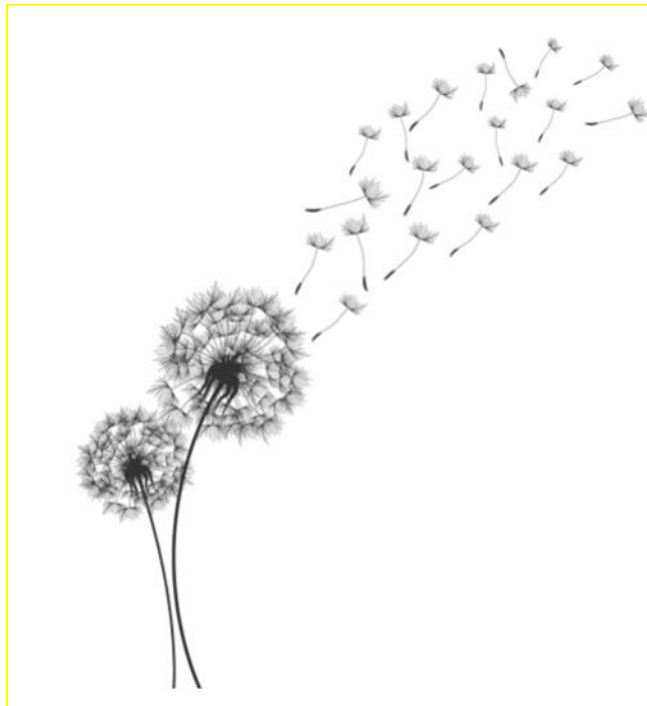


# Share Abundantly in Every Good Work

II Corinthians 9:8



**August 29, 2026**

**Mount Pleasant Presbyterian Church**

**Pre-registration Deadline: August 12**

**Registration Fee: \$25**

<https://capresbytery.org>



## MESSAGE FROM

### THE S.T.E.P.S. MINISTRY TEAM CO-CHAIRS

Dear Friends,

The Nurture Ministry Team and the S.T.E.P.S. Planning Team of our Charleston Atlantic Presbytery invite you to our annual STEPS event taking place on Saturday, August 29<sup>th</sup> at the Mount Pleasant Presbyterian Church.

As people of faith, we have good news to share! We develop our faith in many different ways and through many different acts. We hope this event will challenge you to strengthen your faith as we share abundantly in every good work.

Join us and others from the congregations in our presbytery as we gather for this opportunity to share and enrich our faith through learning, worship, and fellowship. See you August 29<sup>th</sup>.

Betsy Martin and Laura Harley  
Co-chairs, 2026 S.T.E.P.S. Planning Team

## **S.T.E.P.S. EVENT SCHEDULE**

<b>8:45 - 9:20 AM:</b>	Check-In/Walk-In Registration
<b>9:30 - 10:30 AM:</b>	Workshop Session A
<b>10:40 - 11:30 AM:</b>	Worship
<b>11:40 - 12:40 PM:</b>	Workshop Session B*
<b>12:45 – 1:30 pm:</b>	Lunch and Workshop C**

\*Light snacks will be available in the lobby of the Grace Building after worship.

\*\*Participants may bring lunch or order a boxed lunch from *Honey Baked Ham* for \$12. The preacher for the day, The Rev. Tony Larson will lead a workshop during lunch.

**Early Pre-registration** Deadline: July 22/ \$20

**Childcare registration deadline:** July 22

**Pre-registration deadline:** August 12/ \$25

**Young Adult** (18-35) and **Small Church Registration** (150 or less): August 12/ \$15

**Walk-in Registration:** August 29/ \$35 (no lunch option)









## WORKSHOP CATEGORY ICON KEY

If you would like suggestions in the selection of workshops, this icon key may help. Many of the workshops fit into several categories so be sure to read the workshop descriptions when determining your selections.



