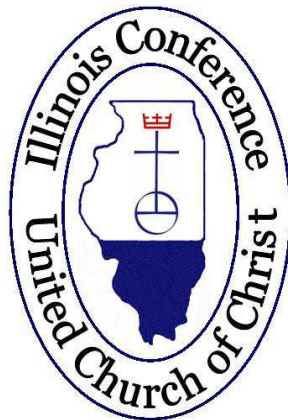


Illinois Conference
Annual Celebration
and 52nd Anniversary

“Continuing Testament:
Unleashing Our Ministry”



Registration Information Booklet



2015 All Conference Choir Rehearsal

June 17-18, 2016
Embassy Suites
100 Conference Center Dr., East Peoria IL
309-694-0200

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Greetings Sisters and Brothers of the Illinois Conference United Church of Christ,

The Conference's Annual Celebration is scheduled for June 17 and 18, 2016 in East Peoria at the Embassy Suites. I encourage each and every one of you to make plans to attend this important event, whether you are a delegate representing your congregation, an authorized minister, or an interested congregation member wanting to increase your awareness and involvement within the larger church.

Our keynote speaker is most appropriate to our theme, "Unleashing Our Ministry." The Rev. Traci Blackmon, recently appointed as Acting Executive Minister for Justice and Witness Ministries of the United Church of Christ, is pastor at Christ the King UCC in Florissant, Missouri. Rev. Blackmon exemplified how ministry happens outside the walls of a local congregation when she took a leadership role in local and national protest and awareness after the shooting death of Michael Brown, Jr. in 2014.

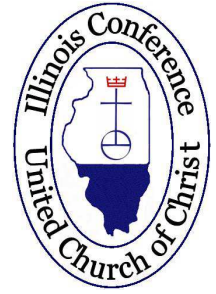
I always think of the Annual Celebration as not only a time to renew old friendships and make new ones across the Illinois Conference, but also a time of learning and of uplifting worship experiences. There will be time to take part in a mission project for the UCC Disaster Relief Team, and several energizers are designed to provide you some tools to help unleash ministry in your local congregation.

Please don't wait, register today. I look forward to seeing you in East Peoria.

Until then, Peace be with you.

Michael Linder, Illinois Conference President

In accordance with Article VI of the Constitution and Article II and III of the By-Laws of the Illinois Conference of the United Church of Christ, notice is hereby given that the 2016 Annual Meeting of the Conference will be held at the Embassy Suites in East Peoria Illinois June 17-18, 2016



The By-Laws, Article II provides:

1. Every local church which has standing in an Association of the Conference shall be entitled to representation in the Conference by **one voting lay delegate**, and in addition thereto, each such church shall be entitled to representation by **one voting youth delegate** (a person at least 14 years of age, but not older than 22.) A church of **800 or more members** shall have **one additional delegate and one additional youth delegate**.
2. All **ordained, commissioned and licensed ministers** who have standing or recognition in an Association of the Conference shall be **voting members**. The **members of the Conference Council** shall be voting members of the Conference during their term of office.

It is our hope that every church will be represented by its clergy, lay and youth delegates, and visitors at this 52nd Annual Celebration:

Embassy Suites
100 Conference Center Drive
East Peoria IL 61611

To make reservations by phone: Call **1-800-362-2779 (deadline May 25, 2016)**

Ask for Global Reservations; State your check in and checkout date
Mention: **United Church of Christ Block** and code **UCC**

To make reservations on-line:

Visit www.embassysuiteseastpeoria.com Select check in date and check out date. Click the blue link that reads "Add special rate codes" Enter **UCC** into the Group Code box; Select Check Availability



**RECEPTION
FRIDAY NIGHT
June 17, 2016**

**Let's Celebrate With
Rev. Traci Blockmon**

**After Opening Worship
Meet on the outside River Front Patio**



FRIDAY:

June 17, 2016

- | | | |
|----------|--|----------------------|
| 8:00 am | Registration, Displays, Bookstore | |
| 9:00 am | UCC Polity (Martha Brunell) | |
| 10:00 am | Energizers Session "A" | |
| | See pages 7 through 9 for descriptions | |
| 11:30 am | LUNCH (on your own) | |
| 1:00 pm | Energizers Session "B" | |
| | See pages 9 through 12 for descriptions | |
| | Opening Worship Practice | (Grand Ballroom ABE) |
| 3:00 pm | Gathering I | (Grand Ballroom ABE) |
| | Resolutions Introduction | |
| | Necrology | |
| 4:00 pm | Keynote Address | (Grand Ballroom ABE) |
| 5:30 pm | Dinner | (Grand Ballroom F) |
| 7:00 pm | Gathering II | (Grand Ballroom ABE) |
| | Election of Conference Leadership | |
| | Chalice Award Honorees | |
| 8:00 pm | Opening Worship: | (Grand Ballroom ABE) |
| | Preacher Rev. Traci Blackmon | |
| 9:00 pm | Reception | (The Deck/Patio) |

