



September 8, 2024

## Lay Leadership Courses Being Offered This Fall

**Growing Our Spiritual Lives:** The first step in making our churches more vibrant, faithful and effective, is for each of us to cultivate our spiritual lives. Our congregations are like trees: in order to reach out with our branches and bear fruit, we must first deepen our roots in our faith. This course on Spiritual Life will meet for three sessions on Saturday mornings from 9:00-11:00 as follows:

October 5 – Spiritual growth through congregational worship

October 19 – Spiritual growth through personal disciplines

November 2 – Spiritual growth through small groups.

November 16 – A fourth session if needed.

For more information, go to [psec.org](http://psec.org), click the Events & News tab and click on the calendar. Go to Oct. 5th for information and the registration link.

**Organization for Mission:** Many of us, when elected to a leadership position in our congregation, know very little about our denomination. Yet, as leaders of the congregation, we are responsible for our relationship with the denomination. This is a course in United Church of Christ polity, that is, how our denomination functions. Participants will receive by electronic mail a printable copy of the workbook “United Church of Christ Polity for Lay Leaders.”

This will be an online course meeting Thursday evenings from 7:00-9:00 October 17, 31, and November 7, 14, and 21. For more information, go to [psec.org](http://psec.org), click the Events & News tab and click on the calendar. Go to Oct. 17th for information and the registration link.

## A Word From the Associate Conference Minister for Search & Call

There is so much going on this fall in our country and in Conference in the coming few months that it's sometimes hard to know where to spend our time. We have multiple opportunities to discuss the possible Keystone Conference, as well as an important vote on Saturday, November 9, to gauge the will of our Conference to go forward into a new and different future. And certainly, there are so many other good events happening in our local churches to draw our attention and time. However, I want to highlight something that I think will deeply benefit congregations and pastors, which is the “Fractured Lives, Fractured Churches” workshop being offered on Saturday, October 12 from 9 AM to 3 PM at Church of the Good Shepherd UCC in Boyertown.

This workshop is being presented through the Lombard Mennonite Peace Center and is designed to address the estrangement we're experiencing from each other in the world that has now filtered down to our local churches, and how the church can be a place that heals and restores rather than a place that simply mirrors our divided world. The basis of the workshop is family systems theory, something I learned briefly about in seminary, but was introduced to more thoroughly by a lovely Lutheran couple that befriended this new pastor in the late nineties. I often say that two things changed my life for the better – Jesus and GPS – but it's really three things: the third was understanding that churches are like families, with all the positive and negative dynamics that happen with those we love and struggle to love. Knowing this truth changed my personal life, and it forever changed my ministry with the churches I served. Whether your church knows how to handle the estrangement and division well, or is struggling to do so, this workshop is for you, both laity and clergy. It's free and you can bring as many people as we can fit into the room. Join us!

To register, go to the PSEC website ([psec.org](http://psec.org)) go to the calendar (under Events & News) and click on the event on October 12th for more information.

*Rev. Kevin McLemore,*  
Associate Conference Minister for Search and Call