Local churches can encounter unresolved conflicts, stagnant church practices, grief and anxiety as well as a plethora of ghosts of hidden “secrets.” These “ghosts” may unexpectedly appear as we probe the system, hold up the mirror of self-reflection or ask difficult questions. Because they cause discomfort, church members can scapegoat others or “act out” in inappropriate behavior. Further, because churches are often welcoming places and conflict avoidant, difficult people or those with personality disorders can raise havoc in the congregation. This workshop explores ways to enter the emotional system while avoiding becoming a target of the anxiety. Through visual presentations, small group discussions, and case studies participants will learn skills to be a compassionate, non-anxious presence in tense situations and have a grid for understanding people with certain personality disorders that tend to be attracted to our churches.

Beyond Difficult People: Telling the Difference between Merely Problematic or Pathological People

With Retreat Leaders: Norman Bendroth and Leslie Ann Chatfield

Wednesday, April 29, 2020
9:30am-3:30pm

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