## WORKSHOPS BY SESSION

### SESSION A: 9:30 – 10:30am

Category	Workshop # & Title	Leader
	A-1: The Abundance of Earth, Wind, and Fire	CeCe Armstrong
	A-2: Bridging the Gap Between Scripture and Life	Chris Denny
	A-3: Evicting the American Dream	Dorothy Blackwelder
	A-4: Expanding the Table of God's Mission Together	Cheryl Barnes
	A-5: Forming Leaders for the Work	Brian Henderson
	A-6: How Can I Keep from Singing: Engaging the Congregation in Song!	Tony Sane
	A-7: How to Seek Racial Justice with a History of Hope	William Yoo
	A-8: Leaving the Edge: Reflecting on the Call to Give	Natash Akery
	A-9: Visualizing Forgiveness in Worship	Tricia Petraven

**WORSHIP: 10:40 – 11:30am** (in the sanctuary)

**Sermon: *Confessions of an Unjust Steward***

**Preacher: The Rev Tony Larson**

## SESSION B: 11:40– 12:40

Category	Workshop # & Title	Leader
	B-1: The Ballot and the Bible: How Scripture Has Been Used and Abused in American Politics and Where We Go From Here	Daniel Smoak
	B-2: Building a Faithful Foundation for Children and Youth: Church And Families Together	Glenna Darbin & Suzy Edwards
	B-3: Do You Believe in God? Which One?	Jim Miller
	B-4: Earth, Wind, and Fire Dancing (Part 2)	CeCe Armstrong
	B-5: Engaging Ages 20s and 30s	Colin Kerr
	B-6: How to Seek Racial Justice with a History of Hope	William Yoo
	B-7: It's About A Sound	Larayssa Alston
	B-8: Making the Most of Your All Church/Intergenerational Gatherings	Chris Denny
	B-9: Partners in God's Mission: Prayer, Letters, and Connection	Vilmarie Cintrón-Olivieri

## SESSION C: 12:45– 1:30- Lunch and Workshop (fellowship hall)

Gather for lunch and a workshop presentation by **Tony Larson** entitled *Unleashing the Parables to Unleash the Church*- For centuries, the parables of Jesus have been read in ways that make them safe — useful for personal devotion, acceptable to the powerful, harmless to the systems they were designed to disrupt. But caged parables produce caged churches. This seminar works through four of Jesus' most subversive stories — the Unjust Steward, the Barren Fig Tree, the Laborers in the Vineyard, and the Great Banquet — asking what we lose when we tame them and what the church becomes when we don't. For leaders ready to lead from the Kingdom's actual economy: abundance, Jubilee, and unjust grace.

### S.T.E.P.S. NEWS

- Bethelwoods will have "Camp for a Day" for 5K-5<sup>th</sup> grade. Childcare for infants-4K. **You must pre-register for childcare by Early Pre-registration, July 22.**
- Participants may bring a bag lunch or order a boxed lunch from Honey Baked Ham. The cost of the boxed lunch is \$12 and must be ordered when pre-registering for S.T.E.P.S. by August 12
- You may register for S.T.E.P.S. and pay online at [www.capresbytery.org](http://www.capresbytery.org) Checks payable to CAP

# WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

## Session A- 9:30am – 10:30am

### **A-1 The Abundance of Earth, Wind, and Fire- CeCe Armstrong**



Exploring songs written and performed by Earth, Wind, and Fire. Each song selected will be aligned with Biblical texts to determine how the lyrics are prophetic for our current times. Grooving and dancing may be a result of attendance to such a fun-filled deep dive into exegetical work for preaching and teaching. **CeCe Armstrong** served as the Co-Moderator of the 226th and 227th General Assemblies of the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.). She is currently serving St. James Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) in Charleston, South Carolina as Associate Pastor.