SATURDAY

June 18, 2016

- 7:00 am **Breakfast**
- 7:45 am **Executive Committee/Conference Council Meeting**
Meet in Fon Du Lac (Conference Center)
- 8:00 am **Morning Meditations** (Prayer/Meditation room)
Choir Rehearsal (Grand Ballroom ABE)
- 9:30 am **Gathering III** (Grand Ballroom ABE)
Reports: Conference Minister, Stewardship and Church
Vitality, Financial Reports and Budget Presentation
Community Renewal Society
- 10:30 am **Break**
- 11:00 am **Gathering IV** (Grand Ballroom ABE)
Updates on 2015 Resolutions
Church and Pastor Anniversaries
- NOON **Lunch** Hotel Atrium
“Mission Project”
Closing Worship Practice (Grand Ballroom ABE)
- 1:30 pm **Gathering V** (Grand Ballroom ABE)
Installation of Officers
Passing of the Gavel
Closing Worship
- 3:00 pm **Homeward Bound**

FRIDAY “A” Session Energizers.....10:00—11:30 a.m.

A1: The Different Shapes of Youth Ministry*Facilitator: Martha Mendoza*

Come learn how both youth and adults working together can plan for practical and relevant youth ministry at your local church. Building or re-energizing your church’s youth ministry using an intergenerational approach provides welcoming opportunities. This approach may be the answer for a church with no youth or just a few! We’ll share the practice of faith language and the principles and simple steps of engaging youth in their spiritual growth.

A2: With the Wisdom of Seasons: Tracking our Spiritual Lives*Facilitator: Rev. Dr. Martha Brunell*

Interior journeys of spirit like the earth’s exterior journey make their way from one season to another. Spiritual lives are not stagnant. They are on the move, characterized by change, embodying a range of experience and emotion. On the brink of the summer solstice, we will listen to the spiral or orbit of the earth’s seasons as a metaphor for identifying and leaning into where we each currently dwell in our spiritual lives. Every repeating season of the year and of spirit offers gifts and challenges that can open our willingness to grow.

A3: Growing the Church through Mission Partnerships*Facilitators: The Illinois Conference Angola Partnership Team*

Take a trip to Angola, Africa, to learn how your congregation can benefit from partnerships such as the *Illinois Conference Angola Partnership*. The purpose of this interactive session is to have you journey with us to Angola to discover how your congregation can benefit, grow, and build community, as we answer God’s call to extend our ministry beyond our local communities, and to receive God’s grace, blessings, and love, from a global ministry perspective. Partnerships are vital to the growth of our congregations. This is one trip you don’t want to miss.

Tour guides: The Illinois Conference Angola Partnership Team

“Working together to build the 1 body of Christ in 2 different places”

A4: Legacy Planning: Making a Difference for the Church's Mission

Facilitators: The Stewardship Team of the Illinois Conference

What is Your future vision for Your Church? You are a stalwart member and continue to be very active in participation and financial support. You can be counted on to answer the call. Have you thought of what happens to your Church when you are no longer around? Does your Church die after you die (everything you've worked for goes away)?

A5: Preparedness: A Mission of Hope in the Midst of Crisis

Facilitators: Rev. Roger Dart and Members of the Illinois Conference Disaster Ministry Team

What happens when a "natural disaster" occurs in your community? What can we do to prepare for ministry and mission in those places of need? Who can I contact to find out about resources and recovery when your community is challenged by disaster?

The Disaster Ministry team of the Illinois Conference will share how we respond both at a state and national level working with both governmental and non-governmental agencies to meet the needs of people affected by disaster. The team will help local churches to plan for preparedness as well as for the process of recovery – hearing from persons involved in recovery ministry – a mission of hope to persons affected by disaster.

A6: "No Money, No Mission"—A Local Evangelism, Envisioning, and Planting (LEEAP) Committee Presentation

Facilitators: The Rev. Dr. Edward Sinclair and Dr. Sammie M. Dortch and Members of the LEEAP Team

Clear mission and vision statements provide a church with a sense of direction and purpose. Successful implementation includes both financial and human resources...**"No money, no mission."** LEEAP funding provides opportunities for church revitalization and planting (new church starts).

This Energizer is designed to streamline the process for churches with an interest in honing LEEAP proposal writing skills and those that are first time applicants. The Energizer will include strategies for writing successful proposals among which will be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, reachable, timely) goals that illustrate how the mission and vision statements are implemented and measured, and the creation of financial documents that support the application.

