



Message from the Interim Conference Minister



Reflection "Finding your Passion" from my days as an Associate Conference Minister while in Michigan but the central truths also apply to Illinois.

Rev. Justo González, II
Interim Conference Minister
Ministro de la Conferencia Interino

Pastor Justo's Upcoming Preaching Schedule:

Sunday, Feb. 10, 2019, Bethel UCC, Elmhurst, Ill.
Sunday, Feb. 17, 2019, Congregational UCC, Arlington Heights, Ill.

Would your congregation like Rev. Justo Gonzalez, II, our Interim Conference Minister to preach in your community? Contact him directly at ilconfjusto@gmail.com. The pastor must be also be present when he visits.

Meet TPIRC Administrative Assistant

My name is Priscilla Rodriguez, and I am the part-time Administrative Assistant to the new TPIRC (Thriving Pastors in Revitalizing Congregations) Grant given by the Lilly Endowment. I will be working with the Rev. Dr. David Russell. I am a 2016 (M.A.M.) graduate of McCormick Theological Seminary. While I am new in this position, I am not new to the UCC denomination. I have worked with UCC ministers within the Chicago area, and also collaborated with UCC churches. I believe that every environment and job that you are in and do, whether it be personal, professional and/or in ministry, is a chance to learn and grow. In the process of growing and learning, I will also be able to share some of the skills and knowledge obtained through my work with the TPIRC to "mi gente latinx dentro de mi contexto" (my Latinx people within my own context.)

I am excited about this particular grant and the opportunity it gives to those pastors who are new in ministry, bi-vocational pastors working part-time, and

pastors/congregations who are struggling with decreased attendance and/or aging congregations and/or dwindling church income. Often times a pastor will struggle and suffer quietly, while confronting some of the issues that many churches and denominations are up against today. He/she/they is not quite sure of the where and how to work through these issues. This grant will give a pastor the opportunity to receive training for lay leaders within the congregation, be assigned a Coach to help facilitate and encourage him/her/they, and work in cohorts in an effort to seek resolutions and/or help work through and with these issues.

I look forward to my time in this work with Rev. David Russell, learning, growing, assisting and meeting many of you through this exciting opportunity with TPIRC. My e-mail is ilconfpriscilla@gmail.com. To learn more about the TPIRC and/or download the application form(s), visit the [website here](#).

CoachNet Global to train 20 coaches in the Illinois Conference

The Illinois Conference is proud to announce that CoachNet Global has been selected to train 20 coaches (15 for our Thriving Pastors Initiative) and our Conference Executive Staff.

Master Coaches, [Jonathan Reitz](#) and the Rev. Dr. [Felix Villanueva](#) will be our lead trainers. Rev. [Justo González](#), Interim Conference Minister, will also teach alongside them as a Professional Coach. It's time to discern if God is calling you to be a Professional Coach. We will provide all of the training to get you through your Associate Coach Credentials (ACC). The expectation is that every coach will be an accredited coach at the end of the process.

If you believe that God is calling you, please fill out the application that will be posted very soon. Check out [CoachNet Global here](#).

WANTED! Clergy Coaches and CCOP Group Facilitators for TPIRC Lilly Grant

We are looking for a few good pastors who are interested in serving as a Clergy Coach with three (3) other pastors in the Thriving Pastors in Revitalizing Congregations (TPIRC) Lilly Grant.

We also are interested in finding some good candidates to be Facilitators with small Clergy Communities of Practice for the 45 TPIRC Pastors.

Both [Clergy Coaches](#) and [CCOP Facilitators](#) will be trained: Coaches on May 13-17, 2019 and Facilitators on May 1-2, 2019.

[See our website](#) or contact ilconfdavid@gmail.com.



Need to energize and revitalize your church's strategies for faithful generosity? Does your church find it hard to talk about money? UCC Church Building & Loan Fund would like to make you aware of the Ecumenical Stewardship Center's (ESC) "Generosity transformed! your mission *your ministry* your money Conference, April 30 – May 3, 2019 in Indianapolis. For complete conference information and to register, visit [ESC's website](#).

UCC Church Building & Loan Fund can help your church with stewardship and much more! For more information about all the services we offer, please contact Priscilla Bizer, Regional Mission Interpreter, bizerp@ucc.org.

Mission Trip to Guatemala

Church members of Union Church of Hinsdale, UCC and San Lucas United Church of Christ, Chicago, return to Rabinal, Guatemala to continue their relationship and work with Habitat for Humanity, International and the good people of Rabinal.