### **A-2 Bridging the Gap Between Scripture and Life- Chris Denny**



Do you feel closer to God when out in nature? Does music help you experience a deeper connection with God? Are you someone who would prefer more silence in a worship setting? Our unique, God-given formation helps each of us engage with God in different ways. Using Howard Gardner's Multiple Intelligences theory, participants will explore ways to engage more fully in the study of scripture and the worship of God. **The Rev Dr Chris Denny** enjoys DIY home improvement, hammock camping, leading Energizers for Montreat Middle School Conference, hot tea on the back porch, and hiking with his wife, Alle, and their son, Charles. Chris finds joy in being playful in preaching, inviting others to use their gifts in worship, writing prayer-poetry for his blog ([almostdailyprayer.com](http://almostdailyprayer.com)), and being a fellow learner in Bible study, especially with older adults. He is a past-president of the South Atlantic and Puerto Rico region of APCE and currently serves as pastor of Westminster Presbyterian Church, Columbia, SC.

### **A-3 Evicting the Dream- Dorothy Blackwelder**

South Carolina consistently ranks among the highest in eviction rates in the country. Presbyterian Disaster Assistance recently released a documentary about this housing crisis in America. "Evicting the American Dream amplifies the voices and stories of children and families confronting eviction and homelessness [and] explores the root causes and systemic issues that perpetuate this epidemic. Often when we hear the words 'homelessness' and 'eviction', there is a dominant narrative that says: 'There is nothing we can do to prevent this from happening.' This film seeks to reframe, humanize, and transform how the wider public understands eviction and homelessness and the ways in which this is preventable." We will watch clips from the film, learn statistics about the epidemic here in our area and how local organizations are working to keep families in their homes, and discuss how God might be calling us to respond. **Rev. Dorothy Blackwelder** has served as Associate Pastor at Dorchester Presbyterian Church and Director of Communications for Charleston Atlantic Presbytery. She is now an attorney with Charleston Legal Access, a sliding scale legal aid firm in North Charleston, where she primarily practices family law and represents tenants in Housing Court who are facing evictions.

### **A-4 Expanding the Mission of God's Table Together- Cheryl Barnes**



You are invited to deepen your understanding of global engagement defined as Global Ecumenical Partnerships, (GEP) and the work of Global Ecumenical Liaisons, (GELs). It has its expression in Partnerships Beyond the PC(USA) which invites local congregations and presbyteries to serve in the shared work and witness to and with all of God's people around the

globe. **The Rev. Cheryl Barnes** serves as the Manager for the U.S. Global Ecumenical Liaisons for Presbyterian Life and Witness. Previously, Barnes was the Africa Area Coordinator for Presbyterian World Mission. Barnes lived and served in Malawi for 5 years as a Mission Co-Worker, serving as an Education Facilitator for the 5 Synods of the Church of Central Africa (CCAP). Prior to entering ministry, Barnes taught special education and pastored a congregation. In her current role, Barnes continues her focus to shared ministry in solidarity with the people of the global majority and at-risk populations. She is a native of Georgia and holds a Master of Divinity from Columbia Theological Seminary in Decatur, Georgia, a bachelor's degree in special education from Morris Brown College in Atlanta, and a Master of Business Administration from Nova Southeastern University in Fort Lauderdale, Florida. She is currently a doctoral student at Pittsburgh Theological Seminary. Barnes is a member of the Northeast Georgia Presbytery.

