living in the world.

Rev. Dr. Rebecca Davis is the Sarah Belk Gambrell Professor of Christian Education, Director of the MACE degree and the Center for Excellence in Christian Education at Union Presbyterian Seminary. She is a Teaching Elder and a Certified Educator in the PCUSA. She has served the Church as an educator, pastor, associate presbyter, and in ecumenical non-profits.

E605 Still at It: Sustaining the Work of Welcome

COVENANT NETWORK OF PRESBYTERIANS

Workshop Leaders: Brian Ellison & Pepa Paniagua
Offering Notes: -
Description: You've been doing the work of LGBTQIA+ inclusion and authentic welcome for a long time — and you're still showing up. Maybe your congregation has a thriving LGBTQIA+ community and you're not sure what deeper welcome looks like from here. Maybe you've tried everything and wonder if it's making a difference. Maybe the weight of a complicated world is making it hard to stay focused. Maybe you're just tired. This workshop is for you. Led by experienced leaders in LGBTQIA+ inclusion ministry, this is a space to share stories, ask hard questions, and think together about what sustaining and deepening this work actually looks like — drawing on real experience with congregations at many different stages of the journey. Come with a lot to say, or just come to listen. Either way, you belong in this room.

The Rev. Brian Ellison is Executive Director of the Covenant Network of Presbyterians, advocating for LGBTQIA+ inclusion in the church since 2012. He has worked with congregations across the country on creating authentic, embodied welcome.

The Rev. Pepa Paniagua (she/her) is Coordinator of Innovation & New Ministry Development at Grace Presbytery and a CNP board member, and was founder of kin-dom community, a fully affirming PCUSA New Worshiping Community committed to LGBTQIA+ inclusion.

Workshop Block E Options

E606 Designing Intergenerational Scripture Presentations for Worship and Ministry

Workshop Leaders: Valerie Grissom
Offering Notes: -
Description: When it comes to planning intergenerational worship, one of the least utilized elements is intergenerational Scripture Presentation or Reading. Often, Scripture is only presented by the pastor or an adult leader. But what if we could design Scripture presentations that invite the whole congregation—all ages—to participate in leading and responding to Scripture in worship?

Participation in God's story is a spiritually formative practice; when people of different generations lead and plan intergenerational Scripture presentations together, they are spiritually formed by engaging in lifegiving, intergenerational relationships, where they can share and learn about Scripture together. And when they lead in this way, the rest of the congregation is invited to participate, too! That's why intergenerational Scripture presentations help us all participate more fully in the story of God.

Come learn Valerie Grissom's simple step-by-step process that helps ministry leaders take any Scripture passage and design an intergenerational presentation creatively to fit your context. In this workshop, participants will go home with ideas to use right away in worship (or other ministry contexts), plus participants will collaborate to design a Scripture presentation to use in this workshop. Because intergenerational means including all ages, presentations will also be designed to be inclusive of all ethnicities, abilities, and seek to help all people of the church, even those who might usually be excluded, to both lead and participate in Scripture during worship.

Rev. Dr. Valerie M. Grissom is Chair of InterGenerate and a Pastor (PC-USA), near Seattle, Washington. Valerie edited All Ages Becoming: Intergenerational Practice in the Formation of God's People. Her ongoing research projects are the IYS Youth Story Project, and Lament with Children and Youth in Worship and Daily Life. See valeriemgrissom.com.

Workshop Block E Options

E607 Young Bones, Old Bones, ALL Bones Belong to God!

Workshop Leaders: Laurel Hamilton
Offering Notes: -
Description: How do you respond when children present themselves for baptism? Or when parents present a school-aged child for baptism? How do you respond when an adult presents themself for baptism? What resources, guides, and material are available for your next steps? We will look at theological aspects of our reformed tradition and how they differ from our siblings from other faith traditions, as well as historical views of baptism and our evolving understanding of baptism.

Laurel is the Minister of Word and Sacrament at Immanuel Presbyterian Church in Schererville, IN. While ordained just nine years ago, she spent almost 20 years serving in various Christian Education roles between her graduation from seminary and her ordination - she jokes that she took "the scenic route" to ordination!

E608 Calm Spaces, Thriving Kids: Adding Sensory Rooms, Calm Corners, and Buddy Systems

Workshop Leaders: Michelle Junkin
Offering Notes: -
Description: This workshop explores practical strategies to create inclusive, supportive environments and support networks where every child can engage and grow in faith, especially neurodiverse kids. Participants will explore how a variety of opportunities abound for churches to create calm, supportive environments that can transform the way children experience church. This hands-on workshop will show Christian educators, children's ministry leaders, and volunteers how to design sensory rooms, calm corners, and buddy systems that help neurodivergent and neurotypical children regulate, focus, and fully participate in faith activities. Participants will explore practical strategies for creating safe, flexible spaces, while learning how buddy systems can foster connection, confidence, and inclusion. Through hands-on activities, group discussion, and real-world examples, attendees will leave with ready-to-use ideas, templates, and a clear plan for implementing these inclusive practices in Sunday School, worship, seasonal events, or any ministry setting. By the end of the session, participants will be equipped to build environments where every child feels seen, supported, and empowered to thrive in their faith journey.

