**Salt and Light 2017 Workshops**

This is a listing of the workshops planned for the 2017 Salt and Light Conference, 14 October 2017 at National City Christian Church. We will add to this list as workshops are added to the program.

***Rev. Chaim Rodriguez  "I Met God and She's Black"***

This workshop looks at the ways language is used and can often be [mis]used in public worship. We will consider the language that we utilize in reference to one another and the ways in which we talk about and direct our worship to God. We will explore how using gender-neutral language can enhance worship and the many ways that this can be accomplished. The workshop will benefit all laypersons and clergy who plan and/or lead any facet of public worship.

**Dr. Irvin Green *"I've got your back"***

In this workshop, we will identify ways of redirecting our energies to meet the needs of others. We will confess our tendency to focus on ministry to and for ourselves. We will engage the fear of scarcity, in theological terms. We will escape the jeopardy of being trampled under-foot, in favor of being known as light for all the world.

The hope for this workshop is that participants will better understand that God has offered the Church as a primary response to the needs of God’s people. If we better understand our mission, we are more able and more likely to embrace and accomplish it.

**Rev. Dr. Betty Green "No Sanctuary Here for Me"**

When a person has endured the trauma of abuse they often suffer in silence and are not able to pick up and move on. That kind of suffering permeates their whole existence. They are affected psychologically, physically and spiritually. Abuse is a life changing experience that should never be ignored or minimized. Most of the messages we preach and teach fail to specifically address the pain and suffering they have endured. More often the messages make them feel guilty or ashamed; tearing down their sense of worth and value. Instead they are blamed and shamed into silence. They would rather suffer in silence than to risk further victimization, rejection and judgement from their church family, leaders, and pastor. Participants will learn to recognize and understand the problems faced by victims. Time and attention will be given to explore myths and realities of abuse and its impact. They will learn why the church leaders need to become advocates, as well as why this is a social justice issue. They will also learn valuable approaches using scriptures to preach messages of hope to enable abused women to fully hear and receive the gospel message of love and acceptance.

**Dr. Sherrill McMillan "Therapeutic Problem Solving in the Local Church"**

The session will help participants better understand and manage group conflict by interacting around five basic areas: (1) the nature of group conflict including conflicting personalities and perceptions; (2) understanding how our emotional IQ can contribute to the cause and resolution of group conflict; (3) improving conditions that lessen revenge i.e., empathy and forgiveness; (4) better understanding of how communication styles (including transference and countertransference) can aid in problem-solving; and (5) introducing a six-point model for healing congregational hurt based on the passages in Galatians 6 and Ephesians 4.

**Rev. Danny Gulden   “Retirement Planning”**

Take the mystery out of retirement planning and break it down into basic steps. Hear strategies for saving when retirement is many years away and also when retirement is just around the corner. Learn how a congregation can help its employees save for retirement. Pension Fund products will be explained, so bring your questions!

**Pastor Tracey Perry “Preaching in an Anti-Other World”**

The workshop will focus on the evils of relegating people to otherness, less than. Seeing people as less than human to justify the cruel and inhumane behavior of those who feel superior. We will examine how the enemy, Satan uses hate to divide and conquer as a means to create chaos, confusion and oppression. As Christians we are not defeated and cannot become complacent through word and inaction, and falsely believing that racism, sexism, homophobia, exclusion of immigrants and divisive government systems cannot change. As Pastors, we are called to keep our congregations aware of what is going on in the world and call them to action, through service, protest, and financial assistance. The workshop will help Pastors to become empowered with knowledge, seeking courage and boldness through the power of the Holy Spirit to preach and teach even if the members or they themselves are uncomfortable. In preaching truth, we are being obedient to God's command to love our neighbors as ourselves and to know we truly are our brother and sisters keepers. I will use research articles, news events, LGBTQ statistics and articles and other data to examine the condition of our world at this time.

