

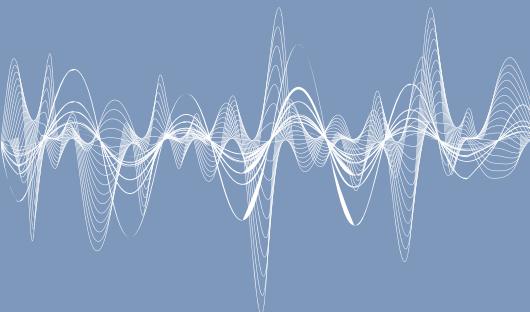
UNION
CHURCH
HINSDALE

JANUARY + FEBRUARY 2026

EPIPHANY

The Power of Voice

SUNDAYS @ 9 & 10AM



Listening

Other Voices

Join us
during
Epiphany as
we gather to
listen to
speakers
that
represent
other voices.

JAN
4

Rabbi Jessica Wainer was ordained by the Cincinnati campus of Hebrew Union College - Jewish Institute of Religion (HUC-JIR) in 2016 and previously served as the associate rabbi and director of congregational learning for Northern Virginia Hebrew Congregation in Reston, VA. She loves to develop creative worship experiences, walk with families through their times of sorrow and joy, and bring Torah to life for people of all ages. In addition to her ordination, Rabbi Wainer earned a Master's degree in Hebrew Letters in 2015 from Hebrew Union College, as well as a Master's in Education Administration from Xavier University in 2015. She holds a Bachelor's degree in Jewish Studies, with honors, and minored in Hebrew and Psychology from Indiana University - Bloomington. Rabbi Wainer currently serves as the head of faculty for the Union of Reform Judaism's Six-Points Creative Arts Academy where she is a founding faculty member. She also previously served on the Central Conference of American Rabbi Taskforce on Women's Experience in the Rabbinate.

JAN
11

Imam Tariq El-Amin has served as the Resident Imam & Chairman of the Board of Masjid Al-Taqwa since 2013. Servant, and Participatory, leadership ground his leadership and community building philosophy. He is an active part of local, national, and international Inter & Intrafaith Community efforts. Imam El-Amin's convictions have led him to serve as a board member of The Abolition Institute (an international anti-slavery nonprofit), supporting their work here and abroad. In the past, Imam Tariq has served as the nightly host/producer of Radio Islam, a live talk program where he conversed with politicians, artists, activists, etc, and also gave social commentary on the issues of the day. He is the former Director of Civic Engagement & Interfaith Services at the Council of Islamic Organizations of Greater Chicago and a past appointee to the Illinois Muslim Advisory Council, established by former Governor Pat Quinn. Imam Tariq is completing a Masters Of Divinity, with a focus on Islamic Chaplaincy from Bayan Islamic Graduate School/Chicago Theological Seminary.

JAN
18

Stephanie Buckhanon Crowder is a Bible in/and pop culture educator. Her focus on New Testament literature provides the lens for traversing the re-contextualization of such texts in present media. While engaging what she terms "womanist maternal thought," she explores ways in which the Bible speaks to current-day motherhood through an African American lens. As a dually-aligned National Baptist and Disciples of Christ minister, Professor Crowder employs creative code-switching means to communicate in both the church and the academy. From 2018-2023 she was the first African American and first woman to serve as Vice President of Academic Affairs/Academic Dean at Chicago Theological Seminary (CTS). In 2021 she became the first African American woman to become Full Professor at CTS..

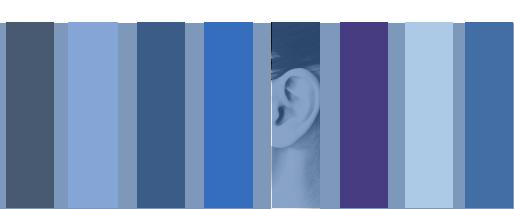


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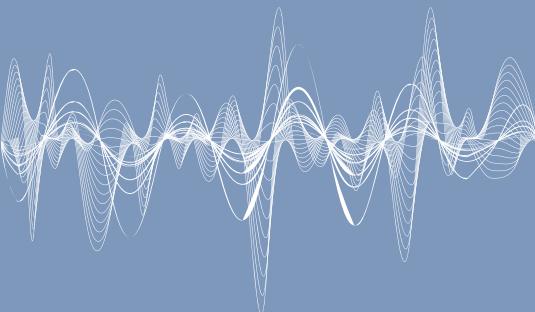
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JAN
25

Dr. Ken Stone, *God and Animals* | Professor Stone, a Lambda Literary Award winner, focuses his research on the relationship between critical theory and biblical interpretation and matters of gender, sexuality, animals, and ecology. "I always encourage students to question their own assumptions about the content and interpretation of the Bible. Such a process of questioning need not be destructive, but rather creates opportunities for pursuing a two-fold goal. On the one hand, we must obtain a thorough knowledge of both the surprising diversity of the biblical writings and their historical and socio-cultural contexts. On the other hand, we must reflect critically on the difficult process of interpreting and teaching those writings in a manner that will help us transform our own world toward greater justice and mercy."

FEB
1

Andrew Johnson, *Native Spirituality* | Andy Johnson is the executive director of the Native American Chamber of Commerce of Illinois and a citizen of the Cherokee Nation. He lobbies for legislation as part of the Chicago American Indian Community Collaborative.

FEB
8

Where Faith Meets AI

AI provides this biography of Artificial Intelligence: AI traces its evolution from ancient myths (Talos, Golems) and early mechanical concepts (Pascal's calculator, Da Vinci's knight) through foundational theories (Turing Test in 1950), the coining of the term "Artificial Intelligence" at Dartmouth in 1956, the first expert systems (DENDRAL, SAINT), and key milestones like Deep Blue (1997) and AlphaGo (2016). The modern era is defined by deep learning, GPUs, Large Language Models (LLMs like GPT-3/4), and generative AI, transforming it from a niche research field into ubiquitous technology impacting daily life through virtual assistants, search, and creative tools.

FEB
15

Antoinette Daniels, *Differently Abled and Faith Communities* | Rev. Daniels is a healthcare Chaplain (BCCI – ACC) at the Shirley Ryan Abilitylab in Chicago. A native of Meridian, MS, she grew up in Los Angeles and has traveled the world while working for the Episcopal Church in various capacities. She has earned a B.A. in Psychobiology (UCLA), an MBA (Baruch College, NYC), and an M.Div. (Loyola University, Chicago). She is a member of St. Paul and the Redeemer Episcopal Church in Hyde Park, where she met the Rev. Tim Murray, an Episcopal Deacon, in the parking lot, and they subsequently married in 2021.



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