## **A-5 Forming Leaders for the Work- Brian Henderson**

In this workshop we will discuss leadership development from a practical and spiritual perspective. There will be opportunities for sharing as well as suggested resources that can be used to develop that next class of leaders within your church. On February 18, 2018, **the Reverend Dr. Brian C. Henderson** accepted the call to serve as the Senior Pastor/Head of Staff at St. James Presbyterian Church in Charleston, South Carolina. Born and raised in Rankin County, Mississippi, Pastor B graduated from Richland Attendance Center in 1995 and began attending the University of Southern Mississippi that same year. Upon graduating from college, he attended Johnson C. Smith Seminary at the Interdenominational Theological Center in Atlanta, GA. At Johnson C. Smith. In 2008, Pastor B received a Master of Arts in Religion from Memphis Theological Seminary and graduated in May 2016 with his Doctor of Ministry in Church Leadership from the same institution. Currently, Pastor B is in his third year of academic studies at Claremont School of Theology, pursuing a Ph.D. in Practical Theology and Spiritual Formation. In his service to the Presbyterian Church USA, Pastor Brian currently serves as the chair of the Charleston Atlantic Presbytery's Nurture Division, as a trustee and vice chair of the board of trustees for Columbia Theological Seminary, and as the president of the Charleston Atlantic Chapter of the National Black Presbyterian caucus. While this service has value, Pastor B's daily pursuit is to further the mission and ministry of St. James as it strives daily to be a congregation that G.E.T.S. IT and fits itself for flourishing in the years to come. None of what pastor B does would be possible without the support of his loving and amazing wife, Tanjula. At the lowest and most difficult moments of his life, it has been Tanjula's voice that has reminded him that he and God are all that is needed to do the work that stands before him. Together, they raise a daughter, Laila, who is currently in the 10th grade at the Charleston County School of the Arts. Laila is the work of their lives, and they are very proud of the young lady she is becoming every day. Along with the voice of his wife, Pastor B's mother, Linda, is also in his ear, telling him that Tanjula knows best, don't waste money, and to take days off. Linda, along with Pastor B's father, Cecil, laid the foundation of hard work and high expectations that drive Pastor B every day. Linda currently lives in their home in Mississippi, and Cecil joined the saints in the light in 2011. In January of 2024, Pastor B adopted a new life mission statement that he attempts to live out every day. The purpose of his life is to Build: Build a life and habits that please and honor God. Romans 12:1; Build a family in which every member thrives. 1 Timothy 5:8; Build churches that educate, impact, and inspire. Matthew 28:19-20; and Build communities of justice and fairness for all people. Jeremiah 29:7



## **A-6 How Can I Keep from Singing: Engaging the Congregation in Song- Tony Sane**

We will explore ways to incorporate singers of various skill levels into congregational song as we raise our voices and instruments for the Glory of God! We will do this as we take a closer look at both the church year as well as special and occasional services where singing and music

making can be used in more vocal (no pun intended) ways! **Tony Sane** has served at the Director of Music Ministries at Mount Pleasant Presbyterian since 2022. He is a native of Rutherfordton, North Carolina and has served churches across the southeast. Tony studied church music, both choral and instrumental music at Gardner-Webb University and Western Carolina University and is a proud member of the American Choral Directors Association, Phi Mu Alpha Sinfonia and The Presbyterian Association of Musicians where he is a candidate for Certified Church Musician. At MPPC Tony helps to collaboratively lead worship and numerous musical ensembles ranging from children's choirs, handbell choirs, adult choirs, instrumental ensembles. Tony also leads MPPC's "Village Concert Series" where artist from around the region and country are invited perform in concert throughout the year in partnership with our local community in Mount Peasant. Tony is happy to share life with his wife, Haley, who is a first-grade teacher in the Charleston County School District, as well has their two cat children, Dorian, and Faust. Tony enjoys travel, cooking, and spending time in God's creation.

## A-7 How to Seek Racial Justice With a History of Hope- William Yoo



It is important for Christians to comprehend the legacies of slavery and racial oppression as we seek to faithfully enact racial justice in our congregations, communities, and nation today. Yet it is also necessary to approach history in ways that prioritize responsibility and repair over despair and shame. In this workshop William Yoo covers how history is used and misused when Christians talk about racism, and he offers a pathway toward racial justice that is honest, hopeful, practical, and prophetic. **The Rev Dr William Yoo** is Associate Professor of American Religious and Cultural History at Columbia Theological Seminary. He has published books on African American Christianity, Asian American Christianity, Presbyterian history, and the histories of Indigenous rights activism and abolitionism in the United States. His book, *What Kind of Christianity: A History of Slavery and Anti-Black Racism in the Presbyterian Church*, received the 2023 Award of Excellence from the Religion Communicators Council. His most recent book is *Reckoning with History: Settler Colonialism, Slavery, and the Making of American Christianity*. He is presently conducting research for a book project on Reconstruction and the Civil Rights Movement. As a teacher, preacher, and scholar, Yoo focuses on the history of racism in American Christianity. Yoo is a professor and public theologian who interprets the most challenging and urgent issues of racial justice with clarity, depth, honesty, and precision. His conviction is that deeper engagement with history aids us in more faithful and effective participation in our present ministries exhibiting God's love, justice, grace, and righteousness. When studying the development of Christianity in the United States, he is motivated to find both beautiful moments of awe-inspiring faith and ugly episodes where it is difficult to discern the divine presence. He is a Minister of Word and Sacrament in the Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and a member of Cherokee Presbytery. He previously served on the Board of Directors for the Presbyterian Historical Society and presently serves on the Board of Directors for the Montreat Conference Center. William and his spouse, Sarah, a middle school educator in Atlanta Public Schools, reside in Decatur, Georgia with their two teenage children and two cats.

