

# 2023 Pastor's Sabbath

*Camp Alexander Mack*

*1:00 pm October 23 - 3:30 pm October 24*

As pastors, we know as well as any that authentic faith is a source of comfort, hope, learning and newness of life. We also know that practicing faith can be a challenge, leading us into difficult relationships and painful experiences. Our congregants look to us for understanding, support, encouragement and inspiration. And that's what each of us aspires to provide...but sometimes we miss the mark. Sometimes we fail to see what our parishioners are really needing. Sometimes, those we serve don't seem to recognize or connect with what we offer. What's more, these missed connections can make it hard for church members to find a unified sense of vision and mission, at a time when growing numbers see Christianity as irrelevant, at best, and hypocritical, at worst.

Is it any surprise, amid the deepening cultural and political divisions in our society and churches, that so many pastors are feeling under-resourced and overwhelmed?

Professor W. Paul Jones has made a life-long study of the richly varied patterns of Christian belief and how they shape our ideas about God and a life of discipleship. He's identified five 'theological worlds' which try to describe the differing ways Christians perceive life's greatest challenges and seek to address them. Because these differences are rooted in so many subconsciously formed experiences and assumptions, they frequently lead to psychological and social tension, misunderstanding and conflict.

This year our presenter, pastor Ken Miller Rieman, will invite us into a time of self-reflection, study and conversation. He'll present the five 'theological worlds' as a tool for pastors to help our members discover opportunities for spiritual growth as individuals, families and congregations. We'll use the five worlds to explore scripture, music, liturgy and congregational practices as bridges of meaning for enlarging our common ground.

Ken has shared these five theological worlds with two congregations and found them a valuable resource for better understanding his members and helping them better understand each other. He's appreciative of professor Jones' approach to transform the tension between alternative worldviews into an adventure of discovery. Ken has used the five worlds to craft a sermon series and enrich his ongoing sermon, worship and Sunday School planning. He hopes our retreat might open the same possibilities for you.

Those who'd like to get a preview of the five theological worlds and come into the retreat with a clearer idea of their own connection to each worldview will be able to complete and self-score an inventory, in advance. Registrants will be provided a [downloadable pdf](#) of the inventory which they can also share with their congregations.

Ken is also hoping that the weather will permit some good time for everyone to enjoy the natural beauty of Camp Mack and Lake Waubee. He'll try to get us up and moving frequently and asks for participants to bring clothing suitable for at least some of our conversations to happen outside. A boating opportunity will also be scheduled.

**Our presenter:** Ken Miller Rieman is pastor of the Prince of Peace Church of the Brethren in South Bend. He graduated from Manchester University with a BA in Peace Studies and earned his Master of Divinity at Bethany Theological Seminary. Over 25 years he's served congregations in both Indiana districts, Seattle, Washington and Oakton, Virginia. He is married to Kate and father to Marigold (10) and Moses (8). He loves spending time with family and friends, making and listening to music, playing and coaching soccer, roasting, brewing and drinking coffee. He also enjoys photography, carpentry and sailing.

### **Continuing Education .7**

#### **Monday, October 23**

1:00: Arrive, get settled, get acquainted

2:00-4:00: Session 1 – Introduction to Theological Worlds

4:00: Free Time: Relax, refresh, meditate, fellowship

#### **5:30: Dinner**

7:00-9:00: Session 2 – Exploring the Theological Worlds

9:00: Free time: Relax, refresh, fellowship, snack

#### **Tuesday, October 24**

8:30: Breakfast

9:30-11:30: Session 3 – Exploring the Theological Worlds

12:00: Lunch

1:00-2:00: Wrap-up

2:00-3:30: Free Time: Relax and refresh. Boating on the lake