FRIDAY "A" Session Energizers 10:00—11:30 a.m.

A7: Justice and Witness Ministries: A Call to Action

Facilitator: Rev. Traci D. Blackmon, Justice and Witness Ministries of the United Church of Christ

This energizer will feature conversation with Rev. Traci D. Blackmon, Keynote Presenter and Preacher for the Annual Celebration. Rev. Blackmon was appointed as the Acting Executive Minister of UCC Justice and Witness Ministries in October, 2015. Rev. Blackmon also serves as Pastor of Christ the King UCC in Florissant, Missouri. She became nationally recognized as a prominent voice for social change when Michael Brown was shot in Ferguson, MO, just miles from her church. She immediately got involved in assisting and collaborating with the people in the community working for justice. She shares: "The conversation must begin with a determination to listen and a willingness to be changed."

FRIDAY "B" Session Energizers 1:00—2:30 p.m.

B1: The Different Shapes of Youth Ministry

Facilitator: Martha Mendoza

Come learn how both youth and adults working together can plan for practical and relevant youth ministry at your local church. Building or re-energizing your church's youth ministry using an intergenerational approach provides welcoming opportunities. This approach may be the answer for a church with no Youth or just a few! We'll share the practice of faith language and the principles and simple steps of engaging youth in their spiritual growth.

FRIDAY “B” Session Energizers 1:00—2:30 p.m.

B2: Healing Wildness

Facilitator: Rev. Dr. Martha Brunell

In the world of spirituality, wildness has to do with our essential, unedited, authentic self. Mary Reynolds Thompson writes of the “wild beauty that is our deepest nature and greatest hope.” In our face-paced, accumulating culture, the essential wildness of both our core selves and the whole of creation around us are endangered. We don’t know who we are and we don’t know the earth from which we have emerged. The healing of our birthright wildness and the healing of the earth and its wildness are bound together, one manifestation of the interconnection of all. Thompson asks this question: “What if healing the world does start from within?” Her question is an invitation with which we will pause.

B3: Growing the Church through Mission Partnerships

Facilitators: The Illinois Conference Angola Partnership Team

Take a trip to Angola, Africa, to learn how your congregation can benefit from partnerships such as the *Illinois Conference Angola Partnership*. The purpose of this interactive session is to have you journey with us to Angola to discover how your congregation can benefit, grow, and build community, as we answer God’s call to extend our ministry beyond our local communities, and to receive God’s grace, blessings, and love, from a global ministry perspective. Partnerships are vital to the growth of our congregations. This is one trip you don’t want to miss.

Tour guides: The Illinois Conference Angola Partnership Team

“Working together to build the one body of Christ in two different places”

FRIDAY “B” Session Energizers 1:00—2:30 p.m.

B4: Unleashing Your Ministry: Missional/Narrative Budgeting

Facilitators: The Stewardship Team of the Illinois Conference

Discover the ways in which using a Missional/Narrative Budget helps to tell the story of your ministry and your mission. Uncover the priorities of your Church and the values that undergird your membership. Tell your story and share the Good News in a new way to inspire others to join you in fulfilling your call.

B5: Preparedness: A Mission of Hope in the Midst of Crisis

Facilitators: Rev. Roger Dart and Members of the Illinois Conference Disaster Ministry Team

What happens when a natural disaster occurs in your community? What can we do to prepare for ministry and mission in those places of need? Who can you contact to find out about resources and recovery when your community is challenged by disaster?

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FRIDAY “B” Session Energizers..... 1:00—2:30 p.m.

B6: “No Money, No Mission”—A Local Evangelism, Envisioning, and Planting (LEEAP) Committee Presentation

Facilitators: The Rev. Dr. Edward Sinclair and Dr. Sammie M. Dortch and Members of the LEEAP Team

Clear mission and vision statements provide a church with a sense of direction and purpose. However, successful implementation includes both financial and human resources. In essence, “*No money, no mission.*” LEEAP funding provides opportunities for church revitalization and planting (new church starts).

This Energizer is designed to streamline the process for churches with an interest in honing LEEAP proposal writing skills and those that are first time applicants. The Energizer will include strategies for writing successful proposals among which will be SMART (specific, measurable, achievable, reachable, timely) goals that illustrate how the mission and vision statements are implemented and measured, and the creation of financial documents that support the application.

B7: Unleashing Our Mission: Transforming the Local Church

Facilitators: The Ministry Leadership Team of the Illinois Conference

What is a Transformational Strategy for the local church? The Ministry Leadership Team in a working retreat began significant conversations about what it means to work toward a “turn around” strategy for congregations seeking new life in their ministry and mission. A transformational strategy must be biblically grounded, faith driven and must come out of a process that invites and engages the Holy Spirit, and is driven by prayer, Bible study and scriptural discernment.