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 Director of Big Faith Resources, a Lilly Foundation, Inc. initiative equipping churches to minister to neurodiverse

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Workshop Block E Options

E609 "Crafting" Your Personal Faith Story

Workshop Leaders: Abby McCubbin & Kathleen McCubbin
Offering Notes: -
Description: Have you ever felt nervous sharing with others about how God has impacted your life? Do you use crafting to understand God better? Are you looking for new ways to encourage others to share their God sightings in your community? This highly interactive craft workshop is based on 1 Peter 3:1. There will be opportunities for quiet reflection on your personal faith story. This workshop endeavors to have you design a craft of your own creation that presents a springboard to share an individual story with others. You can utilize collaboration with other educators to generate ideas for hosting this experience back home. Crafters encouraged to bring show-and-tell projects in various stages of completion that may demonstrate an encounter with God. (Photos welcomed.) Paper based craft materials provided during brainstorming portion of workshop (like origami, mosaics, paper sculpture, and sticky notes.) We look forward to rediscovering what matters on this journey together.

Abby McCubbin is the Director of Children & Student Ministries in Arvada, CO. She finds joy in designing interactive experiential worship opportunities for all ages. Ask her about collaborating to find accessible ways to deepen relationships with God, others, and creation.

Kathleen McCubbin is a Resting Elder and Commission Pastor Candidate in Broomfield, Colorado. She is passionate about creating and facilitating learning experiences which fosters thoughtful reflection and application for all ages.

Workshop Block E Options

E610 Cultivating Courageous and Compassionate Leadership in the Church

Workshop Leaders: Anne Wilson
Offering Notes: -
Description:Leadership in today's church requires more than good intentions—it calls for clarity, adaptability, and a commitment to nurturing others. This interactive workshop is designed for educators, pastors, church professionals, and volunteers who want to grow as leaders while empowering others to lead.

Through a blend of brief instruction, guided conversation, and small group discussion, participants will reflect on their own leadership styles and engage practical, faith-grounded approaches to leading in a variety of ministry contexts. Together, we will explore how to inspire participation, build trust, and strengthen leadership within the church.

Participants will:

- **Gain practical tools for leading with clarity, confidence, and compassion**
- **Learn strategies to identify, invite, and equip others for leadership**
- **Explore healthy ways to navigate conflict and differing leadership styles**
- **Share adaptable resources and ideas for immediate use in their settings**

This workshop emphasizes collaboration, real-world application, and shared wisdom. Participants will leave with fresh ideas, practical resources, and renewed energy for leadership that is both faithful and effective. and empowered to thrive in their faith journey.

Anne Wilson is a seasoned educator who currently serves on several boards of non-profit, church-related or educational institutions. She is a Past President of APCE and recipient of a Sustain Life Achievement Award. She has served in numerous leadership roles in APCE.

Workshop Block E Options

E611 Games and Team-Building Activities from the Dollar Store

Workshop Leaders: Joel Winchip
Offering Notes: -
Description: This interactive workshop equips church leaders with creative group games and team-building activities using simple supplies purchased from the Dollar Store. We all know the importance of offering hands-on, adaptable games that foster cooperation, communication, and community with the different age groups in our congregations. Workshop attendees will leave with practical ideas, ready-to-use activities, and a renewed confidence to build connections without straining their ministry budgets.

Joel Winchip is the Executive Director of the Campfire Collective and the Presbyterian Church Camp and Conference Association. He also serves on the adjunct faculty of Columbia Theological Seminary (Decatur, GA), where he teaches their camp/conference ministry and recreation courses.

E612 Reimagining Fowler

Workshop Leaders: Maggie Alsup
Offering Notes: -
Description: TIn the 1980's James Fowler published Stages of Faith: The Psychology of Human Development and the Quest for Meaning. At the time his six stages of faith development were influential to ministry across the ages. Today, we recognize that the stages he developed are not necessarily linear or distinctly tied to age development as he originally thought. As a college chaplain, I have seen faith development changing as the students and their circumstances change. Join us as we explore how faith development with college students looks today and reminage what or how Fowler's stages appear in young adults.

Maggie Alsup is a college chaplain and spends her time preaching, teaching, and feeding students. She is passionate about equipping young adults for life and work in God's changing world.

Workshop Block DE Options

DE501 Beyond Commonalities: Intercultural Approaches to Foster Community

Workshop Leaders: Larrisa Kwong Abazia
Offering Notes: -
Description: Churches often begin building community by emphasizing what we share in common — but whose "common" are we centering? From the language in our bulletins to when we stand, sit, or respond to a sermon, our worship spaces are shaped by assumed ways of being that not everyone shares. Programs and ministries create similar situations with people attempting to uncover how things are run, what is expected of them, and what is acceptable from indirect engagement and observations. We delay harder conversations, waiting for the "right moment" to address difference — but that moment rarely comes.

