

IMAGINE

Going to the Edges and Discovering Life

November 6-8, 2024

New Orleans, LA



SYNOD OF THE SUN

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Synodsun.org

IMAGINE

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WELCOME!

Wednesday, November 6

ARRIVAL All are welcome to attend the Synod Assembly and workshops. The workshops will begin at 1:00 PM at Metairie Ridge Presbyterian Church.

Registration for IMAGINE! will begin at 4:30 PM at St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church.

ASSEMBLY WORKSHOPS

Wednesday, November 6, 2024
Metairie Ridge Presbyterian Church

Workshop 1: 1:00 PM; Workshop 3: 3:00 PM

Learning from the Least of These: Engaging Presbyterians in the Strategic Work of Understanding, Preventing and Eradicating Poverty.

Workshop content will help individuals navigate and engage in anti-poverty work and its intersections. This interactive workshop will equip participants with missional, theological, and practical strategies centered around networking and community organizing. Through these we will create and leverage congregational/communal power in engaging justice issues in local churches and communities through the relationship building practices of direct action and advocacy. We will be using biblical perspectives of justice, PCUSA policy statements, and missional based asset mapping. The workshop will also encourage relationship, network, and community building among participants. Finally, the workshop will include activities designed to help us understand how the dynamics of poverty play out in communities. These activities are designed to encourage

relationship healing and building among participants so they may network together to address the issues of poverty in America.

God’s Round Table of Mission

Workshop 2: 1:00 PM, Workshop 4: 3:00 PM

Description: As we work to end poverty, it can be easy to unintentionally objectify or “otherize” the people in the communities where we carry out mission and ministry. In this workshop participants will gain shared insights and tools to break from the “us-them” mission paradigm. We Will go deeper into an understanding of God’s mission as a round table to which all are invited and included, and at which everyone has something to contribute and something to receive. Participants will explore stories – their own and others’ – to think in fresh ways about mission, examine power in mission relationships, and consider practical ways to approach mission before, during, and after a mission trip or service activity. People of all levels of mission engagement are welcome to this highly interactive workshop.

IMAGINE!

Wednesday, November 6, 2024

Metairie Ridge Presbyterian Church

4:30 pm Registration
6:00 PM Dinner

Panel Discussion, 7:00 PM

**Crescent City Café, Café Reconcile, Eden Centers for Hope and Healing,
St. Thomas Medical Center**

Community leaders from these organizations will be hosting discussions and answering questions on how they do mission and ministry while providing life giving services to those on the margins. Their services include: dignified dining experiences, job training, trauma recovery for human trafficking victims, and health care for the economically and medically vulnerable.

CLOSING PRAYER SERVICE, 8:15 PM

*** All may Stand**

Response in Bold

O God, come to our assistance.

Ps. 70:1

O Lord, hasten to help us.

The Lord grant us a restful night and peace at the last. Amen.

Hymn “When in the Night I Meditate” GTG p. 810

Prayer of Confession

Almighty God, Maker of all things,

have mercy on us.

Jesus Christ, Redeemer of the world,

have mercy on us.

Holy Spirit, Giver of life,

have mercy on us.

There is a brief period of silence for self examination.

Merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, but what we have done, by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart and mind and strength; We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.

In your mercy forgive what we have been, help us amend what we are, and direct what we shall be, so that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways to the glory of your holy name.

Psalm 23

The Lord is my shepherd; I shall not want.

² He makes me lie down in green pastures;

he leads me beside still waters;^[a]

³ he restores my soul.^[b]

He leads me in right paths^[c]

for his name’s sake.

⁴ Even though I walk through the darkest valley,^[d]

I fear no evil,

for you are with me;

your rod and your staff,

they comfort me.

⁵ You prepare a table before me

in the presence of my enemies;

you anoint my head with oil;

my cup overflows.

⁶ Surely^[e] goodness and mercy^[f] shall follow me

all the days of my life,

and I shall dwell in the house of the Lord

my whole life long.^[g]

Prayer:

Eternal God, your Son cried out in anguish from the cross, and you delivered him. Do not hide your face from those who cry out to you. By his death and resurrection bring life where there is

death: feed the hungry, strengthen the weak, and break the chains of oppression, that all people may rejoice in your saving deeds through Jesus Christ, our savior and Lord. Amen

Scripture: Matt. 6:31-34

Therefore do not worry, saying, 'What will we eat?' or 'What will we drink?' or 'What will we wear?' For it is the gentiles who seek all these things, and indeed your heavenly Father knows that you need all these things. But seek first the kingdom of God^[a] and his righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well.

Holy wisdom. Holy word.

Thanks be to God.

Silence follows for a reflection on the meaning of the scripture.

Prayer:

Keep us, O Lord, as the apple of your eye;
hide us under the shadow of your wings.

Thanksgivings and intercessions may be offered. There may be silent prayer.

