



From the Conference Minister

Dear Friends,

Greetings in the name of Jesus the Christ.

One of the greatest decision and investment we may make in life may be the buying of a home. The buyer as well as the real estate agent has made popular the term "location, location, location." Some church planning and planting consultants have often made use of this same terminology. In relationship to organizational development and sustainability, the key three words might be "leadership, leadership, leadership."



Leadership of sober judgement is vital to human organization. Moses and Joshua needed to be aware of this in a time of leadership transition and in sustaining God's mission, God's people's future. We know how important leadership is in furthering the mission of the church, sustaining its ministry and being ever more faithful at time of change.

Our Illinois Conference, I believe, is at an important juncture in its ministry and discernment about the plans God has for us. Led by the Holy Spirit and able leadership, we are discerning the future and have also made decisions that help define where we are being led, by God. We are engaged in and have made some decisions about the following:

Working to secure the sustainability of our ministry, having already assessed the financial resources available to carry out our mission. Sustainability #2, also called "Mission and Structure" has been put in



QUICK LINKS

[Illinois Conference UCC](#)

[Chicago Metropolitan Association](#)

[Eastern Association](#)

[Fox Valley Association](#)

[Western Association](#)

[Prairie Association](#)

[Pilgrim Park Camp](#)

[Tower Hill Camp](#)

CALENDAR OF EVENTS

ASSOCIATION FALL MEETINGS
Chicago Metropolitan Association
 Saturday, Oct. 21, 2017
 Faith United Protestant Church,
 Park Forest, Ill.
 "Voices Still Speaking"

place and soon we will know what its goals and expected outcome are to be.

An investment of approximately \$2 million in our camps is a beginning to transforming them into conference and retreat centers. A group is to be established to develop a strategy for the camps' sustainability, ownership and support for a discerned vision.

Carrying out a capital campaign of an additional \$2/3 million for camp upgrades and improvements.

Responding to calls from a conference-conducted survey to address a deficit in the areas of both clergy and lay leadership. With the dollars set aside, a plan and program needs to be developed and implemented in response.

Conducting a campaign and raising \$4 million to strengthen a wider mission commitment and in support of the Evangelical Congregational Church of Angola, as they respond to enormous growth and the need for a seminary, student housing and a hospital.

Communicate and respond more effectively to the needs of our local congregations, as they strive to be vibrant in ministry and in their public witness.

The above in part may define some of what our future may look like, what leadership may need to be applied and much to be discerned and prayed about.

We should all be in discernment and prayer about our leadership and service to Christ and the Church. In doing so we might consider how we are making a difference in people's lives, in the local church, committee, association and/or wider church group in which we participate. We might ask:

How effective is my leadership and how is the group I am in affecting change and producing outcome?

How long have I served and what am I contributing to the mentoring and training of future leaders?

How many committees or groups am I serving on? Who am I keeping from or encouraging to occupy a leadership role?

If I am serving where I can make a meaningful contribution, or in more than one setting, why do I need to fill the vacancy that just became open elsewhere?

Do I think of myself much higher than I ought, rather than with sober judgment? (Romans 12:3-8)

Save the date;
more info will follow.

**Eastern and Western
Associations**

Saturday, Oct. 21, 2017
St. Luke Union UCC,
Bloomington, Ill.

Save the date;

[Click here for more info](#)

Fox Valley Association

Saturday, Oct. 21, 2017
9:30 a.m.

Save the date;

more info will follow.

Prairie Association

Saturday, Nov. 4, 2017,

Save the date;

more info will follow.

Service of Installation

**Rev. Ted Engelsdorfer as
Pastor,**

Sunday, Sept. 24, 2017
3:00 p.m.,

Union Congregational UCC
305 Gage Street,
Somonauk, Ill.

Service of Installation

**Rev. Josh Kuipers as
Associate Pastor,**

Sunday, Sept. 24, 2017
9:30 a.m.,

Congregational UCC,
40 West 451 Fox Mill
Boulevard
St. Charles, Ill.

