



Courageous Congregations Collaborative [C3]

2025-26 Michigan Cohorts | September 2025 – May 2026

WHAT IS C3? C3 is an initiative developed by Texas Methodist Foundation which shares and equips teams to use five muscles that congregations need to strengthen and flex in this ministry season. Engaging these five muscles will support disciples in cultivating thriving congregations who share the Good News and love of Jesus. Thanks to a grant from the Lilly Endowment and investment by the United Methodist Foundation of Michigan, C3 Michigan cohorts bring teams from Michigan together to learn, experience, and flex the five muscles in their contexts. The TMF, UMF MI, and C3 team believe people participating in C3 and using these muscles as they discern God's movement and call in the life of their congregation will cultivate vibrant communities of faithful and fruitful disciples of Jesus.

What will we do? The pastor and four laity from each congregation gather together for an in person, on-site regional learning journey, engage in online 1.5 hour sessions, develop and present a ministry initiative emerging from the five muscles, and receive three months of coaching to support and encourage the team through implementing the ministry initiative.

5 MUSCLES | GRIEVING WELL | DISCERNING PURPOSE WALKING ALONGSIDE | TENDING POWER | EXPANDING IMAGINATION

C3 was a meaningful and eye-opening journey for our team at Orchard. Rather than focusing on tasks or action plans, the process encouraged us to look inward—to reflect deeply and honestly. The facilitators, cohort, and team environment created a space where we could explore all five “muscles” in a way that felt safe, supportive, and free from pressure or judgment. One of our team members shared after visiting another church while traveling: *“What we processed together in C3 helped me see that church—and even our own community—through a whole new lens.”*

~ Rev. Paul Hahm

What are the benefits for the congregation? When leaders wrestle with the difference God is calling them to make, the results can be deeply transforming. When they do that wrestling with leaders from other churches, a powerful sense of solidarity can emerge. We need fellow believers to be courageous, take risks, and thrive in sharing the Gospel and making disciples!

South Lyon First UMC found C3 to be a time of great conversation around the past and used our imaginations to consider partnerships and ministries God is calling us to. We were equipped and encouraged to take the Holy momentum within the church to a deeper level, and find purpose and direction for the future. We are thankful for the invitation and opportunity to participate in a C3 Cohort. ~ Rev. Mary McInnes

COST

Your only cost is **travel** to/from the learning journey. The remaining \$13,000 per church is being paid by the Lilly grant, TMF, & UMF MI.

NEXT STEP

Discern with key leaders. Is this a faithful next step God is calling us to take?

LEADERSHIP TEAM

Facilitators

Rev. Sarah Hescheles

Rev. Nathan Kirkpatrick

Rev. Gary Step

Chaplain

Rev. Joel Fitzgerald

MORE INFORMATION

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