Keep watch, dear Lord, with those who work or watch we pray this night, and give your angels charge over those who sleep. Tend to the sick, Lord Christ; give rest to the weary, bless the dying, soothe the suffering, pity the afflicted, shield the joyous; and all for your love's sake. Amen.

The Lord's Prayer

Benediction

Guide us waking, O Lord, and guard us sleeping; that awake we may watch with Christ, and asleep rest in his peace.

Blessing

May almighty God bless, preserve, and keep us, this night and forever more. Amen.

Bless the Lord.

The Lord's name. Be praised.

This prayer service was prepared by Armel Crocker, Commissioned Pastor, Grace Presbytery

Day of Service and Reflection

Thursday, November 7

St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church

8:00 AM	Breakfast	Fellowship Hall
9:00 AM	Morning Prayers	Chapel
9:30 AM	Prepare for Departure to Sites – pick up box lunches	Fellowship Hall
10:00 AM	Depart for Site Visits	
10:00-12:00	Group 1 – Berean Community Center Group 2 – Okra Abbey	
12:00 -1:00	Box lunch at site and travel to next site	
1:00 – 3:00	Group 1 – Okra Abbey Group 2 – Berean Community Center	
4:00 PM	Rest and Relax; Reflection	Space will be provided for reflection
5:00 PM	Mardi Gras/Black Masking Indian Presentation	Fellowship Hall
6:00 PM	Dinner	Fellowship Hall
7:00 PM	Evening Worship – Alonso Johnson preaching	Chapel

GOING OUT TO SERVE

Friday, November 8

St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church

8:00 AM	Breakfast	Fellowship Hall
9:00 AM	Going Forward How Do We Take What We've Learned Home and Put It Into Action?	Fellowship Hall
10::00 AM	Closing Worship – Prayer Tour	Depart from Fellowship Hall
12:00 Noon	Heading home – lunch on your own	

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Workshop Leaders

Learning from the Least of These: Engaging Presbyterians in the Strategic Work of Understanding, Preventing and Eradicating Poverty.



Rev. Dr. Alonzo T. Johnson is the Coordinator for the Presbyterian Committee on the Self-Development of People Program (SDOP) Presbyterian Church (USA). Rev. Johnson has 25 years of experience in missional church studies, urban, congregational based organizing, youth/education, creative arts, peacemaking, anti-poverty, prison and social justice ministries. Rev. Johnson pastored an urban congregation and trained in both Systems Theory and Missional Church in the Presbytery in Philadelphia. He was also a volunteer chaplain in prison ministry for 9 years. He is also the convenor of PC(USA) Public Education Roundtable and is an active staff member of the Poverty Consultant team -- an anti-poverty working group comprised of both PC(USA) national staff and Mid Council leaders.



Margaret Mwale serves as Associate for Community Development and Constituent Relations with the Presbyterian Mission Agency Self-Development of People (SDOP) program. She oversees National SDOP's community engagement efforts and the grant process for mid council (local) SDOP committees.

She co-chairs the PCUSA national office human trafficking roundtable.

Margaret is engaged in her Louisville, KY community by serving as executive chair of the board of directors for Americana, a nonprofit that seeks to bridge the gap from surviving to thriving for refugees, immigrants, and underserved individuals through education, career, and financial development. She also serves on the board of directors of the Dougbe River School of Liberia (Africa) and co-chairs its Strategic Planning Committee. She previously served as Coordinator of Neighborhood outreach in Mobile, AL and as Director of Admissions with a university in Indianapolis, IN. She has dual master's degrees in economics and in education from Eastern Illinois

University and a BA in economics from Bluffton University. She is a native of Zambia and has lived in Louisville since 2005.

God's Round Table of Mission



The Rev. Ellen Sherby is the associate director of Global Connections in World Mission in the Presbyterian Mission Agency, supporting the work of four global offices as they accompany hundreds of international partners and over sixty mission co-workers in ministries of peace, justice, education and sustainable development. She also coordinates the Equipping for Mission Involvement office, which provides mission education resources to U.S. Presbyterians and helps churches and mission co-workers connect with each other through letters and visits. Ellen holds a Master of Science degree in Pedagogy from the National Autonomous University of Nicaragua in Managua, Nicaragua and a Master of Divinity degree from Louisville Presbyterian Theological Seminary in Kentucky. Ellen worked for 11 years in Nicaragua: two with Witness for Peace and nine as a PC(USA) mission co-worker with the Council of Protestant Churches of Nicaragua (CEPAD), most of those years accompanying short-term delegations and long-term partnerships between Nicaraguan and U.S. church communities. She is a minister member of Mid-Kentucky Presbytery and accompanies her husband, the Rev. Elmer Zavala, in the leadership and support of a Latino/Hispanic immigrant ministry through Mid-Kentucky Presbytery. She and Elmer are the parents of three children ages 23, 19 and 14.