Brown Bag Forum on anti-LGBT protestors at our churches.

In case you missed the Brown Bag Forum held at Immanuel UCC in Streamwood on how to handle anti-LGBT disruptors in worship, [read some of the points that were raised here.](#)



Polar Peace March participants brave cold weather to end violence in Chicago

St. Pauls United Church of Christ, Chicago and UCAN (Uhlich Children's Advantage Network), Chicago, began hosting the annual march five years ago. On January 20th, they raised \$50,000, which will go toward UCAN's violence-prevention efforts in Chicago.



Oh, Glory! Black Lives Matter Concert

Oh, Glory! A Black Lives Matter Concert features James Dargan, Baritone and Mark Whitlock, Piano. The concert showcases the songs and arias associated with five legendary black singers: Paul Robeson, Roland Hayes, Nina Simone, Billie Holiday, and Robert McFerrin, Sr.

Sponsored by the Fox Valley Association, the concert will be performed at five churches in the areas of Fox Valley and Chicago Metropolitan Associations.

[View schedule here and share!](#)

**OH, GLORY!
A BLACK
LIVES
MATTER
CONCERT
JAMES
DARGAN,
BARITONE,
MARK
WHITLOCK,
PIANO**

\$ 20
Freewill
Offering

7:00 p.m.

Monday, February 25	First Congregational Church of Geneva, IL 527 Hamilton St., Geneva
Tuesday, February 26	Second Unitarian Church, Chicago, IL 656 Barry Ave, Chicago
Wednesday, February 27	First Congregational Church of Elgin, IL 256 East Chicago St., Elgin
Thursday, February 28	Advocate United Church of Christ 10259 S. Avenue L, Chicago
Friday, March 1	St. John's UCC, Waukegan IL 1520 N. McAre Rd, Waukegan

A FVAUCC Production

News from the UCC Palestine Israel Network

Many of you helped to sponsor and pass a Resolution of Witness at UCC General Synod in 2017 calling for an end to the systematic ill-treatment of Palestinian children in Israeli military detention. Today, in response to that resolution, we are pleased to announce the publication of a new video-based curriculum for UCC audiences. [Read more here.](#)

["How Are the Children?" Trailer](#)

UCC Webinar: Climate Change and Forced Migration

An upcoming UCC webinar will address one of the most important issues of our time: climate change and forced migration. War, agricultural hardship, severe weather -- all of these can connect to climate change and the factors behind migration for millions of people. For example, one of the factors behind the much discussed caravan of migrants from Central America was climate change. How can people of faith respond to increasing climate migration? This webinar will feature four panelists who will address this. It will be on Feb. 13, 2019. [Sign-up now to join!](#) Register even if you can't make it, and a recording will be sent to you.

It's time to start scheduling your church's 2020 mission trip!

Mission trips to Back Bay Mission are great opportunities for learning, service, and fellowship. These week-long immersive mission experiences teach participants about poverty on the Mississippi Gulf Coast and prepare groups to serve in their own communities. [Click here to learn more about mission trips at Back Bay Mission, including how to register!](#)

[Click here to view the 2019 Mission Trip Calendar.](#)

Churches in the News

[New pastor brings clown background, focus on young people to Burr Ridge United Church of Christ](#)

[Caring Cupboards "planted" by Community United Church of Christ members are a blessing for struggling Morton residents](#)

Employment Opportunities

For the Interim Associate Conference Minister being called to serve the Illinois Conference UCC and Eastern and Western Associations [click here](#) to view position description outlining areas of responsibility. Deadline to apply: Feb. 12, 2019.

Click links to view [Ministerial opportunities](#) and [lay employment opportunities](#) within the Illinois Conference.

Conference Calendar for February

February 9: [Mental Health First Aid Workshop](#), 8:00 a.m. to 5:00 p.m. at Advocate Good Samaritan Hospital Health and Wellness Center, Downers Grove.

February 9: [Women In Islam](#), 2:00 p.m. at First Congregational, Geneva.

February 10: Rev. Tom Norwalk, Associate Conference Minister Serving Western and Eastern Associations, will be preaching at [Zion UCC in Gilman](#) at 10:00 a.m. as part of

the participation of Eleven Churches in the Eastern Association Pulpit Exchange.

February 10: [Angola Partnership Team Executive Committee Meeting](#), 2:00 p.m. at Union Church, Hinsdale.

February 10: [Ordination Service for Myra M. Taylor](#), 3:00 p.m. at Covenant United Church of Christ, South Holland.