RSVP: office@cuccstc.org

Service of Installation

**Rev. Daniel Dexter as
Pastor,**

Sunday, Sept. 24, 2017
First Congregational UCC

2100 Bates Avenue
Springfield, Ill.

Service of Installation

**Rev. Lisa M. Goods as
Senior Pastor,**

Sunday, Oct. 15, 2017
3:00 p.m.

Kenwood UCC
4600 South Greenwood
Chicago, Ill.

**Illinois Conference 7th
Annual Women's Retreat
"Somebody's Calling
My Name"**

Sept. 29-30, 2017
Pilgrim Park Camp,

Is there a need for me to acknowledge the difference between service and position holding?

Is it time to step up, serve faithfully as a consequential leader or to step aside, get out of the way, make room for someone else?

Do I need to step up, apply myself more faithfully with all my gifts, where God has called me to be and to serve?

At Conference Annual Meeting this past June, I shared with our church delegates the importance of discerning the times: "time to step up or to step down and get out of the way." I invite all of us to discern about leadership (ours and that of others). Good, sober judgment and leadership are vital in the life and ministry of the church.

In my discerning about a second term coming to an end next June as your Conference Minister, I pray to be attentive to, a better listener to what many voices have to say, to our elected officers, colleagues in ministry, the person in the pew, the local church, the expert, and even those I may perceive as lacking sober judgment.

Please know that your leadership is important and appreciated. I thank you for the ways you serve our beloved Christ and the Church. As Jesus' disciples, let us hold one another, our churches, members and staff in prayer that they/we may all be one in Christ.

Peace and grace to you,

Rev. Dr. Jorge L. Morales
Conference Minister

26449-1340 N. Avenue
Princeton, Ill.
[Click here for more info](#)

Autumn Adult Retreat
Sept. 29, 30 and
Oct. 01, 2017
Tower Hill Camp
12173 Tower Hill Road
Sawyer, MI
[Click here for more info](#)

**26th Annual Association
of Trained Intentional
Interim Ministers (ATIIM)**
Oct. 4-5, 2017
Starved Rock Lodge &
Conference Center
Utica, Ill.
[Click here for more info](#)

**UCC for Mental Health
WISE Congregations
for Mental Health
Conference**
Oct. 20, 2017
Venice UCC
630 Shamrock Blvd.
Venice, FL
[Click here for more info](#)



Report from the Associate Conference Minister for Stewardship and Church Vitality

There isn't one day that doesn't bring a catastrophe to our attention or a change in the culture that challenges the way we think about and do church. How do we go on? How do we go forward? It can be overwhelming, painful, frustrating and irritating.

"God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change." (Ps. 146:1, NRSV)

I believe that the Church is changing and will continue to transform to meet, challenge and be with the culture. This happens church by church, disciple by disciple, little by little. It means that the Church, local and wider, must embrace innovation, flexibility and agility to deal with this often directionless yet wonderful culture.

I am seeing and experiencing churches that are bit-by-bit changing and reaching out to the culture. Some examples:

- Imaginative intergenerational ministries with the neighborhood

- A LGBTQ welcoming youth drop-in center
- Skills training church and community youth to be entrepreneurs and independent
- A small groups ministry to engage church members
- Another church working its way through the process of becoming ONA
- Hosting a free weekly lunch for homeless and other locals, plus a clothing closet
- Live streaming Sunday worship, the sermon on Facebook and YouTube

I would like to start a collection of "Best Practices" in churches, ministries, innovations, programs, new directions, etc. that a church is doing and reaping results. My goal and hope is that these "Best Practices" can be put online with a link to our Illinois Conference website. Contact me if you're interested in helping make this happen.

Day by day, Christ comes alive in the spirited work of the faithful church folk engaging the new world. That's hope!

