



## Returning to In-Person Worship

Stated Clerk Urges Church to “Slow Down” and “wait on the Lord and be of good courage”



The Rev. Dr. J. Herbert Nelson, Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the PC (USA) addresses the church about returning to in-person worship.

By PASTOR ERIC O. LEDERMANN

Just a few days ago, the Rev. Dr. J. Herbert Nelson, Stated Clerk of the PC (USA) General Assembly, issued a statement urging patience on returning to in-person worship.

Over the past several months, churches across the country have returned to various levels of in-person worship as millions of people began receiving vaccinations to prevent COVID-19 infections. As more have been vaccinated, and as the CDC released confusing guidelines, many churches have relaxed their prevention practices while others have continued to practice social distancing and other measures.

But our Stated Clerk urged caution due to the recent surge in Delta variant cases. “Normality is not going to be up to us,” Nelson said in his statement. “It’s going to be up to God.”

The next day, the Center for Disease Control (CDC) issued new guidelines urging both the unvaccinated and the vaccinated to wear masks in certain public places where transmission is likely.

New science has suggested that vaccinated and unvaccinated people carry nearly the same load of the virus when infected, making them equally contagious.

While most of those being hospitalized are unvaccinated, the cause for concern rises from the fact that increased trans-

mission, with or without serious illness, may contribute to the ongoing mutation of the virus, thus making new variants even more dangerous and the vaccines less effective. Already researchers are seeing the vaccines becoming less effective with each new generation of the virus. Masks continue to be a major factor in the spread of the virus in all its forms.

Your session has been working tirelessly to gauge when we might return to some form of in-person worship. A survey was sent to the congregation, inviting people to share where they are mentally, emotionally, and physically with regard to the Coronavirus and returning to in-person worship. Responses were mixed, with many wanting to return to in-person and nearly as many preferring online worship.

Session is cautiously moving forward with plans to open the sanctuary for worship on August 15th. The Worship Committee, staff, worship volunteers, and myself have been working hard to develop a plan for worship that will be wor-

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This issue of the  
UPC NEWS & Current Events  
is brought to you by...  
**the word...**

## Discernment

From Latin *discernere*, to separate, set apart, distribute, distinguish, perceive. The process of separating what is important or true from what is not. For people of faith, often a prayerful process in which we make a discovery about God, ourselves, or the world around us that can lead to future action and faith development. Through spiritual discernment, quietly listening and contemplating, God may guide us to the best and most fruitful decisions we can make given circumstances and information known at the time. What have you discerned in your faith walk?

## IN-PERSON WORSHIP

Continued from page 1

shipful and still try to mitigate the risks of gathering inside.

According to a model developed by Massachusetts Institute of Technology (MIT), when factoring the size of a room, wearing masks, vaccination rates among participants, we estimate that up to 120 people can safely gather in the sanctuary. Our average Sunday attendance for the past several years has been around 120-125 people. With an online option available, we anticipate that number to be below 100 on August 15th and following.

We are still working out plans for singing, even with masks on. The choir is preparing to begin their season in September, along with Sunday School and other programs. For now, we are going to forgo refreshments after worship. Even outside in the courtyard, everyone will be encouraged to keep masks on. Inside, masks will be required (we will have some available if you forget yours).

We're not sure how communion is going to work, but we are experimenting with a number of ideas that seem to be working in other congregations, and adapting them to our context. Regardless, you will have options, including bringing your own elements to continue our act of solidarity with Christ and one another.

I have read many Christians argue that we need to trust God in all this. I can't argue with that. However, I also believe

God has gifted us with discerning minds that have helped Humanity uncover many of the great mysteries of God's creation. Session and leaders throughout the PC (USA) are trying to follow the ever changing landscape of the scientific research regarding this virus. That has altered all of our lives, possibly for a very long time.

Dr. Nelson reminded viewers of our Christian understanding of lament. "We want what we want now, but we can't have it the way we want it," he said. "And I think that's where we are in these challenging times. I think there is a need for us to still slow down and figure out how to live into where we are and not what we are dreaming to be right now. That's the challenge of our time."

So, may we cautiously step into whatever new normal we need to discern, be gracious with one another—including our leadership—and lean into the spirit of love and care for one another. Some of you may be ready to ditch the mask. But know that you are putting others at risk and making it difficult for those not ready to unmask to engage in the life of our communities. We are called to not think of ourselves, but to think of the "other" in our lives. This is a primary value at UPC as seek to serve the greater good of God's holy reign, revealed in Jesus, our Christ, and which has, indeed, come near. n

*Be of good courage  
and know that you are loved!*

## MONTHLY CANNED FOOD DRIVE

**August 1, 2021, 1:00 p.m.-3:00 p.m.**

*Normally First Sunday of each month! Drop off at church!*

Food pantries are often short of money and protein foods. The pantry at Tempe Community Action Agency (TCAA) needs your contributions of:



- tuna
- beans
- canned meats
- ramen noodles
- canned vegetables
- soups

**Drop off food donations  
at the church.**

Financial contributions may be sent to the office (make checks out to "TCAA" with "Food Pantry" in the memo).



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Tempe, Arizona 85282  
(480) 966-6267  
[www.upctempe.org](http://www.upctempe.org)  
[www.facebook.com/upctempe](https://www.facebook.com/upctempe)

### Office Hours

Tue-Fri: 8:00 a.m.-1:00 p.m.

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UPC NEWS & Current Events is published monthly. Submissions of announcements, stories, op-eds, and reflections on recent events at UPC are welcomed.

#### Requirements:

Announcements: 500 words or less  
Articles/Reflections: 1200 words or less  
Letters to the Editor: 750 words or less  
Submissions may be edited for content, grammar, and space available.

**Send submissions  
by the 20th of each month to:  
[newsletter@upctempe.org](mailto:newsletter@upctempe.org)**

# UPC Keeps on Giving!

## Christian Education Committee Scholarship Awards, Montlure Support

By **LAURA KNORR** and  
**VICKI JACOBS**

*Christian Education Committee*

The Christian Education Committee would like to report a wonderful conclusion for this year's Montlure Day Camp. It was held at Mesa First Presbyterian with approximately 40 participants, campers and counselors. We would especially like to thank those who provided gift cards and money to allow us to provide a day of meals for the counselors and snacks for the entire camp.

