



April 30, 2023

## Foundations of Worship Planning

“Prepares lay leaders.....”

Saturday, May 20th—Online

9:00 am—1:00 pm

“Foundations of Worship Planning” prepares lay leaders and refreshes authorized ministers on the foundational principles of worship with an emphasis on practical application. Participants will gain tools and sharpen skills for planning meaningful worship that facilitates holy encounters. No previous experience with worship planning is necessary.



***Participants should bring a recent bulletin or order of service from their context as well as a Bible and music selection resources (i.e. hymnal and/or songbook).***

**Facilitator: Rev. Cheryl Lindsay, Minister for Worship and Theology**

Rev. Lindsay works at the Ministerial Excellence, Support & Authorization (MESA) at UCC Headquarters in Ohio.

Go to [psec.org](http://psec.org), click the Events & News tab, go to the calendar and click on the event on May 20th for more information and the registration link.

## Updates from Open Table UCC

(PSEC’s most recent new church start, located in Pottstown, PA. New church starts are supported in part by funds received from churches that have closed and forwarded their funds to the Conference for this purpose. From closure....comes growth!)

Happy Resurrection Season, friends! On behalf of Nichole, myself, and the whole team at Open Table UCC, we want to thank you all for your prayers and support during the first seven months of our church plant. I often say that the Spirit seems to work most dramatically when we are faithfully teetering on the edges of chaos, and that has been my experience so far with Open Table.

We have been experimenting with various forms of worship, creating our own traditions, and meeting folks who have never really “done church” before. We’re a small group (20-30 total), and we have no permanent space, so we’re trying our best to leverage that to our advantage. We had our first wedding in a living room, baptized two girls in the Schuylkill, and brought our own branches to “Palm” Sunday. Back in December, since we knew that our Christmas Eve attendance was going to be low, we held a small service at the local nursing home and connected with Glick’s Greenhouse who donated a poinsettia for every resident. It was one of the most meaningful Christmas Eve services of my life, and as an added benefit, we were done by 2pm!

I know it’s a weird thing to say, but I’m really cherishing this time of “low” attendance. It has enabled us to make our services truly interactive as we regularly make space for people to share their own hearts and co-create the worship service together. We have big plans for a more permanent home, a “third space” style business, and exciting events, but I keep hearing that whisper in my soul urging me to slow down and savor the sweetness of this present moment. Every season has its own opportunities, and God has a history of doing spectacular works in the most inauspicious ways. So we continue exploring the “edges of chaos” with radical honesty and vulnerability, trusting that God is up to something special in these days.

This Summer, we plan to be at every local event, meeting new people and inviting them to bring their authentic selves to the table of grace. Thank you again for your prayers and support. We could not do this work without you. May God bless you and your churches, and may God illuminate your path so that you might serve God’s beloved children in the way that you are uniquely equipped to do.

Grace and Peace,

Rev. Zack Jackson, Co-Pastor of Open Table UCC