February 14: Chicago Metropolitan Association Church and Ministry Team Meeting, 12:00 p.m. at St. Peter's UCC, Elmhurst.

February 15: [Queering Interdisciplinarity Conference](#) sponsored by Queer Theologians Illinois, 10:00 a.m. - 3:10 p.m. at St. James Commons, Chicago.

February 17: Rev. Tom Norwalk, Associate Conference Minister Serving Western and Eastern Associations, will be preaching at [St. John UCC in Lincoln](#) at 10:00 a.m. and after worship he will be sharing a presentation on the Angola Hymnal Project and the partnership with the Evangelical Congregational Church of Angola.

February 17: Rev. Dr. David Russell, Interim Associate Conference Minister for Stewardship and Church Vitality, will be visiting [First Congregational Church of Glen Ellyn](#) at 10:30 a.m.

February 17: [Service of Installation for Rev. Veronica Johnson and Minister Sarah Lusche](#), 3:00 p.m. at Hyde Park Union, Chicago.

February 17: [Ecclesiastical Council for Chad O'Neil](#), 3:00 p.m. at Community UCC, Champaign.

February 19: [Ecclesiastical Council for Yuki Schwartz](#), 7:00 p.m. at Wellington Avenue UCC, Chicago.

February 21: [Clergy Ethics Training](#), 9:30 a.m. - 3:30 p.m. at Trinity UCC, Quincy.

February 23: ["Empathic Listening and the Power of Nonviolent Communication"](#), 9:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m. at ManKind Project Chicago.

February 23: [Off the Pews: "Barbershop Talk: Keeping It Real"](#), 10:00 a.m. - 2:00 p.m. at the Hyde Park Art Center, Chicago.

February 24: Rev. Chuck Maney, Interim Associate Conference Minister Serving Prairie Association, will be preaching at [St. John UCC in Belvidere](#) at 10:30 a.m.

February 24: [Service of Farewell and Sending for Rev. Dr. David Stewart](#) at 3:00 p.m. at Kenwood UCC, Chicago.

February 24: [Celebrate Seminary Sunday](#) (UCC seminaries - Chicago, United, and Eden).

Upcoming Events

March 1-2: [Risking Connection: A Trauma-Informed Curriculum for Faith Communities](#), Villa Guadalupe Senior Center, Chicago.

March 2: [2019 Pathways to Justice Conference: "Take Action using Restorative Justice and the U.N. charter of Human Rights"](#), 9:30 a.m. to 3:00 p.m. at McCormick Theological Seminary, Chicago. Sponsored by CMA Justice & Witness, Illinois Conference.

March 3: [Service of Ordination and Installation for Elisabeth E. Patz](#), 3:00 p.m. at St. Paul's UCC, Elgin.

March 5-7: [2019 CHHSM 81st Annual Gathering](#), Chicago

March 10: Rev. Dr. David Russell, Interim Associate Conference Minister for Stewardship and Church Vitality, will be preaching at [United Church of Hyde Park, Chicago](#) at 10:30 a.m.

March 23: [Prairie Association Spring Meeting](#). Location: TBA

March 30: [Western Association Spring Meeting](#) at St. John UCC, Lincoln.

April 6: [Eastern Association Spring Meeting](#) at St. Paul's UCC, Monee.

April 27: [Fox Valley Association Spring Meeting](#) at St. Peter UCC, Lake Zurich.

May 4: [Chicago Metropolitan Association Spring Meeting](#) at Bethany UCC, Chicago.

May 13-17: Clergy Coach Credentialing Intensive Training, Location: TBA.

May 19: [Rev. Tom Norwalk's Retirement Celebration](#) 4:00 p.m. at St. Luke Union, Bloomington.

June 7-8: [Illinois Conference Annual Celebration](#) at Elmhurst College. "Love in Action: Life Together," the theme our Annual Celebration.

June 18-20: [National ONA Gathering](#) in Milwaukee. Rev. Justo González II, Interim Conference Minister, will be one of the Keynote speakers.

June 21-25: [United Church of Christ's Thirty-Second General Synod](#) at the Wisconsin Center, located in the heart of downtown Milwaukee.

[Visit our website](#)

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THE ILLINOIS CONFERENCE UCC E-BLAST is published by the Illinois Conference of the United Church of Christ, 1840 Westchester Blvd., Suite 200, Westchester, IL 60154. The Rev. Justo González II, Interim Conference Minister; Carmen Torres, Editorial Assistant. Copy may be sent to: ilconfcarmen@gmail.com.

This communication is made possible by your contributions to

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