PANEL DISCUSSIONS

Crescent City Cafe, a New Orleans based non-profit that focuses on providing a dignified, restaurant-style dining experience for unhoused and food insecure members of the community. Twice each month, the Cafe opens with a team of volunteers to simulate a full-service restaurant with gourmet breakfast options. Our purpose is simple - we create a gathering place where all the different faces of hunger feel respected and can enjoy a nourishing meal. To date, the Crescent City Cafe has served more than 22,569 meals to our food-insecure guests. The Crescent City Cafe's vision is to open a full service pay-what-you-can community cafe in our community. crescentcitycafe.com

Café Reconcile, Run as a non-profit workforce training program, the café prepares ambitious young adults for careers in the city's celebrated hospitality industry. From red beans and rice, to catfish and po' boys, we draw inspiration from the proud, vibrant Black history and cuisine of our city. Always cooking from scratch—including our roux—you can rest assured that even our more indulgent dishes taste fresh and flavor-forward. And with more than two decades of service under our belt, you may find we've reimagined a few of your favorite dishes, with an emphasis on quality ingredients and skillful technique. Café Reconcile New Orleans

Eden Centers for Hope and Healing is an anti trafficking organization that specializes in trauma recovery. Our mission is to eradicate the trafficking and selling of human beings. We create systemic change through: youth prevention; education and legislative advocacy; recovery and reentry

services for victims, including emergency, transitional, and long-term shelter; and a lifelong community of care for survivors. [Home page - Eden House New Orleans](#)

St. Thomas Community Health Center is a Federally Qualified Health Center (FQHC), as designated by the Health Resources and Service Administration (HRSA). As such, St. Thomas CHC provides healthcare to economically and medically vulnerable populations regardless of the patient’s ability to pay or insurance status. [St. Thomas Community Health Center | Medical Clinics in New Orleans, LA](#)

SITE VISITS

Berean Presbyterian Community Center located at 2128 Felicity St. New Orleans La 70113.. The community is below the poverty line and also has a high incidence of addiction and violence crime. The community center provides free monthly feeding, clothes, diapers, feminine products, books, information, a non-judgmental environment along with structured children activities. Services provided by volunteers.

Okra Abbey is located at the intersections of Hickory and Eagle Streets, New Orleans. At first glance, Okra Abbey looks like a community garden, and while that is true, Okra Abbey is also a sacred space for the residents of the Pigeon Town neighborhood in New Orleans. Unlike many sacred spaces, our sanctuary is a garden where we grow food to share with our neighbors. Like other sacred spaces, Okra Abbey is a place where people grow in friendship and faith alongside one another through the sharing of stories, scripture, prayers, and food.

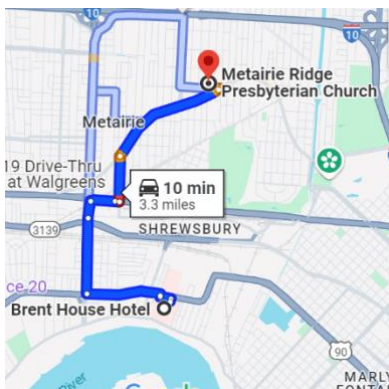
Okra Abbey is a mission of the Presbytery of South Louisiana and a New Worshipping Community of the Presbyterian Church (USA).

MAPS

Brent House Hotel to Metairie Ridge Presbyterian Church,

215 Phosphor Ave, Metairie, LA 70005

10 min (3.3 miles) via Metairie Rd



Brent House Hotel, 1512 Jefferson Hwy, New Orleans, LA 70121

Continue to US-90 W 2 min (0.1 mi)

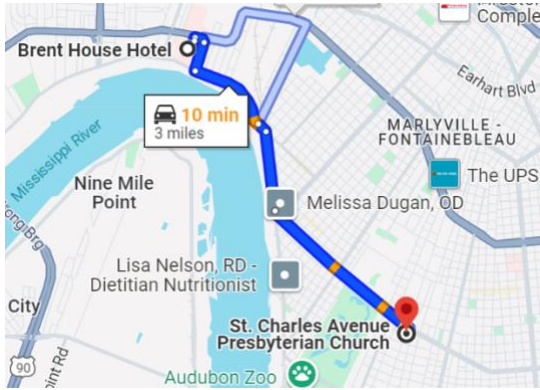
Continue on US-90 W. Take Causeway Blvd and Metairie Rd to Codifer Blvd in Metairie

9 min (3.1 mi)

Sharp left onto Codifer Blvd

Destination will be on the right 29 sec (0.1 mi)

**Brent House to St. Charles Avenue Presbyterian Church,
1545 State St, New Orleans, LA 70118**



10 min (3.0 miles) via St Charles Ave

Brent House Hotel

1512 Jefferson Hwy, New Orleans, LA 70121

Head northeast 141 ft

Turn right toward Collins C. Diboll Dr 427 ft

Merge onto Collins C. Diboll Dr 0.2 mi

Turn left onto River Rd 0.7 mi

Continue onto Oak St Slight right onto Leake Ave 0.6 mi

Turn left onto St Charles Ave Destination will be on the right 1.4 mi



SYNOD OF THE SUN

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