**Rev. William Bennett, Jr. “What every congregation should know about energy and climate change”**

In this workshop we will briefly trace the history of climate change negotiations under the auspices of the United Nations. We will take note of the two primary aspects of climate change negotiations, mitigation activities and adaptation activities, and assess how the global community has sought to balance the two. Mitigation involves efforts to reduce climate change. Adaptation involves adjusting to the consequences of climate change. The discussion will center on biblical principles applicable to both aspects, including the notion of human stewardship over God’s creation with regard to the former activities (cf. Gen. 2: 15), and Jesus’ admonition to his disciples and other listeners to do good to him by doing good for the least of these with regard to the latter. (Matt. 25:45) Among other things, the discussion around mitigation and adaptation measures will pivot on an assessment of moral considerations attendant to solar geoengineering to “dim” the rays of the sun. We will close with a brainstorming activity about ways in which local congregations can get involved in either aspect.

**Rachel Leslie "Listening, Learning and Leading in Interreligious Engagement"**

Drawing from the “Disciples of Christ and Interreligious Engagement” report, this workshop will explore the theological question of whether and how to engage in interreligious dialogue, as well as the scriptural foundations that provide guidance in this regard. The workshop will also discuss how to understand interfaith leadership and highlight opportunities and obstacles to creating spaces for interreligious conversations. It will allow participants a chance to evaluate how their own religious, cultural, and social experiences can or have impacted their interactions with those of a different religious tradition. Lastly, the workshop will provide attendees with a toolkit of best practices and considerations as they go forth as potential interfaith leaders.

**Rev. Elizabeth Hagan "Taboo Topics: How We Talk About Hard Stuff in Congregations"**

There are some stories in all of our lives that are just off limits when it comes to talking about them in church. Incarceration. Abortion. Metal Illness. Infertility. Infidelity. Suicide. We pretend to be ok when we are not. We don’t dare open our mouth to speak out of fear of shaming or judgment of others. We tow hard lines proclaiming “truth” alienating our brothers and sisters in Christ. And in the end, we spend our precious fellowship time speaking about stuff that doesn’t matter much at all. In this age of division, regular Facebook de-friending and lots of “agreeing to disagree” come learn how your congregation and friendship circles as well can open up to more authentic conversations full of grace. Come explore how to make your small group, Sunday School class or Elder board a place where participants from various positions can be heard and loved as true stories are shared.

**Rev. Sharon Stanley-Rae "Here Comes a Neighborhood"**

Rather than “There Goes the Neighborhood,” this workshop looks at how our communities are being positively influenced by immigrants and refugees, reviews policy changes over the past months which threaten to halt welcome of the world’s most vulnerable, and involve participants actively in ways you can use your voices of faith to influence welcome and to offer hospitality. Each participant will learn how to build relationships with refugees and immigrants based on their specific location, will hear from an area refugee and immigrant about how and why church relationships matter to them, will partner collectively to write or call to several legislators in support of refugees, and will learn how to “live out” recent General Assembly resolutions related to refugees and immigrants.

**Rev. Sharon Stanley-Rae "Faithful Communication or Roaring Rhetoric?"**

Roaring, often non respectful rhetoric, often dominates our news and conversations. How can we instead practice to communicate our faith values clearly to decision makers and legislators? In this workshop, we will learn techniques for communicating with public leaders, and will practice a legislative visit to communicate values related to a refugee or immigration related topic of choice. Each participant will learn how to frame their concerns through their lens of faith values, and to build respectful relationships with public leaders. Participants will gain confidence in how to use the power of their faith and voice to help influence public policy.

**Rev. Ken Collins "Gay People and the Bible"**

Most often, we study the modern impact of ancient Bible passages, and that works, but it only goes so far. In this workshop, we examine all the passages in the Bible that are generally used to condemn homosexuality, but in their ancient context, and discover that the Bible is indifferent to sexuality. Also, we examine the story of an apparent same-sex romance, wedding, and marriage that spans 15 consecutive chapters in the Old Testament. I expect that all attendees will come away convinced that the condemnation of sexuality must be read into, not out of, the Bible, and is a fraudulent attempt to retrofit the Bible to contemporary judgmentalism.