## A-8 Leaving the Edge: Reflecting on the Call to Give- Natasha Akery



What if your inaction is a form of greed? In this session, language arts teacher and restorative practitioner Natasha Akery will lead participants through The Book of Ruth and verses from Leviticus to explore how generosity is both a calling and a command for every disciple of Christ, and how it has the power to change someone's life. **Natasha Akery** is a language arts teacher, restorative practitioner, and poet in North Charleston, South Carolina. Her classes and workshops center a restorative lens for examining literature, poetry, and scripture to make meaning. Her chapbook, in the [name], is a collection of haiku inspired by biblical figures, available from Bottlecap Press.

## A-9 Visualizing Forgiveness in Worship- Tricia Petraven

Forgiveness is something we can easily take for granted when we get used to the format of a prayer of confession and assurance of pardon. In this class we will consider another way to remind our worshippers that God's forgiveness is boundless by using visualizations. Following the pattern of how Jesus taught by using everyday examples, we will read visualizations about taking a walk, writing in the sand, swinging on a swing, and cleaning out a drawer. Then we will write one of our own together. Participants will receive a packet of visualizations they may use in worship or for devotional purposes. *Tricia Petraven is the organizing pastor of Church of the Arts. She has an MFA in theater design and production, which she uses to integrate creative ideas into worship. She earned her MDiv from Andover Newton Theological School, a place that taught her to think outside the box. Creative worship is her passion.*



## Session B- 11:40am – 12:40pm

### B-1 The Ballot and the Bible: How Scripture Has Been Used and Abused in American Politics and Where We Go From Here- Daniel Smoak



We'll unpack examples of how Americans have connected the Bible to politics in the past, highlighting times it was applied well and times it was egregiously misused. The combination of American political history and biblical interpretation will help us more faithfully read Scripture, talk with others about it, and apply it to contemporary political issues. \*We're leaning heavily on Kaitlyn Schiess's book on this topic. *The Rev Daniel Smoak grew up on a cotton farm in Orangeburg, SC. Being baptized, confirmed, and ordained at First Presbyterian, Orangeburg, he will tell you that he has been aware of God's love for him in Jesus Christ every day of his life. He learned the faith from his family and ministry from influential teachers at Presbyterian College (BA), Princeton Seminary (MDiv), and Erskine Seminary (DMin). He's served churches in Thomasville, Georgia and York, SC before coming to Westminster in 2015. Daniel is married to Amy, and he calls her "my favorite person in the whole world." They are the parents of Andrew, Lauren, and Matthew. They love family time: learning, hanging out together, and visiting friends and family.*

### B-2 Building a Faithful Foundation for Children and Youth: Church and Families Together- Glenna Durbin & Suzy Edwards



