

2024 Annual Celebration Trainings

Optional Trainings - Thursday, October 31

1 Committee on Ministry Discussion | 10 AM - 12 PM | FREE

Facilitator: Rev. Tara Barber

This discussion is open to COM members only! This discussion is a MESA-led conversation which will provide COM members the opportunity to discuss topics like unified fitness review, ordainable calls, four 4-Way calls, Manual On Ministry, Situational Support and other learning opportunities.

2 Boundary Awareness Training | 1:00 - 5:00 PM | \$30/person

Facilitator: Rev. Diane Weible, Enkei Resolutions

Case studies will be presented and discussed in small group format regarding the following topics: power and vulnerability, social media, finances, Pastoral identity and vocation self-care (burn-out, stress, compassion fatigue), receiving gifts, boundaries and church conflict, when a Minister leaves/retires, Ministers as church members/Ministers in 4-Way covenants and cultural boundaries.

3 Bias Awareness Training | 1:00 - 5:00 PM | \$30/person

Facilitator: Rev. Michelle Day, Nehemiah Trinity Rising

In this training the learners will discuss various ways of understanding some of the barriers to right (healthy) relationship through Restorative Justice practices which are grounded in Biblical principles.

4 UCC History & Polity | CANCELLED

Register online here: <https://tinyurl.com/2024AnnualCelebration>

2024 Annual Celebration Workshops

BLOCK A - Friday, 11:15 AM - 12:00 PM

1 Embracing Humanity Towards Others

Presenter: Dr. Julia Speller

We will discuss the legacy of the Afro-Christian Convention as the fifth founding stream of the United Church of Christ through the lens of Ubuntu. Ubuntu is more understood through the phrase "I am because we are; since we are, therefore, I am." We will explore how the Illinois Conference can journey toward a greater awareness and responsiveness in our work and fellowship.

2 The Rise of the Small Church Today

Presenter: Rev. Harriet Dart

The lifeblood of the UCC today resides in local, small and rural churches. There is a sense in rural areas where these churches are forgotten or ignored, small and rural churches have felt discounted and disconnected. However, that is slowly changing today. This workshop will discuss how small and rural churches are making a broad impact today.

3 The Camp Forward Initiative

Presenter: Amy Wildermuth

The Camp Forward team is excited to share the exploration process we have engaged in to evaluate the strengths and opportunities for growth of the two Illinois UCC camps, Pilgrim Park and Tower Hill. After reviewing the current state of both camps, learning about how similar camps have evolved, and imagining possibilities for the future, we have several recommendations we believe will allow the camps to chart a new path forward that will both maintain a close connection to the Illinois UCC and grow the camps' presence and resources so they can better live out their mission and achieve their goals.

4 Illinois Conference 2024-2025 Budget Discussions

Presenters: Bob Poor (FAB Chair) & Cristine Vesely (Treasurer)

The Illinois Conference Finances Workshop will provide an update on the current status of our Illinois Conference's Finances, including the 2024 Budget, our transition to a new financial management company, our audit, and our 2025 budget proposal. Our Chair of the Finance, Administration and Business (FAB) Committee, Bob Poor, and our Treasurer, Cristine Vesely, will co-host and provide an overview of these topics, and try to answer any questions you may have about our Conference Finances.

2024 Annual Celebration Workshops

BLOCK A - Friday, 11:15 AM - 12:00 PM

5 Are We There Yet? Exploring Creative and Effective Ways to Move Youth Ministry to the Next Level

Presenter: Rev. Isaac Hayes, The Emmaus Community

Participants will explore the unique challenges facing today's youth, learn best practices for fostering spiritual growth, and develop skills for leading engaging, Christ-centered activities.

6 Understanding the New Governance Model for the Illinois Conference

Presenter: Rev. Hank Fairman

This workshop will discuss the work of the Governance Task Force to develop a "New Governance Model" which reimagines and revises our ILUCC Constitution and By-Laws. One of the driving forces behind this "new model" is the need for greater efficiency in the work of the Conference; and the need to better engage with the diversity which the IL Conference encompasses.

Register online here: <https://tinyurl.com/2024AnnualCelebration>

2024 Annual Celebration Workshops

BLOCK B - Friday, 1:15 - 2:00 PM

1 Ethical Concerns with the Use of AI in the Church

Presenter: Rev. Tara Barber, Minister for Ministerial Support & Accountability

We use AI (Artificial Intelligence) without even realizing it, so how can we be more discerning and understanding about generative AI, the ethics involved, and appropriateness for use? Let's talk about it and share resources for more in-depth understanding.

2 Introducing the Manual on Local Church

Presenter: Rev. Roberto Ochoa, Minister for Ethnic Inclusion & Congregational Support for Rural and Small Churches

The United Church of Christ has sought ways to clarify how we live out "covenant" in community. The Manual on Local Church is part of this ongoing work to discern and define our structure so that we can engage more fully in our faithful witness in the world.

3 Opening Our Eyes to the Benefits of OCWM

Presenters: Kay Quinney-Bernard & Larry McCure

Effective stewardship ensures that our churches have the necessary resources to sustain and expand their ministries. This workshop examines the practice of faithful stewardship to the larger church so that we honor God and grow spiritually.

4 Meaningful Spaces for Youth

Presenter: Rev. Tyler Ung, Love of Children Program Coordinator

Rev. Tyler Ung will lead a conversation about creating meaningful spaces for children in worship, focusing on engaging young minds in a way that fosters spiritual growth and connection. This discussion will explore practical approaches for making children feel included and valued in the worship experience.

5 How Money Serves the Church

Presenter: Maria Coyne, Cornerstone CEO

Learn more about how the Cornerstone Fund serves as a catalyst for ministries to thrive. Encouraging and supporting church vitality, property development, community ministry, impact investing, environmental justice and more.