Annual Meeting TPIRC Report 2026

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

~~~~~~~~~~

Thriving Pastors in Revitalizing Congregations (TPIRC)

Illinois Conference of the United Church of Christ

Pillars of TPIRC

Leadership – Collegiality – Spirituality – Congeniality

Team

Melody L. Seaton, Project Director

Lindsey Svetlick, Project Coordinator

Stephanie Moore, Generosity Officer

Kathy Brown, Administrative Assistant

Membership Report:

- 14 churches involved in TPIRC

Team Meetings:

1/7, 2/4, 4/1, 5/6, 6/3, 8/5

Team Meetings with Annual Planning Committee:

1/6, 1/8, 2/5, 3/5, 4/23, 6/4, 8/6, 9/3, 10/22

Responsibilities:

A. Secured 7 of the presenters.
   1. Grant Writing
   2. Taste & See (sample CCP)
   3. Leading Well: An Inside -Out Approach to Self-Care
   4. Faithful Stewardship in an age of AI
   5. Honest & Honorable Conversations
   6. The Male Spiritual Journey
   7. Faith in Place (Environmental Justice)
~~~~~~~~~~

B. Worked with Rev. Sarah Lohrbach to create the registration portal.
C. Handled the logistics for the meeting.
D. Arranged for Lunch both days.
E. Secured the Banquet location.
F. Secured the Hotel.

Thriving in Ministry Lily Endowment Gathering:

March 2026-Attendees: Stephanie Moore (Generosity Officer) & Kathy Brown (Administrative Assistant)

Activities

Cohort Meetings:

1st Quarter Meetings: 4/25

Presenter: Rev. Jonathan Brooks
Formerly of Canaan Baptist Church
Topic: Cultivating Networks of Impact

2nd Quarter Meetings: 7/18

Presenter: Minister Zakiya Moton
Uplevel Management
Approaching a Biblical & Theological Framework for approaching AI with wisdom

Generosity Officer:

To assist in the raising of the matching funds for the sustainability grant, we contracted J & P Consulting. They have an established footprint in the community locally and at large. It was our hope that by working closely with our new generosity officer, the tools needed to secure various types of funding would occur. We contracted Dr. Jordan, principal consultant for a 12-month period and she worked extensively writing grant and introducing Ms. Moore to fundraising protocols. To culminate this year, Dr. Jordan will be one (1) of the presenters for the Annual Meeting/TPIRC Education Summit. She has created a grant-writing booklet useful for religious organizations.

Clergy Communities of Practice:

We continued with two (2) CCOP groups headed by Rev. Dr. Kent Poindexter and Rev. Hank Fairman. They meet monthly with specific topics to govern the gathering time. Rev. Dr. Terrill Murff will be resuming CCOP he led to be in line with one of the expectations of the sustainability grant.

Annual Meeting TPIRC Report 2026

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

Microgrants:

This year we awarded four (4) microgrants in the amount of $1,000 each to the following churches:

1. Hope UCC, Moline
2. First Congregational UCC, Springfield
3. Church of the Good Shepherd, Chicago
4. Federated Church of Sycamore, Sycamore