The Christian Education Committee is delighted to announce the awarding of our Second Semester Freshman Scholarship awards. This year we were able to award two students some financial help

maturing their school expenses. The scholarships were awarded to L. Brooks McAllister, son of Lori McAllister, Brooks is attending the Kansas City Art Institute here in Tempe, and to Gracie Fraser who is attending Emory University in Atlanta Georgia. Congratulations!

In looking at the people who donated to Montlure, They were Bonny H, Kathy R, Kathy Wand Martha W...We (Theresa and I) were able to provide a delicious

Muffin and yogurt breakfast, cold fried chicken, rolls and salads for lunch and Someburros party trays for dinner! ■



## Backpack Drive

### A successful 2021 Deacon's Backpack Drive

By **HOLLY SILCOX** and  
**NATALIE HORNE**  
*Board of Deacons*

It's Officially a Wrap on the 2021 Deacon's Backpack Drive!

Holly and I were able to present Teresa Alvarez of the Guadalupe Community Action Program with two backpacks and a check for \$3,395! We celebrate the great success this year's backpack drive has been and want to express our gratitude and thanks for all who supported our drive so generously. This has been quite a year, and we weren't really sure how that would affect our annual drive, but as always, UPC supported the drive in the same way you always do — with



wide support and abundant giving! Your gifts will certainly make a positive impact on the ability for Guadalupe CAP to support their students in their education goals.

On behalf of the Board of Deacons, thank you, thank you, thank you! We are overjoyed! ■

## Stewardship Update

### Good News for First Half of 2021

By **KATIE RANES**  
*Stewardship Committee Chairperson*

Church leadership and the Stewardship Committee continue to be grateful for the demonstration of faithful generosity by the members of UPC. As of the end of June, we are halfway through our fiscal year, and we have received almost 56% of General Funds pledged and almost 68% of the pledged amounts to per capita. That is great news! During the last quarter, we also received \$1,140 for the Pentecost Offering, one of the four denominational offerings. That will go a long way toward supporting youth and young people.

You have been generous in supporting for the Backpack Drive (see article to the left), supplies for the Refugee program, and contributions for the new congregation, First Light, Anthem (\$660 to date). We continue to support those experiencing hunger and homelessness through the Drive and Drop Sundays and regular hosting of programs on our campus. The work of Jesus Christ is happening at UPC! ■



# UPC Grown RiseShine Bread Ministry is Baking Love

By ANDREA WHITE

*Board of Deacons*

A group of UPC and community members are beginning a project to provide home baked bread to the food insecure in Tempe. We will start with providing single portions of home baked bread to I-HELP locations, including churches and the Oasis Center. We may branch out to the TCAA Food Pantry once the project gets going.

If you are interested in learning more or volunteering to help bake, collect/deliver, or package supplies please contact Andrea White at (480) 580-3021 or [awhite@businessbydesign.us](mailto:awhite@businessbydesign.us). Here is a link to a video you can view: <https://youtu.be/Go5llLjTuw>.

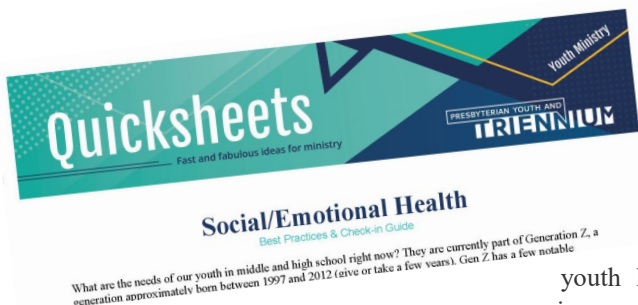
To contribute financially to this cause, go to [www.upctempe.org/giving](http://www.upctempe.org/giving), and choose the RiseShine Break Baking Project.

Soon we hope to have our own website where you can volunteer. ■



## New PC(USA) Resources Focus on Youth Mental Health

Middle school and high school youth are part of Generation Z, more likely than others to report anxiety and other mental health issues



By PAUL SEEBECK

*Presbyterian News Service*

Two new resources from the PC (USA) focus on the mental health and wellness of youth.

The “[Social/Emotional Health](#)” Quicksheet provides a list of check-in questions that can be used in group set-

tings or, say, in a group text check-in to help nurture the mental health of youth. The “[Partnering with Parents for Hard Conversations](#)” Quicksheet encourages

youth leaders and congregations to equip parents to set aside time to talk to their middle- or high-schooler about what is happening in their world.

Students now in middle school and high school are part of Generation Z. Born between 1997 and 2012 — give or take a few years — they’re described, in the Social/Emotional Health resource, as often “lonely, overwhelmed, feeling unsafe in the world, worriers, and deeply concerned about ethical and humanitarian

needs of the world.”

For Gina Yeager-Buckley, associate for Presbyterian Youth and Triennium, talking about mental health, being proactive about providing tools for self-care and modeling mental health are as important and vital to the life and faith of young people as anything else followers of Christ do in the church to serve God faithfully.

“This is part of their lexicon, their language and regular rhythm in many cases. It is where they live, browse and dwell,” she said. “At young ages they understand mental health, mental illness and mental/emotional wholeness. So, we need to be there too, teaching and accom-

See YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH on page 13



**YOU CAN HELP SAVE LIVES!** In response to rising temperatures and the needs of the most vulnerable in our community, Arizona Faith Network has launched an initiative to help establish faith-based cooling centers and hydration stations throughout the valley. In partnership with the Heat Relief Network, our faith-based organizations, and other partners, AFN is working to establish 10 new cooling centers throughout Maricopa County during the summer of 2021. These cooling centers will be strategically placed in areas with heat-vulnerable residents determined in partnership with Arizona State University and the Heat Relief Network.

Summer 2020 marked the hottest summer on record for Arizona. The month of August 2020 marked the hottest month ever recorded in Maricopa County. Preliminary 2020 heat hospitalization and death statistics exceed all historical records in Arizona. From May to September, over 3,700 heat-related Emergency Department (ED) visits were captured in the state's syndromic surveillance system. As of November 30, 2020, preliminary data indicated 467 heat-related deaths (investigations still undergoing), with most deaths recorded in Maricopa, Pima, Mohave, Yuma, and Pinal counties during the months of May-September (AZHeat Relief Network, 2020).