Partnering with you,

Rev. Dr. David Russell
Interim Associate Conference Minister
for Stewardship and Church Vitality

Report from the Fox Valley Association

Dear Friends:

Labor Day is past us, and it seems that though the days are still warm, evenings are cool, and the sun comes up a little later each morning. Some of you know that I am often in the office in Westchester *very* early a couple of days a week, and now it is still dark when I leave my home in Edgewater to get here on those days.

However, we will not lament the passing of summer for too long, for there are many fun and exciting things going on in the Fox Valley Association this fall!

On Sunday Sept. 24, we will install the Rev. Josh Kuipers to the staff of Congregational Church of St. Charles, at the 9:30 a.m. worship service.

On Saturday, Oct. 14, we will ordain Amanda Nagy. 3:00 p.m., also at Congregational Church of St. Charles. Clergy are invited to robe, and wear red stoles. Amanda will serve on the staff of the VA Clinic in Cleveland, as a staff chaplain. Amanda passed her Ecclesiastical Council with flying colors in August.

On Sunday, Oct. 15, we will ordain James Fisher. 3:00 p.m., at United Protestant Church of Grayslake. Clergy are invited to robe and wear red stoles. James has been called to serve Community Congregational in Elburn. An Installation Service will be scheduled later in the fall.

On Saturday, Oct. 21, the Fox Valley Association will gather for the Fall Meeting. We will be welcoming Christ Tamil Church of Chicago as an official congregation of the Fox Valley Association, United Church of Christ. We will gather at 8:45 a.m. for coffee and registration, and the meeting will begin at 9:30. Lunch will be provided. A registration form and the location of the meeting will be emailed to all churches and pastors very soon, so stay tuned. You may learn more about this congregation at www.christtamilchurch.com.

As members of the Fox Valley Association, Illinois Conference, UCC, it is the Covenant

responsibility of each pastor and church delegate to attend as many Association events as possible. I invite and urge you to come celebrate with these talented new pastors, and a new congregation in our Association.

I continue to be busy attending the standing committees of the Association. COM, COTC, J&W and Association Council all have meetings scheduled for September and October.

I also continue to strive to visit every FVA church as quickly as possible! I am scheduled to visit churches now through the end of November. By then, I will have just 14 more churches to visit to complete my goal of visiting all of your churches. I continue to pray for each church, and each pastor, retiree and MID each week.

I hope you all have a productive, Holy Spirit-filled fall.

Rev. Dr. James J. Olson, OCC
Acting Associate Conference Minister
Fox Valley Association and Chicago Metropolitan Association
Illinois Conference, United Church of Christ

Eastern and Western Associations holds Joint Fall Meeting

The Eastern and Western Associations will gather for a joint fall meeting on Oct. 21 at St. Luke Union Church in Bloomington. Our theme for our fall meeting is "Envisioning Congregational Vitality". We will host Rev. Gregg Carlson of the Center for Progressive Renewal as we share in opportunities to renew the vision of our congregational life. And we will hear and contemplate strategies for that renewal. Two of our Western Association congregations who have enlisted the services of the Center for Progressive Renewal will also share information about the work and opportunities that have occurred with the coaching of the Center's staff. Registration will begin at 8:30 a.m. [Click here to view more information](#).

Western Association News

The Western Association will be gathering for several important events over the next month to share in support and fellowship with our sister churches.

On Sunday, Sept. 10, we joined with members and friends of St. Paul UCC in Fowler, Ill., as they install their new Pastor, Rev. Dixie Croxton. The Service of Installation was scheduled at 4:00 p.m. A dinner followed in Pastor Dixie's honor.

First Congregational UCC in Moline will host an Ecclesiastical Council for Member-in-Discernment Tyler Spellious, as the Association gathers to examine and affirm his readiness for Ordained Ministry. The Association will gather at 4:00 p.m. on Sunday, Sept. 17, for this important moment in Tyler's journey toward Ordained Ministry in the United Church of Christ.

