

Annual Meeting TPIRC Report 2025

Submitted by: Rev. Melody L. Seaton, Project Director

“The Thriving in Ministry grant was created to support pastors, so they can become better leaders in their congregations. If pastors are better leaders, this will equip their congregations to spread the gospel.”

-Chris Cobles, Vice President for Religion

Lilly Endowment

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### **Thriving Pastors in Revitalizing Congregations (TPIRC)**

Illinois Conference of the United Church of Christ

#### **Pillars of TPIRC**

Leadership – Collegiality – Spirituality – Congeniality

#### **Components**

Generosity Officer

Micro-grants

Clergy Communities of Practice (CCOP) Group Meetings with other pastors once a month

Cohort Meetings (Combined gatherings with pastors and lay team) 2-3 times a year

Annual Education Summit

#### **Membership Report:**

- 25 churches involved in TPIRC
- 2 CCOP Facilitators

#### **Team Meetings:**

1/6, 1/22, 2/12 2/24, 3/4, 4/8, 4/29, 5/27, 6/17, 8/18, 8/29, 9/15, 10/9, 10/20

#### **Thriving in Ministry Lilly Endowment Gathering:**

March 24-27, 2025

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### **Annual Planning Meeting:**

**7/31, 8/21, 9/4, 10/9, 10/23**

### **Cohort Meetings:**

#### **1<sup>st</sup> Quarter Meetings: 3/15**

**Presenter: Rev. Gregg Carlson**  
Senior Consultant, Director of Coaching & Contracted Services  
Convergence Networks  
**“Utilizing Sacred Spaces”**

#### **2<sup>nd</sup> Quarter Meetings: 6/7**

**Presenters: Rev. Jeffrey Phillips**  
**“Lay Caregiving Ministry”**

This year has been a transition year. We moved from the original grant to the sustainability grant. We lost one (1) of our team members, Marz Rivera and gained two (2): Lindsey Svetlick (Coordinator) & Stephanie Moore (Generosity Officer). In this new grant, we removed the coaching component though we understood the benefit of it. Pastors weren't taking advantage of their expertise. Originally CCOP groups were going to be led by ACM's; however, with Rev. Carlson leaving and Rev. Murff's position only recently being filled, we continued with the two (2) facilitators: Rev. Dr. Kent Poindexter and Rev. Hank Fairman. The generosity officer position is new not only to the Conference but the Denomination. The past few months after Stephanie was hired have been spent connecting her with other Generosity Officers and helping her understand TPIRC and UCC. In addition, we have contracted a consultant to work with her from J & P Consulting.

We have also embarked on a combination meeting with the Conference. I shared with Rev. Carlson that I felt our Summit being in September followed by the Annual Meeting in October was asking too much of pastors and their lay teams. We also saw a decrease in attendance in the second year of our in-person Education Summit, and this was also expressed in surveys. Our initial plan was to move the Education Summit to Spring or Summer. I brought this to our new team, and it was

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suggested that we work together with the Conference and only have one (1) meeting. We will assess how well this worked after it's over and determine if it will continue.

This was the first year of micro-grants. I felt that since we didn't have full participation in coaching and CCOP that we offer \$1,000 grants per church to pay for what best suits their needs. The grant application was streamlined and before another one (1) can be received, a summary needs to be completed.

Due to the many transitions and a new grant, the team will be taking some much-needed time next month to assess and if necessary, make some adjustments to the program.