The NAACP, African American Christian Clergy Coalition, ACLU of Arizona, Puente Arizona, and others are hosting a Voting Rights Restoration Clinic specifically for people affected by Prop 207. Free, but registration is required. To register go to: [https://secure.everyaction.com/\\_sHeL67vxki7p0oeN5JkOQ2](https://secure.everyaction.com/_sHeL67vxki7p0oeN5JkOQ2).

**Learn more about the Arizona Faith Network by subscribing to the newsletter at:**

[www.arizonafaithnetwork.org/subscribe](http://www.arizonafaithnetwork.org/subscribe)

## Mental Health in Faith Communities



with Michael Curry

Lay Minister for Disability Education, Advocacy, and Awareness  
Southwest Conference  
United Church of Christ

**August 23rd**

**6:30 pm**

**via zoom**

The Arizona Faith Network is pleased to welcome special guest Michael Curry for an evening of conversation on Mental Health in Faith Communities. Michael currently serves as the Lay Minister for Disability Education, Advocacy, and Awareness in the Southwest Conference. You are invited to come and listen as Michael shares his story about the challenges he faced as child and adolescent growing up in the church. We will explore why it is difficult for many people to be authentic and true to who they are. Michael will share an overview of how your faith community can become a Welcoming, Inclusive, Supportive, and Engaging for Mental Health. Register at:

<https://www.eventbrite.com/e/mental-health-and-your-faith-community-tickets-164934408255>



Join the anti-hunger and food systems advocacy calls with the Arizona Food Bank Network and the Arizona Food System Network, held every other Friday. More information and recordings of past calls are available at: <https://www.azfsn.org/>

# Speaking Truth in Love

The Apostle Paul was good at it. We should give it a try as well, Synod School preacher says



The Rev. Samuel Son preaches at the 2021 Synod School at Buena Vista University, Storm Lake, Iowa.  
PHOTO: PAMELA RUTH POUTY (via Facebook)

By **MIKE FERGUSON**  
*Presbyterian News Service*

One good way to live out its embodiment is for the church to speak the truth in love.

Synod School has been the work of Presbytery of Lakes and Prairies based on Eagan, Minnesota. This year participants met in person and online July 25-30.

The Rev. Samuel Son, the Presbyterian Mission Agency's Manager of Diversity and Reconciliation, told Synod School attendees during evening worship Thursday that speaking the truth in love can dispel myths, "which you and I are addicted to."

"We love myths that tell us we are pretty good — very good — righteous people," Son said. "All nations have myths," and one that was traditionally

important in this country is that land-owning white males were "the most important human beings." In the pre-amended U.S. Constitution, they were the only ones who could vote.

Then Son wondered: "Has the church spoken truth in love, or has it perpetuated the myth?"

Paul certainly did. "He called out Peter in public," in his letter to the church at Galatia, Son said. Paul's calling out of Cephas — Peter — concludes with these words: "If you, though a Jew, live like a Gentile and not like a Jew, how can you compel the Gentiles to live like Jews?"

"Sometimes, you have to call out lies in public," Son said, "because the lies are spoken in public."

We don't know Peter's response, because it's Paul who's telling the story, Son pointed out, "but I think Peter received it well." In his second letter, Peter

does have this to say about Paul: "So also our beloved brother Paul wrote to you according to the wisdom given him, speaking of this as he does in all his letters. There are some things in them hard to understand, which the ignorant and unstable twist to their own destruction, as they do the other scriptures."

"Peter says, 'What he writes is true,'" Son said. "It's not easy to be called out in public. He could have said, 'Hey, Paul — were you one of the 12? No? Sit down, then.'"

Maybe the reason Peter didn't do that is that he was used to being called out, Son said. "He said, 'I'll never betray you, Jesus,'" but Jesus tells Peter he'll betray him three times before the morning of his crucifixion.

"Getting called out can be a good thing," Son said. The question is, how will you respond when you are called out?

"How comfortable are you with this message?" Son asked. "If you aren't comfortable, that's good. What will you do with it? Maybe the best thing to do is let go of the myth."

Son told the story of the March day shortly after the murder of eight people in the Atlanta metro area, six of whom were Asian Americans. He and his son were out walking their dog when the boy asked his father, "What did we do wrong?"

"I said, 'You did nothing wrong. We are in a place in our history when we tend to blame people who look different,'" Son said. "To anyone here hurting if somebody made you feel like you are wrong for your education level, your body shape, your language, culture, age or whatever, there is nothing wrong with you."

"Friends, we have been called. Let us call lies out. Speak the truth with great love. Tell them they are beloved of God. Amen." ■



# Civil Rights Leaders Jesse Jackson, William Barber Among 39 Arrested Outside Sen. Sinema's Phoenix Office

*Compiled from several news sources and eye-witness accounts*

On Monday, July 26, 2021, the Rev. Jesse L. Jackson joined the Rev. Dr. William J. Barber II (president of the non-partisan civil rights organization Repairers of the Breach) and 37 other clergy and activists in an act of nonviolent civil disobedience outside the office of Sen. Kyrsten Sinema (D-Ariz.) in Phoenix, Arizona. At about 10:30 a.m. more than 200 people began marching 1.8 miles from Kachina Park to Sinema's office near N. 32nd St. and Camelback Rd.

According to Phoenix Police, at around 11:00 a.m. the property manager of the building in which Sen. Sinema's office is located requested demonstrators leave the location and "the group ignored the property manager."

"The group was given verbal warnings to leave the property by Phoenix Police officers, which were also ignored," according to Sgt. Mercedes Fortune. "The group continued to refuse to leave and were interfering with normal business operations. Officers made announcements over loudspeaker, asking the group to leave the premises."

At approximately 11:45 a.m., 39 people were arrested and charged with 3rd degree criminal trespassing, a misde-

meanor. Those arrested were not booked into jail. Rather, they received citations in lieu of detention and were released from police custody.

The rally and march was organized to call on the senator to support the end of the U.S. Senate filibuster, the For the People Act, restore voting rights, and support a \$15 federal minimum wage.

Among those arrested were Arizona State Senator Martin Quezada (D-Ariz. District 29), Barbara Arnwine (national activist, president and founder of Transformative Justice Coalition), the Rev. Dr. Warren H. Stewart Sr. of First Institutional Baptist Church (Phoenix), the Rev. Dr. Eric O. Ledermann of University Presbyterian Church (Tempe), the Rev. Bart Smith of St. Mark's Presbyterian Church (Tucson), and several other clergy in the Phoenix metro area.