First Congregational UCC in Springfield will host an Installation Service for Rev. Dan Dexter as their Called Pastor on Sunday, Sept. 24, at 4:00 p.m. This will be a time of celebration of this joint ministry, and a time of fellowship will follow the service.

News from the Eastern Association

St. John UCC in Kankakee is planning a dedication service for their new church building addition which is scheduled for Sunday, Oct. 29. Building upon a vision the congregation has had to expand their facilities and to make those facilities totally accessible, the congregation undertook a campaign to raise funds. These funds will be used to add a new fellowship hall and kitchen, new office space, new meeting space, an elevator that reaches all levels of the building and accessible bathrooms. We look forward to the opportunities that this new addition brings for the congregation.



St. John UCC, Kankakee new church building.

Community United Church of Christ, located on the campus of the University of Illinois, is reaching out to the student community with a new program entitled Jubilee Café CUCC. This will involve preparing, serving and hosting a weekly meal for students and members of the University community who are needing food support due to the costs of their education, living expenses, etc. Beginning in October, this new program will allow an opportunity for the church community and beyond to provide an important and needed outreach ministry. We share our prayers for this new ministry!

St. Luke Union Church in Bloomington, a union church of the Presbyterian and United Church of Christ, recently completed a building project which increased their ability to extend their ministry into the future. They now are an accessible facility to all levels of their campus, provide generous new fellowship and classroom space as well as a fully functioning kitchen facility to provide opportunities for outreach and congregational fellowship. The Eastern and Western Associations will soon enjoy this new space when they gather for the joint Fall Association meeting in October.



St. Luke Union Church, Bloomington completed building project making the building more accessible.

LEEAP deadline fast approaching



DON'T BE LATE!

LEEAP application deadline is Oct. 1

[Click here to view and download application](#)

Tower Hill Camp welcomes Conference Council members



Illinois Conference members meet at Tower Hill during a two-day meeting.

Environmental Task Force announces new Faith resources

The Environmental Task Force is excited to announce a new Faith resource available to individuals and Faith Communities at the [Sustaining Creation website](#) as well as [Facebook page](#).

In addition to our eight-part small group video series: "Sustaining Creation-A Faith Journey", we will now offer a weekly brief video series: "Come & See".

About: "Come & See".

It is a video series intentionally focused on the unique intersection of Technology & Faith. It is intended to reveal what great good can be accomplished toward the saving of Creation, when our use of amazing new technology is guided by a Faith rooted in compassionate love of neighbor and all God's Good Creation.

Its biblical basis arises out of a prospective disciple's initial refusal to see:

Nathanael said to him, "Can anything good come out of Nazareth?" Philip said to him, "Come and see." John 1:46

In other words, this series is focused on overcoming our existing prejudices to see another way is possible.

This series is a practical expansion of "and yet there are reasons for hope" from our Sustaining Creation series and yet "Come & See" is significantly different in format as this series will explore this critical subject area of Faith & Technology through short weekly video segments.

The message of this series will consistently be "another way is possible". Never mind

the gloom and doom, cast aside all doubt, laugh at the devil, because God's Spirit is alive and at work in this world.

Every episode of "Come & See" contains these elements

- Renewable technology story that gives hope for future
- Scriptural foundation for our response
- Action you can take towards a sustainable life

We will be doing this series through the remainder of 2017 and all of 2018.

Hope you will join us each week as we respond to God's Call and our journey towards a Sustaining Creation.

Strengthening Spiritual Alignment event

First Congregational Church of LaGrange is working with the Center for Progressive Renewal's Convergence Leadership Project to offer a program to develop church leaders during this era of division, hatred, and strife. The first of three conferences was held in NYC on Aug. 18-19. The second will be at [First Congregational Church of LaGrange on Oct. 27-28](#), and third will be online Dec. 1-2.

