

Called to Listen and Act: Practicing Community Engagement Beyond Our Church Walls

The National Capital Presbytery's new *Community Engagement Network* invites you to come meet and learn with other Presbyterians seeking to build relationships within our communities. Action-based listening is a spiritual discipline that calls us to listen deeply to others whose lives are different than ours and build new relationships around a shared desire for justice and equity.

Our teachers for this learning and training experience are:

Rev. Ashley Goff, pastor of Arlington Presbyterian Church. She will share both the theological basis for this listening discipline and her church's lessons learned centering their mission in community engagement.

James Pearlstein, co-lead organizer with Virginians Organized in Interfaith Community Engagement, (VOICE). He has trained volunteer leaders across Northern Virginia how to move from listening into action campaigns that produced important wins for behavioral health and housing.

Arlington Presbyterian uses these inspiring words to call us all into a discipline of action-based listening:

- Listening: We want to listen well, listen broadly and listen with love. We listen to both the words and the silence behind the words. We listen to the whole of the story.
- Meeting needs: We ask what the needs are and seek to meet those needs, rather than the needs we simply assume to exist. We look for clarity about what meeting needs looks like.
- Liberation: We believe in sharing and building power, rather than hoarding it and meting it out on our terms. This is how we will disrupt systems of inequity in our community.

To register for this special training opportunity, register [here](#) through National Capital Presbytery. For questions: contact Kate Theisen, Old Presbyterian Meeting House (cetuva@yahoo.com) or John McKey, Clifton Presbyterian Church (john.mckey@gmail.com), who are co-moderators of the Community Engagement Network. The event will be in Heritage Hall at the Old Presbyterian Meeting House, 323 S. Fairfax, Alexandria, VA.

The Community Engagement Network was established in 2022 among the nine Presbyterian congregations in relationship with VOICE. CEN welcomes people across National Capital Presbytery to join this network as we learn together and support each other in community engagement.



National Capital
PRESBYTERY
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December 3, 6:00 pm-8:30 pm
Hosted at Old Presbyterian Meeting House
321 South Fairfax Street, Alexandria, VA22314
Gather for food and fellowship at 5:30 pm