Parents and at-home caretakers are the most influential factor in a child's faith life - the church is called to work alongside them. This workshop explores how families and church can partner together to nurture a strong, lasting faith in children and youth. Rooted in the values of our Reformed tradition, we will share practical ways to equip parents, strengthen connection between home and church, and support faith formation. Together, we'll imagine what it looks like to raise children in a community where faith is lived, shared, and nurtured every day. *Glenna Durbin is the Director of Youth Ministries at Mt. Pleasant Presbyterian. She is from Raleigh, NC. She is a born and raised Presbyterian. Glenna attended the College of Charleston, which is what brought her to the area. Glenna's youth years were filled with retreats, mission trips, Montreat, and Massanetta, and she could not be happier that she now gets to help give that experience to MPPC's youth. Outside of ministry Glenna dances professionally with Annex Dance Company, loves music, theatre, history, good movies, and good food. Suzy Edwards, (Master of Arts in Theological Studies and Certified Christian Educator- PCUSA) has served in children's ministry across churches in North Carolina, Virginia, Arkansas, Mississippi, and South Carolina. She has written children's curriculum for the PC(USA) and has served as Director of Christian Education in several congregations. Suzy's undergraduate work was in Special Education. Suzy is passionate about partnering with families*

to nurture faith in children and youth. She joyfully serves as Director of Christian Education at Mount Pleasant Presbyterian Church. Suzy and her husband have two adult children, two beloved Golden Retrievers- Lady and Bea, and are grateful to call the Lowcountry home.

### **B-3 Do You Believe in God? Which One?- Jim Miller**

The Bible, the creeds of the church, and even 16<sup>th</sup> century Reformation theology are expressive, to one degree or another, of a classical understanding of God, rooted, metaphorically, largely in a pre-Copernican understanding of the Creation. What difference does it make, for a faith that seeks understanding, that we have come to understand that we live in an evolutionary, relativistic, quantum dynamic Creation? As Reformed Christians, do we worship the Christian God or do we worship God in a Christian way? These are two of the foundational questions that the workshop will invite participants to explore. **The Rev Dr Jim Miller** is an honorably retired teaching elder in the Presbyterian Church (USA) with a Ph.D. from Marquette University with a focus on science and theology. He served as an ecumenical campus minister at Michigan Tech, the University of Pittsburgh, and Carnegie-Mellon University. For nearly ten years he was the Senior Program Associate for the Program of Dialogue on Science, Ethics, and Religion of the American Association for the Advancement of Science (AAAS). He is a founding member of the Presbyterian Association on Science, Technology and the Christian Faith established in 1992 and currently serves as its Secretary. Since 2008 Jim has served as co-chair of the Broader Social Impacts Committee of the Program on Human Origins of the Smithsonian's National Museum of Natural History. He was elected a Fellow of the American Association for the Advancement of Science in 2020.



### **B-4 Earth Wind and Fire Dancing (Part 2)- CeCe Armstrong**

After exploring songs written and performed by Earth, Wind, and Fire (Part 1), let's dance like David danced. **See biographical information in Workshop Session A-1.**



### **B-5 Engaging Ages 20s and 30s- Colin Kerr**

Many young adults skip church participation in college, but when they return to their hometowns or move to a new town after graduation, will you be ready to help them re-engage with Christian community? Join us for a time of self-assessment, learning about strategic life milestones, and why you don't need a rock concert to draw young professionals to your church. **The Rev Colin Kerr** (M.Div) is the founding pastor of Parkside Church. Prior to imagining Parkside, he spent eight years assisting historic congregations with church renewal strategies, planting a new multi-campus college ministry at College of Charleston and the Citadel, and received the Baird Prize for Preaching at seminary. Colin has authored four books, including "Faith Hope Love: The Essentials of Christianity for the Curious, Confused, and Skeptical." He has a passion for beach volleyball, whiskey, and budget travel. Colin is grateful every day to be married to his partner in love, life, and ministry, Erin, and is a doting girl-dad to his daughters Arland and Abigail.



