



September 22, 2024

## A word from the Conference Minister...

I recently had the opportunity to worship with the folks at UCC East Goshen. Founded in 1970, they are one of the “newer” congregations of our conference. They are in a time of immense transition. After 54 years of ministry at their current location, they are selling their building and moving to a yet to be determined new space. In the midst of this change, their current pastor, Rev. Jocelyn Emerson, who has done amazing work helping church members discern their future, is also in a season of transition. So the church is searching for a new home and a new pastor. Either of these would be enough to drive church members to seek a more solid place. But the folks at UCC East Goshen are excited for the possibilities that might lie ahead which is not dimmed by the grief and loss of letting go what has been. That excitement (and courage) has inspired new members to join the church knowing it will look very different than it does now.

Church life and leadership is, in part, about holding in tension stability and spirit. Rev. Dale Davis, shared in a recent sermon that, “The spirit, on the one hand is about empowerment, movement, change, adaptation, and fulfilling the purpose God intends. Stability, on the other hand is about order, predictability, certainty, and no surprises (can I get an “Amen”). Institutions, like the church, tend to gravitate towards stability to such a degree that we become captive to it. God is for stability. And for orderliness. God is for strategic planning and process. God is also for movement, creativity, passion, and innovation. God is for doing a new thing! The key is to embrace both sides, stability and spirit, and not push either side to the corner.” The folks at UCC East Goshen seem to be holding well the tension of stability and spirit, loss and new things, grief and the hope of possibility.

People often ask me where I see hope for the church. This is one of those places.

I pray the spirit will lead you to a place of hope if you are not already there.

Blessings, Pastor Bill

Rev. Bill Worley, Conference Minister

**October 12th**

9:00 am—4:00 pm @ Church of the Good Shepherd, Boyertown

**FREE Workshop for Pastors and Lay Members!**

## Fractured Lives, Fractured Churches

American society is fracturing as more and more families experience estrangement with their loved ones. Tensions in American public life affects their private lives and vice-versa. Americans lack a shared identity, disagree on the nation’s purposes, values, and history, and are becoming more and more intolerant of those with whom they disagree. Estrangement in private lives often leads to intense tribalism in public life. Anchored in Family Systems, the workshop is designed to help leaders understand phenomenon of estrangement, how it comes about and how can the church be a gathering place for restoration and healing.

This Workshop Will Help You/Your Church...

- Learn how estrangement has played a role in the life of your church and family
- Transform estrangement into restoration and healing
- Learn how to have meaningful relationships with individuals with different opinions
- Overcome tribalism to view the world through a more unified lens

Who Will Benefit:

- **Clergy** who are interested in learning a proactive approach to managing estrangement in their church
- **Church lay leaders** who want to gain confidence in their position and how to best manage challenges
- **Anyone** interested in learning how to manage self and become a positive representative for the church

**Register at: <https://psecfractured.eventbrite.com>**