

2017 Spring Meeting
June 9-11, 2017
Workshop Descriptions

1:00 – 3:00 Workshops

Decolonizing Church: Why Making Change Requires Being Changed

Presenter: Naomi Christine Leapheart

Creating sustained, effective faith-based movements for justice requires more than cool hashtags, strongly-worded statements, and occasional protests. In order to bring about change for our communities, congregations must be willing to take an introspective look at how the principles of colonization, domination, greed operate in full force within our own walls. This workshop will explore the ways in which racism, classism, patriarchy, heterosexism, and xenophobia have become Christian practices, and what we can do to uproot these practices in our churches so that we can be equipped to fight for lasting justice. Time permitting, we will make action plans for doing congregational "audits" and use a case study to explore how a decolonized church would tackle a specific injustice facing our region today.

21st Century Discipleship: You can teach an old church new tricks!

Presenter: Rev. Cean James

While the principles and purposes of disciple making have not changed much in the past 2000 years, the means by which to accomplish this goal has advanced with society. Sunday School, Vacation bible, etc., are old school strategies for making Christians from human raw material. In our current iteration, the church must learn to use new technology to "tell the old, old story!"

Individual Transformation

Presenter: Dr. Rev. Steven Treat

Description to follow

Interfaith Relationships in a Divided World

Today's global context is increasingly calling people to meet their religiously-diverse neighbors, break down stereotypes and explore challenging issues together. Based on the book, *Encountering Other Faiths*, written by former Interfaith Center Director of Adult Education Sr. Maria Hornung, this workshop brings interfaith dialogue from the ivory tower into the pews. Participants will be empowered with increased competence and confidence to facilitate meaningful interfaith conversations and programs for their congregation or community.

Merger, Shared Ministry, Closings as Transformation

Presenter: Dr. Rev. Becky Beckwith

As we witness our local churches changing and moving into the future, let's talk about options. How do we discern for the future and make prayerful decisions? How can your congregation talk openly and creatively? What can we learn from each other? Transformation stories and ideas will be shared and examined.

Transformation Through the Sacraments and Worship

Presenter: Rev. Wanda Craner

God may be experienced in a very real incarnational way through participation in the sacraments of baptism and holy communion, and worship. Authentic worship imbedded in meaningful traditions of the past AND open to new expressions makes way for heartfelt growth in faith and greater understanding of Christ's vision for the world. We will explore ways to open doors for this to happen.

Transforming Congregational Culture

Presenter: Rev. Sara Hertzog

A faith community that works together discerning and following the will of God? A community that reaches outward instead of inward? A community that respects each other's gifts? Our discussion will provide ideas and encouragement to turn these questions into statements.

Transforming Gun Culture

Presenters: Rev. Jim McIntyre and Rev. Bill Worley

Gun rights advocates and supporters of stricter gun control vigorously debate the forces shaping the nature of the gun culture in the US that is protected by the Second Amendment to the US Constitution. In this workshop, Jim MacIntyre Rev. Bill Worley, Conference Minister, will discuss the social/religious/economic/safety significance of firearms in our communities and the different ways our relationship with guns will be transformed by people on all sides of this debate.

Youth, Generation Z Transforming Church

Presenter: Matthew Bailey

Description to follow

3:30 – 5:30 Workshop

Resurrecting Church

Presenter: Shane Claiborne

Amid the ruins of an abandoned cathedral where homeless families were living, Shane and his community caught a fresh vision of what it means to be the Church. With ancient stories of the early Christians and contemporary stories of ordinary radicals, Shane will invite us to re-imagine what it means to be the Body of Christ alive in the world. Let's move beyond complaining about the Church we see, and let's start becoming the Church we dream of.