During a speech at Kachina Park, Dr. Barber said the filibuster is "non-constitutional" and undemocratic.

"You should not be using a non-constitutional thing to block constitutional rights," he said.

Sen. Sinema and Sen. Mark Kelly (D-Ariz.) previously voted to advance sweeping elections legislation, but could not overcome a Republican filibuster.

"Today's filibuster is a coward's filibuster," Dr.



**Pastor Eric Ledermann (third from left) with other clergy and activists during their arrest by Phoenix Police on July 26, 2021, after a sit-in at Sen. Kyrsten Sinema's office to advocate ending the filibuster, passing the For the People Act, and legislate a living minimum wage. On the Phoenix Police bus, those being arrested sang songs of freedom and deliverance. PHOTO: STEPHEN A. GREEN**

Barber said during his speech, referring to the fact that senators are no longer required to "hold the floor" as an act of filibuster. Previously, senators were known to read books, the phone book, or any other thing aloud in order to hold the floor and prevent a vote. Today, most legislation requires 60 votes in the Senate before it can be considered for debate and vote.

Sen. Sinema has been praised by Senate Majority Leader Mitch McConnell (R-Ky.) and other Republican leaders for her refusal to support ending the filibuster, and the ire of many in her own party.

John LaBombard, a spokesperson for Sen. Sinema, issued a statement in response to the demonstration on July 26th, stating: "Kyrsten has asked those who want to eliminate the legislative filibuster to pass the For the People Act (voting-rights legislation she supports and has co-sponsored): would it be good for our country if we did, only to see that legislation rescinded a few years from now and replaced by a nationwide voter-ID law or restrictions on voting by mail in federal elections, over the objections of the Senate minority? ... That is one example of how the filibuster helps protect the country from wild swings between opposing policy poles." ■



**The Rev. Dr. William Barber II, president of the nonprofit civil rights organization Repairers of the Breach, addresses the crowd gathered at the Phoenix office of Sen. Kyrsten Sinema (D-Ariz.) prior to he and 38 others being arrested. PHOTO: ERIC O. LEDERMAN**

# The National Presbyterian Hispanic Latin Caucus Issues Declaration Regarding Current Situation of the Cuban People

By THE NATIONAL PRESBYTERIAN  
HISPANIC LATIN CAUCUS

*Special to the Presbyterian News Service*

As a Hispanic/Latin community in the United States, we are profoundly concerned about the events that have occurred in the Caribbean country of Cuba. We feel and share the pain of the Cuban people in light of the shortage of food and medicines and health conditions worsened by the COVID-19 pandemic.

We understand that it is our responsibility, in accordance with the aforementioned purposes, to communicate to our Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba and the Presbyterian and Reformed family in Latin America, our support and solidarity with the people of Cuba and our desire for their well-being.

The National Presbyterian Hispanic Latin Caucus advocates for the elimination of the embargo that the United States has imposed on Cuba and the elimination of the policies on Cuba imposed by the administration of former President Donald Trump.

The National Presbyterian Hispanic Latin Caucus recognizes and respects the just and free self-determination of the people of Cuba.

The National Presbyterian Hispanic Latin Caucus recognizes the right of the Cuban people to express themselves and to have their human rights respected and guaranteed. May peace and dialogue be promoted, instead of confrontation and violence. We are dismayed by the acts of repression by government authorities against those who demonstrate peacefully.

The National Presbyterian Hispanic Latin Caucus expresses its solidarity with the Presbyterian-Reformed Church in Cuba and other ecclesiastical bodies on the island of Cuba.

Among the purposes of the National

Presbyterian Hispanic Latin Caucus:

- Advocate for issues that adversely affect the lives of descendants of Hispanic/Latin and Brazilian people.
- Promote and educate on social, gender, racial, educational, economic, ethnic and generational justice in relation to persons who are excluded, marginalized and vulnerable in society.
- Work with other secular entities and ecumenical organizations, within and outside the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.), to create strategies and cooperative alliances to further the purposes of CNPHL (English acronym).

The National Presbyterian Hispanic Latin Caucus calls on the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) to practice what we affirm in the Confession of Belhar:

“We believe

- that God has revealed God’s self as the one who wishes to bring about justice and true peace among people.
- that God, in a world full of injustice and enmity, is in a special way the God of the destitute, the poor and the wronged.
- that God calls the church to follow God in this; for God brings justice to the oppressed and gives bread to the hungry.
- that God frees the prisoner and restores sight to the blind.
- that God supports the downtrodden, protects the stranger, helps orphans and widows and blocks the path of the ungodly.
- that for God pure and undefiled religion is to visit the orphans and the widows in their suffering.



- that God wishes to teach the church to do what is good and to seek the right.
- that the church must therefore stand by people in any form of suffering and need, which implies, among other things, that the church must witness against and strive against any form of injustice, so that justice may roll down like waters, and righteousness like an ever-flowing stream.
- that the church as the possession of God must stand where the Lord stands, namely against injustice and with the wronged.
- that in following Christ the church must witness against all the powerful and privileged who selfishly seek their own interests and thus control and harm others.

Therefore, we reject any ideology which would legitimate forms of injustice and any doctrine which is unwilling to resist such an ideology in the name of the gospel.” (*Book of Confessions*, 10.7—8)

With the prophet Isaiah, the National Presbyterian Hispanic Latin Caucus says: “Learn to do good! Seek justice: help the oppressed; defend the orphan; plead for the widow.” (Is. 1:17, *Common English Bible*)

Respectfully,  
National Hispanic Latin  
Presbyterian Caucus



# Around the World with PDA

## Highlighting Lifesaving Work in India



Disaster risk reduction training in India conducted by the Society for National Integration through Rural Development (SNIRD), a longtime partner of PDA.  
PHOTO: COURTESY OF SNIRD

By **DARLA CARTER** |  
*Presbyterian News Service*

A webinar series that provides insight into the vital work of international partners of Presbyterian Disaster Assistance returns at 11:30 a.m. (EDT) Aug. 11, with a spotlight on India.