**Rev. Allison Dunn Almaguer "Community Organizing and the Church"**

Training will provide leaders with an abbreviated version of the Industrial Areas Foundation National Leadership Training. The session will cover power, self-interest, culture of broad-based organization, public and private relationships, individuals meetings, and how to build a core team for action. We will also discuss leadership development for congregational renewal and growth.

**Rev. J. Michael McMahon "Psalms in Worship: For Times of Crises and Times of Joy"**

More than words, the Psalms are the songbook of the Bible and express the full range of human emotions. As a shared heritage of Christians and Jews, they have for good reason occupied an important, even prominent place in worship and prayer. How can we reclaim that heritage in worship today, whether in times of joy or times of crisis? This workshop will offer a vision and provide practical, hands-on resources for incorporating the Psalms into worship.

**Rev. Carol E. Richardson “"Mindfulness and Inner Peace for Activists"**

That people who engage in activism will be able to remain calm and influence group dynamics to engage in peaceful protests without harassment, violence, or other negative and ineffective behaviors. 1) The power of activism and why individuals matter – representing truth to power. 2) What is mindfulness and how can it help activists? – inner peace for peaceful protests. 3) Practicing mindfulness – how to do it, when, and finding inner truth, peace, more love. 4) Subtle energy – what is it and why does it matter in protests? Maintaining the peace in peaceful protests. Experiencing subtle energy and how you are already an expert in it! 5) Yoga/stretches, visualizations, affirmations, and other ways to keep your cool and accomplish your goals. 6) Cooperation, leadership, and activism in true democracy – how to cultivate group cohesion and strengthen the peaceful power. 7) Finding your inner spiritual warrior – overcoming victim consciousness to attain greater victories and draw more activists.

**Liz Ragland “How to Listen, Learn, Lead, and use Language Online and Off: Stewardship and Communication Best Practices”**

Learn how to improve your church’s communications using: newsletter, emails, church bulletin, annual report, narrative budget, social media, stewardship campaign, videos, and more. When you leave this workshop you’ll understand digital communications concepts like goal setting, how to speak with one voice, and where you can easily find content to feed all your various communication channels. We’ll also review online donation page best practices.

**Rev. Dr. Dietra Baker and**

**Rev. April Johnson**

***“Why Community Organizing Matters and How it Relates to Anti-Racism Work”***

***(A three part workshop)***

*Session 1 (Part 1): Anti-Racism Conversations to Anti-Racism Organizing: Making the Shift*

*Session 2 (Part 2): This workshop continues and builds upon learnings in Part 1*

*Session 3 (Part 3): This workshop continues and builds upon learnings in both Part 1 & 2*

These workshops seek to help participants make clear connections between the history of racism in America and harmful institutional policies that make racism a true threat to our democracy. Participants will gain practical tools for organizing neighborhood/church racist issue campaigns. Learn how to put your faith in action. Make a difference in your community. Given the resurgence of racist rhetoric we have seen recently, people of faith (lay and clergy) are called to not only make declarations but to organize to dismantle institutions that disseminate policies that violate values of dignity and respect for all Americans and that reinforce inequity and economic injustice.

**Deborah Nix Congregational Health Ministry**

Congregational health ministries address the health of the whole person. The ministry seeks to find common ground among other ministries, such as social justice, religious education, volunteers, visitors, hospitality, and youth ministries. Language, concepts, and models of contemporary health ministry will be discussed. Many congregations have or are developing organized, formal health ministries that address the health of its members as well as that of the community at large. The presenter will share her experience of developing a health ministry and review the potential benefits for the health and wellness of congregations and their neighborhoods.

As of 10/04/17