What if, instead, we began with belonging and wholeness?

This three-hour workshop invites congregational leaders, faith formation teams, and engaged members to reimagine welcome — not as a destination, but as a practice woven into every aspect of church life. Using the framework of the Intercultural Development Inventory (IDI), we will explore how to create spaces that are both safe and courageous — spaces where people across generations, backgrounds, and experiences can bring their whole selves, not just the parts that fit easily.

Whether you are working with youth, young adults, or longtime members, everyone carries unique gifts, stories, and perspectives that the full body of Christ needs. Celebrating diversity doesn't begin with inviting people to the same common table. It begins with honest, structured reflection on the spaces we've already built — and the courage to reshape them together.

Rev. Larissa Kwong Abazia is an ordained pastor in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and the Executive Director of NEXT Church. She is passionate about the ways racial and social justice can be embodied in everyday life.

Workshop Block DE Options

DE502 Around the Tiles: Using Gameplay for Inter-generational Conversations

Workshop Leaders: Elizabeth-Kelly Pope & Johanna Bertino
Offering Notes: -
Description: Around the Tiles is a three-hour, hands-on workshop that invites Christian educators to see gameplay not as a simple activity, but as a meaningful space for connection, learning, and faith formation. Using American Mahjong, Rummikub, Scrabble, and Mexican Trains as framework, participants explore how play can open doors to storytelling, belonging, and intergenerational conversation in the life of the church.

In this workshop, educators experience gameplay as learners first—discovering how patterns, strategy, collaboration, and even frustration can mirror the rhythms of Christian community. Through guided play, reflection, and conversation, we examine how tables can become sacred spaces where people of different ages share wisdom, ask questions, and build relationships across generations.

Participants will gain practical tools for creating intergenerational experiences, including conversation prompts, adaptable lesson structures, and easy ways to use gameplay in classrooms, retreats, and congregational life.

Around the Tiles invites educators to reimagine formation as something that happens not only in classrooms and sanctuaries, but also around tables—where play becomes a pathway to deeper connection, shared meaning, and faithful community.

Elizabeth-Kelly Pope is the Director of Faith Formation at Tyger River Presbyterian Church, a certified mahjong instructor, and a mom of two game-loving kids. She loves exploring how play, faith, and intergenerational connection create meaningful spaces for learning and community.

Johanna Bertino serves as Christian Education Elder at Tyger River Presbyterian Church is a registered dietitian and mom of two children that she currently homeschools. She loves helping families grow in health, learning, and faith through thoughtful practices and meaningful community.

Workshop Block DE Options

DE503 Good Bones: Worship & Sacraments Education in Inter-generational Practice

Workshop Leaders: Kirsten Trachsel & Lynn Miller
Offering Notes: -
Description: An understanding of worship and the sacraments is foundational not only to worship participation but to a life of Christian faith in all ages and stages. Learn how to nurture these practices, deepen theological understandings, and enrich the life of your church through intergenerational education models for classes and events. This is a hands-on workshop where participants will take part in an abbreviated intergenerational worship and sacraments event including education, embodied play, and art projects. Come ready to participate, learn, and take home ideas that can be easily adapted for your context.

Kirsten Trachsel is the Project Manager for the Font & Faith Initiative at the Center for Excellence in Christian Education. A graduate of Union Presbyterian Seminary, Kirsten has served churches in Ohio and Texas and worked with all ages from infant through late life.

Lynn Miller has spent her life working in and around the intersection of faith and art. She worked as a graphic designer, a museum educator, and associate pastor, a secondary art teacher, a freelance artist/designer, and an adjunct college instructor. She is the pastor of Limestone Presbyterian Church in Gaffney, SC.

Workshop Block DE Options

DE504 Offiste Workshop to visit Barbie's Village

Workshop Leaders:
Offering Notes: - offsite
Description: In 2021 the congregation of Presbyterian Church of Laurelhurst, Portland, OR made the difficult decision to close their suburban church. But it was coupled with a great vision: to do a Land Back Gift to benefit local indigenous people.

With support from Cascades Presbytery Leadership Commission, and the Barbie's Village Task Force, the property was gifted to Future Generations Collaborative, an indigenous-led coalition, (https://fgcpdx.org/) and Leaven Land and Housing Coalition, a tribal run organization.
Named Barbie' Village, (https://fgcpdx.org/barbies-village/) the tiny home village and early childhood center for unhoused Indigenous families is named after the late Barbie Shields, a citizen of the Confederated Tribes of Warm Springs, and a dedicated natural helper. Since opening, Barbie's Village has served as a model for other Land Back gifts in Portland.

COST: $35

APCE Workshop attendees will tour the Barbie's Village campus (about 15 minutes from the hotel) and hear about the many ways the programs serve the Indigenous community. Additionally, participants will receive information about best practices for engaging in a land transfer.