The latest installment of “Around the World with PDA,” will introduce viewers to the [Society for National Integration through Rural Development \(SNIRD\)](#). The longtime PDA partner works along-

side vulnerable populations in the South Asian country, which has been deeply impacted by COVID-19 and natural disasters in recent years.

SNIRD’s “approach is not just to come and say, ‘OK, you are in need and this is what we are providing,’” said Sheku Sillah, PDA’s Regional Project Manager for Asia and Africa.

“Through the capacity-building programs, we develop something called rural participatory appraisal,” which means that SNIRD allows the people “to choose their own priorities,” Sillah said. “When you do that, the program becomes very sustainable, so even at the end of the funding, the community takes ownership.”

SNIRD’s work often involves vulnerable coastal people who are considered by society to be untouchables or outcasts, Sillah said.

“They more or less are used by many other Indians of higher class as tools,” he said. “So they are not even allowed to come to the towns,” but SNIRD has been working “to get them registered and recognized by the government.”

On “Around the World with PDA,” Sillah will be joined by SNIRD’s Executive Secretary, Godfrey G.P. Jawahar. They will discuss the overall work of SNIRD and how grant funding from PDA is being used to provide lifesaving assistance to the people of India.

With the help of PDA, SNIRD provides food, WASH (water, sanitation and hygiene) and instruction on COVID-19 prevention. It also takes various steps to supplement people’s livelihoods such as providing sewing machines as well as seeds and tools for backyard gardening.

The sewing machines “have been very, very helpful during this COVID because many of these communities cannot afford even the face masks,” Sillah said. But with the machines, trained individuals are “providing face masks at affordable costs in their communities.”

To register to learn more: <https://zoom.us/join/joinMeeting/register/tJYsf--vqT8tEtLJzCfhVBA1kj47zhlykeh8> ■



We're a  
**Matthew 25**  
church

[pcusa.org/matthew25](http://pcusa.org/matthew25)

# PC(USA) Seminaries Advance Curriculum to Match the Needs of Church and Society

## Practical Theology and Ministry Experiences Prepare Pastors

By GREGG BREKKE

Presbyterian Foundation  
Special to the Presbyterian News Service

*PNS Editor's note: This is the third in a series of four stories that include interviews with Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) seminaries, taking a look at how the COVID-19 pandemic challenged and changed seminary learning environments.*

"We started our curriculum discussions asking what kind of person do we want to graduate," said the Rev. Dr. Jacqueline Lapsley, Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs and Professor of Old Testament at Princeton Theological Seminary.

That sort of design thinking has led to curriculum innovations across Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) theological institutions including Columbia Theological Seminary, Princeton Theological Seminary, and Union Presbyterian Seminary.

The process of looking at curriculum changes couldn't have come at a better time for the seminaries. They were already aware of changing demographics in church attendance and participation, a move toward utilization of technology in faith contexts, and a growing desire by congregations to make substantive progress in addressing the needs in their communities. All of which led to asking the question — what skills and attributes will pastors need to faithfully lead these types of congregations into the future?

And then the pandemic hit.



The pandemic has given seminaries affiliated with the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) the opportunity to strengthen and update their curricula. PHOTO: CONTRIBUTED

"What's so interesting about the year of pandemic at Columbia Seminary is that it certainly upended some things, but it's also very interesting that it accelerated a direction we were already going," said Dr. Leanne Van Dyk, President of Columbia Theological Seminary.

She said the school had realized after a year of remote learning that, along with associated technical and in-person relational challenges, "there are real strengths to online learning."

"We've seen as a community that this is a way of forming and shaping pastoral leaders that is really needed right now," said Van Dyk. "[And the need will continue] as we go forward."

### New Curriculum at Princeton

Princeton Theological Seminary will begin a new curriculum in the fall of 2021. Under development for several years, the curriculum would have launched whether or not the pandemic had happened. But Lapsley believes learnings from pandemic adaptations will

greatly benefit its launch.

"We've had about 70 percent of our students in residence this year, even though we have been online," Lapsley said. "I think our team has done a wonderful job in trying to foster community even as we have had to be distant physically. The other thing we've learned is what the benefits of technology are. We will not be leaving those behind. We are going to integrate the benefits of technology into our teaching going forward."

The three focus areas of the new curriculum include seeking holistic formation of students for ministry in terms of body, mind, and spirit; finding creative ways to engage the residential component of education at Princeton considering most of the students and half of the faculty live on campus; and taking seriously the school's past and the "failure of theological imagination" in exploring its historic participation in slavery, especially its founding in the 19th century.

And that work is not done. As Lapsley acknowledges, those lessons will be applicable to historic as well as the contemporary context of racial reckoning.

"I think some of the turbulence that



The Rev. Dr. Jacqueline Lapsley, Dean and Vice President of Academic Affairs and Professor of Old Testament at Princeton Theological Seminary.



## SEMINARIES

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we are experiencing is so painful,” she said. “But I think God is at work in it and that newness of life is biblical, right? The newness of life comes out of painful times. And so I’m hopeful about that.”

In particular, Lapsley is excited about the new Life Together course, in which first-year students will meet in a dynamic course led by a faculty and staff member, which includes weekly worship, lunch, and service initiatives as a group throughout the semester as well.

### Union Brings Two Campuses Together

Already utilizing a hybrid online/in-person model of education for its Master of Arts in Christian Education Program, Union Presbyterian Seminary leveraged existing tools to provide continuity for virtual learning at the beginning of the pandemic. It also laid the groundwork for bringing closer collaboration between its two campuses, shifting how the school thinks as a community about the process of theological education.

“We took the opportunity [of the pandemic] to use this technical ability to bring the two campuses together,” said Rev. Dr. Brian Blount, President and Professor of New Testament at Union Presbyterian Seminary. “Now we have students in Richmond in class with students from the Charlotte campus, faculty from the Richmond campus teaching with students from the Charlotte campus, and teaching with faculty from the Charlotte campus. So that’s been an exciting thing that’s happened.”

Watch a short video of an interview with Blount here.

In a three-year pilot program that happened prior to the pandemic, Union’s faculty had been asked to teach at least one hybrid or online oriented class.

Though there was some original skepticism, faculty found the ability to work with students more directly an energizing one that offered creative teaching and learning opportunities. And Blount sees the creative new approaches helping to facilitate greater student participation in many cases.