### **B-6 How to Seek Racial Justice with a History of Hope- William Yoo**

It is important for Christians to comprehend the legacies of slavery and racial oppression as we seek to faithfully enact racial justice in our congregations, communities, and nation today. Yet it is also necessary to approach history in ways that prioritize responsibility and repair over despair and shame. In this workshop William Yoo covers how history is used and misused when Christians talk about racism, and he offers a pathway toward racial justice that is honest, hopeful, practical, and prophetic. **See biographical information in Workshop Session A-7.**



## B-7 It's About a Sound- Larayssa Alston



In this class, we journey into the powerful connection between heaven and earth, discovering how God responds to the deepest human conditions and how His voice echoes through the sounds of nature. Every whisper of the wind, every rhythm of creation, reflects His presence and His desire to communicate with us. In moments of desperation and despair, believers are called not to retreat, but to rise—turning to prayer, standing on the promises of Scripture, and drawing strength from the fellowship of others. Through gratitude and the remembrance of God's unwavering faithfulness, hearts are renewed, and hope is restored. As declared in Isaiah 40:31, "But those who wait upon the Lord will renew their strength; they will mount up with wings like eagles; they will run and not grow weary; they will walk and not faint." This class invites you to listen, to respond, and to be strengthened by the sound of God's enduring love and power. **Deacon Larayssa Alston** is a devoted member of St. James Presbyterian Church on James Island, where she serves the congregation under the spiritual leadership of Rev. Dr. Brian Henderson and Rev. Cecelia Armstrong. In addition to her serving as a Deacon, Larayssa serves the church as a co-moderator of the Presbyterian Women's organization. Through this role, she helps lead and support the mission, fellowship, and spiritual growth of the women within the St. James family. Larayssa is also the author of *A Way Out*, a book centered on emotional healing found in God. Written "from the heart," her work offers comforting words from one woman to another, expressed through the powerful combination of poetry and scripture. Larayssa finds deep personal resonance in Psalms 1:3: "That person is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither—whatever they do prospers." This scripture serves as a guiding light for her, reflecting her belief in the importance of staying grounded in faith while flourishing in one's purpose and service. A firm believer in the power of the Word, Larayssa finds great joy in engaging in Bible study with her family and friends. She especially treasures connecting with her two sons, Gervais and Jordan, through deep tabletop discussions on life and shared interests. Above all, Larayssa looks forward to empowering others in this journey called Life.

## B-8 Making the Most of Your All Church/Intergenerational Gatherings- Chris Denny



Do you like to laugh together? Have your table conversations gotten stale? When was the last time you played a board game? Explore ways to build life-sustaining relationships across generations through games, laughter, and meaningful conversations. Church is one of the few places in today's life where multiple generations gather in intentional community. These relationships matter for life-long faith formation. **See biographical information in Workshop Session A-2**

## B-9 Partners in God's Mission: Prayer, Letters, and Connection- Vilmarie Cintrón-Olivieri



From the earliest days of the church, letters connected communities, shared stories, and shaped life in God's mission. This practical, interactive workshop briefly explores selected passages in the epistles to reflect on what it meant to be partners in God's mission then—and what it can look like today. Through prayer and reflective letter-writing, participants will "pray the world," explore possibilities for deepening relationships, and take steps to rekindle, continue, or begin a shared missional journey. Join us for a time to reflect, pray-write, and be renewed for shared ministry. **Vilmarie Cintrón-Olivieri** is a PC(USA) ruling elder, educator, and Global Ecumenical Liaison for the Synods of Mid-America, South Atlantic, The Sun, and Boriquén, Presbyterian Life & Witness. A lifelong Presbyterian, Vilmarie has served at all levels of the PC(USA), including as one of the Co-Moderators of the 223rd General Assembly (2018). Since 2016, she has been exploring creativity and art as a prayer practice, with watercolor painting as her preferred medium. You'll often find her with a watercolor kit and journal, enjoying a good cup of Puerto Rican coffee with her husband of (almost) 30 years, José Manuel.

## **Session C- 12:45pm – 1:30pm** (lunch and workshop in the fellowship hall)

***Unleashing the Parables to Unleash the Church-*** For centuries, the parables of Jesus have been read in ways that make them safe — useful for personal devotion, acceptable to the powerful, harmless to the systems they were designed to disrupt. But caged parables produce caged churches. This seminar works through four of Jesus' most subversive stories — the Unjust Steward, the Barren Fig Tree, the Laborers in the Vineyard, and the Great Banquet — asking what we lose when we tame them and what the church becomes when we don't. For leaders ready to lead from the Kingdom's actual economy: abundance, Jubilee, and unjust grace.