Individuals and churches can register for a single event, or for the accompanying leadership coaching and training at the [Convergence Leadership Project website](#).

Mission Support announces deadline for 2018 grant funding

Illinois Conference Mission Support
grant application deadline is Nov. 14

[Click here to view and download application](#)





Does your congregation value food justice and land stewardship?

COME VISIT, SUPPORT US

Spend a Saturday on the farm: working, learning, worshipping, and enjoying God's good creation. Jubilee Farms United Church of Christ is the first farm church in the country within the UCC. Our sole mission is to feed our neighbors, regardless of their ability to pay. We cannot do that without support from you!

To schedule your visit call Cyndy Ash, 217.621.4068, or email cashswimming@gmail.com

Jubilee Farms United Church of Christ

9116 Texas Church Road

Clinton, IL 61727

JubileeFarmsClinton.com

Grace Cafe returns to Elmhurst churches for its 11th season

On Sept. 11, Grace Cafe returns to the Elmhurst community for its 11th year. Grace Cafe was started in 2007, as an ecumenical mission project to provide a free hot meal to anyone in the community and is currently supported by thirteen Elmhurst churches whose members provide two dinner gatherings per month for their guests. This year offers 18 opportunities for fellowship and sharing a meal, from September through May 2018. Community members who are hungry, lonely, facing a tight budget or are eager



Community members come together for dinner and conversation at Grace Cafe.

to share dinner, companionship and conversation with other folks are invited to come to Grace Cafe. Families are welcome! Meals will be served starting at 5:00 p.m. and concluding at 6:30 p.m. at the Elmhurst churches listed below. No reservations are needed and meals are free of charge to anyone who would enjoy them. For additional information, please contact First United Methodist Church at (630) 834-2440.

The Grace Cafe schedule for 2017-18 is:

2017

Sept. 25, St. Peter's United Church of Christ, 125 W. Church St.
Oct. 9, St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church, 893 N. Church Rd.
Oct. 16, Yorkfield Presbyterian Church, 1099 S. York Rd.
Oct. 30, Immaculate Conception Church, 217 S. Cottage Hill Rd.
Nov. 13, Elmhurst Presbyterian Church, 367 Spring Road
Dec. 4, Redeemer Lutheran Church, 345 S. Kenilworth
Dec. 18, First United Methodist Church, 232 S. York Road

2018

Jan. 15, St. Demetrios Greek Orthodox Church, 893 N. Church Rd.
Jan. 29, Visitation Catholic Church, 779 S. York Road
Feb. 12, Immaculate Conception Church, 217 S. Cottage Hill Rd.
Feb. 26, Redeemer Lutheran Church, 345 S. Kenilworth
March 5, Yorkfield Presbyterian Church, 1099 S. York Rd.
March 19, First Congregational United Church of Christ, 235 S. Kenilworth
April 9, Mary Queen of Heaven Catholic Church, 425 N. West Ave.
April 23, Visitation Catholic Church, 779 S. York Rd.
May 7, Bethel United Church of Christ, 315 E. St. Charles Rd.
May 21, Episcopal Church of Our Savior, 116 E. Church St.

Conference e-mail and website information

Listed below are the e-mail addresses and the website information:

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Conference Minister Jorge Morales: ilconfjorge@gmail.com
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Please visit the Illinois Conference website at www.ilucc.org.

The Illinois Conference now is on [Facebook](#); look for us.

Also, [online giving](#) now is available on the website.

THE ILLINOIS CONFERENCE UCC E-NEWSLETTER is published by the Illinois Conference of the United Church of Christ, 1840 Westchester Blvd., Suite 200, Westchester, IL 60154. The Rev. Jorge Morales, Conference Minister; Jacqueline L. Moore, Editor; Carmen Torres, Editorial Assistant. Copy may be sent to: ilconfcarmen@gmail.com.

This communication is made possible by your contributions to

Our Church's Wider Mission.

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