“We’re beginning to realize that students now can bring a sense of dynamism and control to the classroom and we want to be able to respond to that,” he said. “So it’s not just us coming and being in front of a screen and talking. We want to be able to figure out how we can be more engaging, how we can be more creative so that the classroom time becomes a virtual conversation, but it’s a virtual conversation where they have been equipped.”

Examples of that dynamism include the creation of a global mission center at the seminary so the school can create an international, and interfaith, context where students can think about foundational issues of faith and life experience. The Center for Womanist Leadership named for Rev. Dr. Katie Geneva Cannon and a center for social justice and reconciliation provide more opportunities for students to explore their calling and put their faith into practice.

“I hope one of the things that our students will take with them from this experience of being students in the midst of a pandemic and a time of social justice crisis is that as we have tried to hear

their concerns and craft curriculum around their voices,” Blount said. “I hope that they will be driven to hear more questions from people around them and be more driven to craft worship and education and other kinds of social endeavors or ministry endeavors around those kinds of questions so that they, too, be-

come other oriented.”

The needs of others — the congregation, the community, society at large — are the core to the philosophy of curriculum and program development at Union. “We start with others and then we draw the questions,” Blount said. “A focus and a concern for others transforms the message we teach, learn and share.”

### Columbia Looks to the Future — and the Past

Columbia Seminary benefitted from the strengths of online learning in three primary areas, according to Van Dyk: student response, continuing education and faculty adaptation. While many students longed to come back to campus for in-person instruction, the move to virtual learning was smooth and coursework continued as normal, even with an increased

enrollment in the fall of 2020. Continuing education allowed pastors, many feeling the need to serve in new ways due to the pandemic, to update their skills and outlook toward distributed worship and fellowship. And Columbia’s faculty worked to adapt their curriculum to online learning.

Also during this time, Columbia Seminary’s board of trustees launched an inquiry into the school’s participation “in the oppression and the subjugation of African Americans.”

“This school was founded in the early 1800s by people, some of whom who were enslavers and who attempted to legitimate the system of enslavement,” Van Dyk said. “Columbia Seminary is now at a point where we want to repair the breach that was created with that system of oppression. We want to confess the sin. We want to advocate for justice and we want to make the community whole. That is our commitment and our goal. It’s not easy. It’s not quick, but we are on this for the long haul.” ■



Dr. Leanne Van Dyke, president of Columbia Theological Seminary (previously professor of theology at San Francisco Theological Seminary when Pastor Eric attended).



Dr. Brian Blount, president and professor of New Testament at Union Presbyterian Seminary, Richmond.





# I-HELP

**Until there's a place called HOME**

UPC now hosts I-HELP every week, Friday through Sunday. Our faith partners and Tempe Community Action Agency (TCAA) help provide meals. UPC provides meals the third Friday and the following Saturday of each month.

**For info on volunteering, contact Jill Russell, Bonnie Henry, or Cathy Richardson**



## ONLINE WORSHIP

**REGISTER TODAY!**

**(In-person Worship to Begin Aug 15th)**

**[www.upctempe.org/worship](http://www.upctempe.org/worship)**

A confirmation email will be sent with a login link that is unique to you!

Services also live streamed to [www.upctempe.org/YouTube](http://www.upctempe.org/YouTube).

# National Suicide Prevention Lifeline

## 1-800-273-TALK

(1-800-273-8255)

### Talk to someone.

If you're thinking about suicide, are worried about a friend or loved one, or would like emotional support, the Lifeline network is available 24/7 across the United States.

En Español: 1-888-628-9454

Hard of Hearing: 1-800-799-4889

Veterans Crisis Line: 1-800-273-8255

# MORE THAN JUST COFFEE

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# Worship Volunteer Schedule

Below is the schedule of worship volunteers for the next month. If you are listed and have a conflict, you are asked to please find a replacement and then contact Ruling Elder Sada Reed, co-chair of the Worship Committee.

To volunteer or get on one of the rotations, Sada Reed! Thank you!

## August 2021

Sanctuary Readiness Team.....Larry Seubert

### Aug. 1—18th Sunday in Ordinary Time / Proper 13

Liturgist ..... Nan Beams  
Children's Moment ..... Chris Casanova  
Worship Tech ..... Vacant

### Aug. 8—19th Sunday in Ordinary Time / Proper 14

Liturgist ..... Molly Winkler  
Children's Moment ..... Molly Winkler  
Worship Tech ..... Vacant

### Aug. 15—20th Sunday in Ordinary Time / Proper 15

#### FIRST HYBRID IN-PERSON / ONLINE SERVICE!

Liturgist ..... Dan Abbott  
Children's Moment ..... Mailman Dan  
Worship Tech ..... Sada Reed, Chris Trella, Jim Niemann

### Aug. 22—21st Sunday in Ordinary Time / Proper 16

Liturgist ..... Vacant  
Children's Moment ..... Vacant  
Worship Tech ..... Sada Reed, Chris Trella

### Aug. 29—22nd Sunday in Ordinary Time / Proper 17

Liturgist ..... Vicki Jacobs  
Children's Moment ..... Vacant

## September 2021

Sanctuary Readiness Team.....Larry Seubert

### Sep. 5—23rd Sunday in Ordinary Time / Proper 18

Liturgist ..... Dan Abbott  
Children's Moment ..... Mailman Dan  
Worship Tech.....Chris Trella

### Sep. 12—24th Sunday in Ordinary Time / Proper 19

Liturgist ..... Vacant  
Children's Moment ..... Vacant  
Worship Tech.....Chris Trella

### Sep. 19—25th Sunday in Ordinary Time / Proper 20

Liturgist ..... Molly Winkler  
Children's Moment ..... Molly Winkler  
Worship Tech..... Vacant

### Sep. 26—26th Sunday in Ordinary Time / Proper 21

Liturgist ..... Vacant  
Children's Moment ..... Vacant  
Worship Tech..... Vacant

**WANTED:** Anyone interested in learning about audio and video production and to serve as worship techs for upcoming hybrid in-person/online worship services starting Aug. 15th. Training provided. Contact Chris Trella or Pastor Eric to volunteer!

## YOUTH MENTAL HEALTH

Continued from page 4

panying them.”