### **S.T.E.P.S. PREACHER AND WORKSHOP C LEADER**

#### **ANTHONY "TONY" LARSON**



Rev. Anthony "Tony" Larson is a congregational pastor with a passion for storytelling. He was born in Minneapolis and raised in North Carolina. As a student at the University of North Carolina (UNC) at Chapel Hill, Tony studied Public Policy and served as Speaker of the Student Congress. He was also very active at University Presbyterian Church and served on the leadership team of Presbyterian Campus Ministry. Upon graduation he accepted the position of Director of Youth Ministries at Williamsburg Presbyterian

Church in Williamsburg, Virginia. Even though upon graduation from UNC he swore he was done with formal education, just 9 months later he began taking classes at Union Presbyterian Seminary in Richmond, Virginia and discerning a call to ordained ministry. Tony's first pastorate was with Springs Community Presbyterian Church in East Hampton, New York. He is currently in his eleventh year of service as pastor of Trinity Presbyterian Church in Surfside Beach, South Carolina, and is enrolled in Doctor of Ministry studies at Union Presbyterian Seminary in Charlotte, North Carolina. Tony's mother is also a pastor in the PC(USA), although she followed him into ordained ministry attending seminary and seeking ordination after retiring. Tony has served the church in a number of capacities: Co-leader of the Synod Youth Council for the Synod of the Mid-Atlantic, Montreat Youth Conference Planning Team, 12 years of COM service, 3 of those as COM Moderator, and Moderator of New Harmony Presbytery.

He has been married for 18 years to wife Heather, father by adoption to her son, Stephen Larson, and his granddaughter Nora James Larson who will turn 2 in 2026. Tony and Heather share their home in SC with two non-humans, an Australian Shepherd named Martin Luther and a cat (caramel mocha latte tabby) named John Calvin. Tony describes himself as a "semi-professional nerd" and backs that up as a Level 77 Pokémon Go Trainer, captain of the RogueRev Trivia Team and is officially sorted into House Ravenclaw. He loves to cook, listen to jazz, and spoil his theologian pets. In addition to his formal call to Trinity Presbyterian Church, Pastor Tony is also the unofficial Surfside Beach Dog Park Chaplain and Bar Chaplain at the Bohemian Bull in Garden City.

"The story of my life and faith is one of being called by God through the voices of others," Anthony said. "In each chapter of my life story, there have been people who sensed a place where my gifts and the needs of community overlapped, and they named my gifts and challenged me to develop and use them as a disciple of Jesus Christ."

# REGISTRATION FORM

We encourage you to register before the pre-registration deadline of August 12<sup>th</sup>. Workshops with less than six people registered by that date will be canceled.

NAME: \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS: \_\_\_\_\_

PHONE: \_\_\_\_\_

EMAIL: \_\_\_\_\_

CHURCH: \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_ I would like to order a boxed lunch or salad for an additional \$12

\_\_\_\_ Ham Sandwich

\_\_\_\_ Turkey Sandwich

\_\_\_\_ Vegetarian Salad

PAYMENT ENCLOSED: \$\_\_\_\_\_ (Registration fee **plus** boxed lunch if you ordered one.)

WORKSHOP CHOICES: Please record the workshop number and title here:

**Session A** \_\_\_\_\_

**Session B** \_\_\_\_\_

**Session C** I plan to attend Session C- \_\_\_\_yes \_\_\_\_no

I give my permission for images of me captured through video, photos, and digital camera images to be used solely for the purposes of Charleston Atlantic Presbytery and/or PCUSA affiliate publications and websites. If you do **not** give permission, put an X here- \_\_\_\_\_

**SPECIAL NEEDS:** Accessibility: \_\_\_\_\_

**CHILDCARE:** (Names and Ages): \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

Return registration form by **mail** to: Charleston Atlantic Presbytery, 4701 Park Pl W,  
North Charleston, SC 29405 | Return by **email** to [mjones@capresbytery.org](mailto:mjones@capresbytery.org)