

Possible pathways to strengthening congregational faith and life:

Extended book discussions - reading and discussing a chapter a month, possibly following worship. Here are some titles that have been used or recommended by colleagues recently, with links to reviews online:

If the Church Were Christian: Rediscovering the Values of Jesus, by Philip Gulley. Gulley, a Quaker pastor, introduces his own book in this brief synopsis of his ten new/old guidelines for living. https://www.huffpost.com/entry/if-the-church-were-christ_b_495385

Dear Church: A Love Letter from a Black Preacher to the Whitest Denomination in the U.S. (The ELCA, not the PCUSA); by the Rev. Lenny Duncan.

<https://www.christiancentury.org/review/books/black-pastor-writes-white-church-about-its-complacency-oppression>

Why Did Jesus, Moses, the Buddha, and Mohammed Cross the Road? Christian Identity in a Multi-Faith World, by Brian McLaren.

<https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/view/23790/why-did-jesus-moses-the-buddha-and-mohammed-cross-the-road>

We make the road by walking: a year-long quest for spiritual formation, reorientation, and activation, also by Brian McLaren. 52 passages to ponder and discuss.

<https://www.spiritualityandpractice.com/book-reviews/view/26383/we-make-the-road-by-walking>

My Grandmother's Hands: Racialized Trauma and the Pathway to Mending our Hearts and our Bodies, by Resmaa Menakem

<https://bookshop.org/books/my-grandmother-s-hands-racialized-trauma-and-the-pathway-to-mending-our-hearts-and-bodies-9781942094470/9781942094470>

Being Christian: Baptism, Bible, Eucharist, Prayer, by Rowan Williams, former Archbishop of Canterbury. Read a review here:

<https://livingchurch.org/covenant/2014/08/25/book-review-rowan-williams-being-christian/>

Being Disciples: Essentials of the Christian Life. Read a review here:

<http://www.bobcornwall.com/2016/11/being-disciples-rowan-williams-review.html>

These are the first two of what I believe will be a trilogy. The two published works are both short, under 100 pages. Each chapter has discussion questions for small groups.

Faithful Friendships: Embracing Diversity in Christian Community, Dana L. Robert

<http://www.bobcornwall.com/2019/12/faithful-friendships-dana-l-robert.html>

Always, We Begin Again, John McQuiston. Adapting the Rule of Benedict to daily life in our times. <https://www.churchpublishing.org/alwayswebeginagain>

Videos/Other media

For those who learn by watching and/or listening together

Videos of Rowan Williams and Dana Robert speaking on the themes represented in the books listed above are available on YouTube.

White Savior: Racism in the American Church. Documentary film, purchased on DVD for the church library as the PWWs expressed an interest in watching it together. See a trailer here:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=2FWenQCC4-s>

and/or read a review here (includes a link to the trailer):

<https://medium.com/@namenzie/why-you-need-to-watch-this-documentary-on-racism-in-the-american-church-5171a78d6ea8>

[*On Being with Krista Tippett*](#): podcasts of conversations with spiritual leaders.

Activities

Activities together that feed our souls:

Meals, time together for over-55s, game nights, movies for fun as well as learning

Making music together

Gardening

Check out this article about another PCUSA church planting their grounds with native plants for pollinators, butterflies)

<https://www.presbyterianmission.org/story/maryland-church-protecting-the-earth-with-native-plants/>