Yeager-Buckley believes the church must work to understand why Generation Z is reporting more mental health concerns and not dismiss those concerns as a “generational issue.” While she worries about the statistics and the effect the pandemic has had on youth, she also wonders if “the vocal, viral, judgmental and tough world” they’re growing up in is also in some way “strengthening their awareness.” That awareness, she said, can help youth to develop grit, a trait she’s heard from professionals who care for adolescents.

Grateful for the young people in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and for the youth leaders who work with them, Yeager-Buckley encourages churches to pay attention to their youth — to notice them and to name them.

“Take seriously the gospel to see them,” she said. “Remember how you were seen when young and help young people be a part of your circles of faith, prayer, worship and fellowship, where all ages learn together.”

And if a youth discloses a behavioral health concern that is serious and potentially harmful or life-threatening, Buckley-Yeager encourages youth leaders to be there for them by helping them enlist the help of a professional.

Brittany Porch, a youth leader, and Sean Delaney, a therapist, teamed up to write *Social/Emotional Health*, which according to Yeager-Buckley makes it a very relational, practical resource to encourage leaders of youth.

Porch also wrote “Partnering with Parents for Hard Conversations,” which ties in well with the summer season with its changing schedules, youth away from their studies and family vacations now

on the horizon because pandemic restrictions are being lifted in most states. During this time, she said, it can be difficult for parents and guardians to engage in deeply powerful conversations about racism, reconciliation or political and religious tensions.

“This Quicksheet has a beautiful blend of Scripture, theological foundation and developmental awareness,” she said. “All of this feels heavy to parents and adults working with youth. But this helps convey understanding and comfort. After all, most adults are trying to understand their own feelings about how to respond as believers in Jesus Christ to what is happening in our world.” ■

*Social/Emotional Health and Partnering with Parents for Hard Conversations* can be found at [www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/youthministry/presbyterian-youth-and-triennium](http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/youthministry/presbyterian-youth-and-triennium). An index to all the Quicksheets is available at [www.presbyterianmission.org/resource/quicksheets-index](http://www.presbyterianmission.org/resource/quicksheets-index).



3	Tim Russell	15	Rev. Norm Phillips
	Judy Earl	19	Theo Gibson
7	Marjorie Anderson	20	Paige Murphy-Young
8	Denny Martin	21	Ted Gibson
	Roy Gust	22	Tom Hoepner
9	Elaine Murray		Vivian Teye
	Harriet McAllister	24	Michael O'Connor
10	Larry Seubert	25	McKenna Kemp
12	Laura Risseuw		Jon Sywassink
13	Natalie Horne	27	Margaret Fraser
	Brittany Niles	30	Annsley Niemann
14	Barbara Smith	31	Carol Rickel

## Prayers of thanks for these beautiful lives!

*If you see a birthday is missing or we have the wrong date, please let the office know as soon as possible.*

# Stay Informed on All-Things-Presby!

### PC(USA) News

Available in a daily or weekly digest format. [www.pcusa.org/newsupdates](http://www.pcusa.org/newsupdates)

### Presbytery of Grand Canyon Weekly E-focus Newsletter

News and views from our presbytery. [pbygrandcanyon.org/subscribe-to-efocus](http://pbygrandcanyon.org/subscribe-to-efocus).

### PC(USA) Office of Public Witness

Housed across the street from the U.S. Supreme Court in what is referred to as "the God Box," the OPW is the PC (USA)'s advocacy and information center in Washington, D.C. Sign up for OPW Alerts and be an advocate! [www.votervoice.net/pcusa/home](http://www.votervoice.net/pcusa/home). Learn

more about the OPW at:

[www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/compassion-peace-justice/washington](http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/compassion-peace-justice/washington).

### Presbyterian Historical Society

Organized in 1852, the PHS is the oldest denominational archives in the U.S. and serves as the national archives for the PC (USA) and its predecessor denominations. PHS exists to collect, preserve, and share the story of the American Presbyterian and Reformed experience. [www.history.pcusa.org](http://www.history.pcusa.org).

### The Presbyterian Outlook

An independent magazine covering all things Presbyterian — \$19.95/year, 18 issues. [pres-outlook.org](http://pres-outlook.org)

### Presbyterians Today

Award-winning denominational magazine published by the PC(USA). Also available in a free twice monthly e-newsletter. *Get a free 1 year subscription!*

[www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/today](http://www.presbyterianmission.org/ministries/today)



# Remember prayer...

- ✘ **Homebound:** Evelyn Colby, Elaine Murray, Helen Alderson
- ✘ **Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC)** in the U.S.
- ✘ **Communities** bearing the weight of violence in their streets and neighborhoods
- ✘ **All affected by COVID-19**, especial those who are hospitalized and their families, and the families of those who have died.
- ✘ **Medical personnel** and first responders who continue to be on the front lines of battling COVID-19
- ✘ **Indigenous People** who are especially suffering under the weight of COVID-19 and hundreds of years of subjugation.
- ✘ **Teachers and students** as they continue online and in-person.
- ✘ **All of creation**, and for the strength to stand up for environmental conservation
- ✘ **Elected & community leaders**, that they can bring peace to our nation and world
- ✘ **Military personnel**, stateside and abroad
- ✘ **Peacemakers/Mission Workers**, particularly the Rev. Leslie Vogel and the Rev. Mark Adams, Jocabed Gallego, and all at Frontera de Cristo.
- ✘ **Our nation and world**—praying for peace
- ✘ **Immigrants**, especially those separated from families
- ✘ **UPC Officers:** elders, deacons, trustees
- ✘ Those who are **suffering and are marginalized**
- ✘ Those struggling with **mental illness**



# UPC Calendar

Submit corrections, additions, or deletions to the church office at (480) 966-6267 or [upc@upctempe.org](mailto:upc@upctempe.org).

