



ANNUAL SPRING RETREAT 2025

Our Pilgrimage of Life in the Shadows

An exploration of pilgrimage of congregational life, of our neighbourhoods and perhaps the greatest journey, of our soul, in the grace of our living God

Date: Friday, April 25 (5:00 p.m.)
to Sunday April 27 (1:30 p.m., after lunch)

Location: **Manoir d'Youville**
Châteauguay (Québec) J6J 5T9
(for information: <https://manoiryouville.ca>)

Leader: **The Rev. Jeff Crittenden, D. Min., Ph.D.**
Rev. Dr. Jeff has served in congregational ministry for over thirty years throughout Canada (ON, QC, NB, AB, NL), and is currently Preaching Minister at St. Andrews United Church in Toronto.
Jeff holds doctoral degrees in Theology (Ph.D.) and Homiletics (D. Min.). He is an Assistant Professor in Practical (Pastoral) Theology at Huron University (at Western, London ON), the Founding Director of the Centre for Practical Theology (Toronto); Pilgrimage Leader, and the author of his 2023 book entitled *Leisure Resurrected – Rekindling the Fire of Early Christian Communities*.



Our Speaker, Jeff Crittenden

The presentation will be in English.
Breakout groups in English and in French will be offered,
and questions may be in English or French.

Participation: **In person only.** This is an interactive and team-building retreat.

This Retreat is open to all (Lay readers, parishioners, clergy, as well as friends and members from other Christian denominations)

Outlook

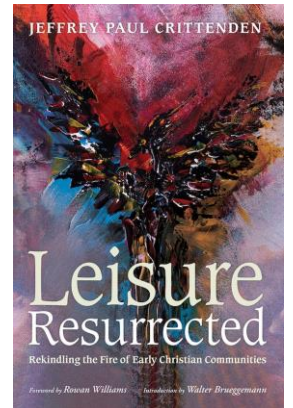
During our time together, Rev. Dr Jeff will explore key themes of pilgrimage: pilgrimage of Congregational life, of our Neighbourhoods and perhaps the greatest journey, of Our Soul in the Grace of our Living God. All of these themes will be held within an inspirational atmosphere of main lectures, break-out sessions, group discussions and group feedback.

“The aim of my research and teaching is to inspire and encourage people in the community of faith, and beyond, in practical theology.” (Teaching quote from Rev. Dr. Jeff)

- Friday evening **Session A. Noticing What is Lost** – Focus text: Luke 15
- Saturday a.m. **Session B. Welcoming the Unexpected** – Focus text: Luke 10
- Saturday p.m. **Session C. Breaking the Bread, the Pilgrim’s Food** – Focus text: Luke 24
- Sunday a.m. **Session D. Walking in the Company of the Saints** – Focus text: 2 Timothy 1

Why should you come?

With all the disruption COVID caused, now comes a great opportunity for congregations to reimagine their missions. How will the local church organize itself, engage with their neighbourhood and the world; and still offer pastoral care to a planet dealing with the significant issues heightened since COVID? Returning to old patterns of behaviour is a wasted chance. A theological opportunity for the church lies in rediscovering the classical aim of leisure. The early church during the first two centuries offers us an understanding of leisure quite unique from the dominant expressions of leisure, such as Greek “scholē”, Roman “otium”, and the Jewish Sabbath. By exploring early Christian practices, we can find insights about leisure for our missions today. These practices include: setting aside a single day of the week to worship; sharing in a common meal open to all, and, following the meal; incorporating into non-work time – care and engagement in the health and vitality of the community in the name of Jesus Christ. The followers of Jesus were consistent, if not extraordinary, in meeting weekly, on the Lord’s Day, to worship, eat together, and then go out into the neighbourhood to live out their faith.



Using numerous examples from his book *Leisure Resurrected*, plus focusing on select New Testament passages (as listed above), Rev. Dr. Jeff will update and walk you through many of these early Christian practices and how you can apply them today by going out to meet others within your own neighbourhood.

This retreat will open your eyes and show you how to meaningfully spread the word to others, residing outside of our current church walls.

Notes

- Please bring your own Bible and *Book of Alternative Services*.
- Although **not** a required text for this Retreat, a limited number of Rev. Dr. Jeff’s *Leisure Resurrected* book will be available on-site, at a discounted price of \$25 (versus \$37 retail).

Registration

Further discussions with the manoir d’Youville and the speaker allow us to increase capacity and to extend the deadline for early-bird registration.

Please register as soon as possible to reserve your place.

You can now save \$35 until March 31!

By registering before Monday, March 31, 11:59 p.m., you will be able to take advantage of our early-bird fee and save \$35.

Registration deadline: Tuesday, April 15, 11:59 p.m.

Questions? Issues?

Contact Robert McLachlan (president • president@layreaders.org • 514-928-7390)
or Mark Weatherley (vice-president • vicepresident@layreaders.org • 514-710-8066)