Check online for updates or to subscribe on your computer or device:

[www.upctempe.org/calendar](http://www.upctempe.org/calendar)

## August 2021

### Sun, Aug 1

ALL DAY I-HELP (FH, K)  
9:30 am Worship Service (Zoom-U)  
1:00 pm TCAA Food Drive (Parking Lot)

### Mon, Aug 2

4:30 pm ACE Team (Zoom-P)  
8:30 pm A.A. Meeting (Rm 7)

### Wed, Aug 4

4:00 pm Worship Planning Team (Zoom-U)  
5:15 pm UPC Social Hour (Zoom-U)

### Thu, Aug 5

11:30 am PGC Theology Reflection Study (Zoom-U)  
7:00 pm CE Meeting (Zoom-U)

### Fri, Aug 6

2:00 pm I-HELP (FH, K)  
8:30 pm A. A. Meeting (Rm 7)

### Sat, Aug 7

ALL DAY I-HELP (FH, K)

### Sun, Aug 8

9:30 am Worship Service (Zoom-U)  
2:00 pm I-HELP Guests Depart

### Mon, Aug 9

8:30 pm A.A. Meeting (Rm 7)

### Tue, Aug 10

7:00 pm Worship Committee (Zoom P)  
7:00 pm Finance Committee (S, Zoom -U)

### Wed, Aug 11

4:00 pm Worship Planning Team (Zoom-U)  
5:15 pm UPC Social Hour (Zoom-U)

### Fri, Aug 13

8:30 pm A. A. Meeting (Rm 7)

### Sun, Aug 15

9:30 am Worship Service (S, Zoom-U, YouTube)

### Mon, Aug 16

7:00 pm Board of Deacons (Zoom-U)  
8:30 pm A.A. Meeting (Rm 7)

### Tue, Aug 17

6:30 pm CIO Committee (Zoom-P)

### Wed, Aug 18

4:00 pm Worship Planning Team (Zoom-U)

### Thu, Aug 19

7:00 pm Stewardship Committee (Zoom-U)

### Fri, Aug 20

8:30 pm A. A. Meeting (Rm 7)

### Sun, Aug 22

9:30 am Worship Service (S, Zoom-U, YouTube)

### Mon, Aug 23

8:30 pm A.A. Meeting (Rm 7)

### Tue, Aug 24

7:00 pm Session Meeting (S, Zoom-U)

### Wed, Aug 25

4:00 pm Worship Planning Team (Zoom-U)

### Fri, Aug 27

8:30 pm A. A. Meeting (Rm 7)

### Sun, Aug 29

ALL DAY Family Promise (FH, K, L, Rm 2, 4-6)  
9:30 am Worship Service (S, Zoom-U, YouTube)

### Mon, Aug 30

ALL DAY Family Promise (FH, K, L, Rm 2, 4-6)  
8:30 pm A.A. Meeting (Rm 7)

### Tue, Aug 31

ALL DAY Family Promise (FH, K, L, Rm 2, 4-6)

## September 2021

### Wed, Sep 1

ALL DAY Family Promise (FH, K, L, Rm 2, 4-6)  
4:00 pm Worship Planning Team (Zoom-U)

### Thu, Sep 2

ALL DAY Family Promise (FH, K, L, Rm 2, 4-6)  
7:00 pm CE Meeting (Zoom-U)

### Fri, Sep 3

ALL DAY Family Promise (FH, K, L, Rm 2, 4-6)  
8:30 pm A. A. Meeting (Rm 7)

### Sat, Sep 4

ALL DAY Family Promise (FH, K, L, Rm 2, 4-6)

### Sun, Sep 5

ALL DAY Family Promise (FH, K, L, Rm 2, 4-6)  
9:30 am Worship Service (S, Zoom-U, YouTube)

### Mon, Sep 6

4:30 pm ACE Team (Zoom-P)  
8:30 pm A.A. Meeting (Rm 7)

### Wed, Sep 8

4:00 pm Worship Planning Team (Zoom-U)

### Fri, Sep 10

8:30 pm A. A. Meeting (Rm 7)

### Sun, Sep 12

*Kick Off Sunday – Sunday School, Choir*  
9:30 am Worship Service (S, Zoom-U, YouTube)  
11:00 am Sunday School (All Ages)

### Mon, Sep 13

8:30 pm A.A. Meeting (Rm 7)

### Tue, Sep 14

7:00 pm Worship Committee (Zoom P)  
7:00 pm Finance Committee (S, Zoom -U)

### Wed, Sep 15

1:00 pm PW Chinle Circle Bible Study (MR)  
4:00 pm Worship Planning Team (Zoom-U)

### Fri, Sep 17

8:30 pm A. A. Meeting (Rm 7)

### Sun, Sep 19

9:30 am Worship Service (S, Zoom-U, YouTube)  
11:00 am Sunday School (All Ages)

### Mon, Sep 20

7:00 pm Board of Deacons (Zoom-U)  
8:30 pm A.A. Meeting (Rm 7)

### Tue, Sep 21

6:30 pm CIO Committee (Zoom-P)

### Wed, Sep 22

4:00 pm Worship Planning Team (Zoom-U)

See CALENDAR, page 16

### Location/Room References:

(CH)-Choir Room (CR)-Conference Room/Office (COR/Rm7)-Community Room (FH)-Fellowship Hall (HSR)-High School Room (MSR)-Middle School Room (K)-Fellowship Hall Kitchen (L)-Lounge (MR)-Meeting Room (N) Nursery (PO)-Pastor's Office (Rm#)-Room Number Indicated (S)-Sanctuary

## UPC NEWS & Current Events

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### CALENDAR

Continued from page 15

#### Fri, Sep 24

8:30 pm A. A. Meeting (Rm 7)

#### Sun, Sep 26

9:30 am Worship Service (S,  
Zoom-U, YouTube)

11:00 am Sunday School (All Ages)

#### Mon, Sep 27

7:00 pm PW Kayenta Circle (MR)

8:30 pm A.A. Meeting (Rm 7)

#### Tue, Sep 28

7:00 pm Session Meeting (S,  
Zoom-U)

#### Wed, Sep 29

4:00 pm Worship Planning Team  
(Zoom-U)



Contact the church office today to schedule your committee, team, or group event! Go to [www.upctempe.org/calendar](http://www.upctempe.org/calendar), check the date and time you're interested in, and then click on "Schedule an Event" and fill out the info. You can also contact the church office at [upc@upctempe.org](mailto:upc@upctempe.org) or (480) 966-6267. Rooms currently available are: Sanctuary, Lounge, and Meeting Room. Please include the following info:

- 1) Name of event
- 2) Primary Contact name, phone number, and email
- 3) Start date and time
- 4) End date and time
- 5) Brief description (1-2 sentences)
- 6) Room preference if in-person (Sanctuary, Lounge, or Meeting Room), or if it is a Zoom or hybrid in-person/online gathering (indicate if you need a Zoom room assigned to your meeting)