“I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.” Isaiah 43:19

Join us in dialogue as we discern God’s call to transformative life and vitality as we seek to be outward focused; as we lay our foundation on the Christ instead of the church; as we worship and live with purpose and mission; as we promote an attitude of generosity; as we seek to engage in prophetic ministry; as we focus on discipleship and faith formation; as we engage in ministry in the community; and as we gain and fulfill a vision of hope for the future.

COSTS THIS YEAR:

Every effort has been made to keep the meal costs at a minimum but still offering selections for Friday’s dinner. We have contracted with the hotel for meals and will incur significant financial penalties if our minimum numbers are not met. Thank you.

<u>Registrations Fees:</u> NOTE Walk-in registration	\$100.00
Ordained, Commissioned and Licensed Ministers	\$100.00
Lay Delegate or Visitor	\$100.00
Conference Council Members	\$100.00
Youth Delegate or Visitor	\$55.00
Member in Discernment	\$45.00
Exhibitor	\$60.00
Retired Clergy	Complimentary
Attending Energizers only	\$25.00

Meals:

Friday Dinner	\$47.00
Saturday Breakfast	included in room rate
Saturday Lunch	\$24.00

Hotel:

Reservations must be made by May 25 for group rate of \$132.00 (plus 12% tax) NOTE: sleeping room includes breakfast.

See page 3 for on-line reservation link or phone number if preferred.

HOUSING: A rate for this meeting has been contracted for \$132/night (plus 12% tax.) Please see page 3 for registration instructions.

MEALS: The Planning Committee hopes that our delegates and visitors will order the meals offered in order to meet our contracted catering costs. Every effort is made to offer a variety while keeping the cost down.

CHILD CARE: Childcare (between the ages of 1 year—11 years) is available on advance request basis only. You will find a child care registration at www.ilucc.org. If no child care has been requested by June 6 none will be available at the meeting. Childcare will be provided during the Energizers, Worship and Gatherings only.

SUPERVISION OF YOUTH DELEGATES & YOUTH VISITORS: It is the responsibility of the local church to provide supervision of any youth under the age of 18. Youth delegates will follow the same schedule as their adult counterparts. The required youth form can be found at the Conference website: www.ilucc.org. The designated Youth Room will be the Schertz Room (located in the conference center.)

ENERGIZERS LOCATIONS & TIMES: Energizers will be in various rooms. The first Energizers (session “A”) will be Friday, June 17 at 10:00 p.m. The second set of Energizers (session “B”) will be on Friday, June 19 at 1:00 p.m. Please register for each session on the meeting registration form. Descriptions for each Energizer start on page 7. NOTE: Each Energizer has a limit of 40 participants except A-7 and B 7. Participants on first come, first served basis.

GATHERING SESSIONS & WORSHIP LOCATION: All Gathering sessions and worship will be held in River Grand Ballroom A-B-E (conference center.) Please be sure your cell phone is in the silent mode during gatherings and worship.

2017 GENERAL SYNOD 31



Make plans now to join your United Church of Christ family for an unforgettable experience at General Synod 31. Registration materials will be available later this year at www.ucc.org

Theme: make glad! #GS2017

June 30-July 4, 2017

Baltimore, Maryland

If you have never been a visitor to General Synod, this may be your time to go.

- ◇ Inspiring worship
- ◇ Workshops
- ◇ Displays from around the country AND so much more



**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**

THANKS TO OUR VOLUNTEERS

Our Illinois Conference depends on volunteers to make the Annual Celebration a success. We express our heartfelt appreciation to all who extend themselves Christ-like with the words recorded in the Gospel:

“Well done good and faithful servant. You have been faithful with a few things; I will put you in charge of many things. Come and share your [God’s] happiness!” Matt 25:21

Also, many thanks to the

Annual Celebration Planning Committee:

Rev. Kim Wood, chair. Ms Latonia Watson, Ms Brenda Jentink, Rev. Dr. Robyn Gray, Ms Pamela Stallings, Rev. Joe Ann Watson, Rev. Thom Parrott-Sheffer, Rev. Carol Currier-Frighetto, Rev. Lance Lackore, Rev. Jana Chwalisz, Rev. Dr. Martha Brunell, Rev. Mary Alice Suter, Ms Martha Mendoza. Staff: Rev. Tom Norwalk, Rev. Dr. Jorge Morales, Ms Naomi Else

Rev. Charlotte Nold, Signer

Rev. Lynn Bohlmann, Parliamentarian

THANK YOU

We wish to express our deep appreciation to our covenanting partner for their faithful support of our Illinois Conference .



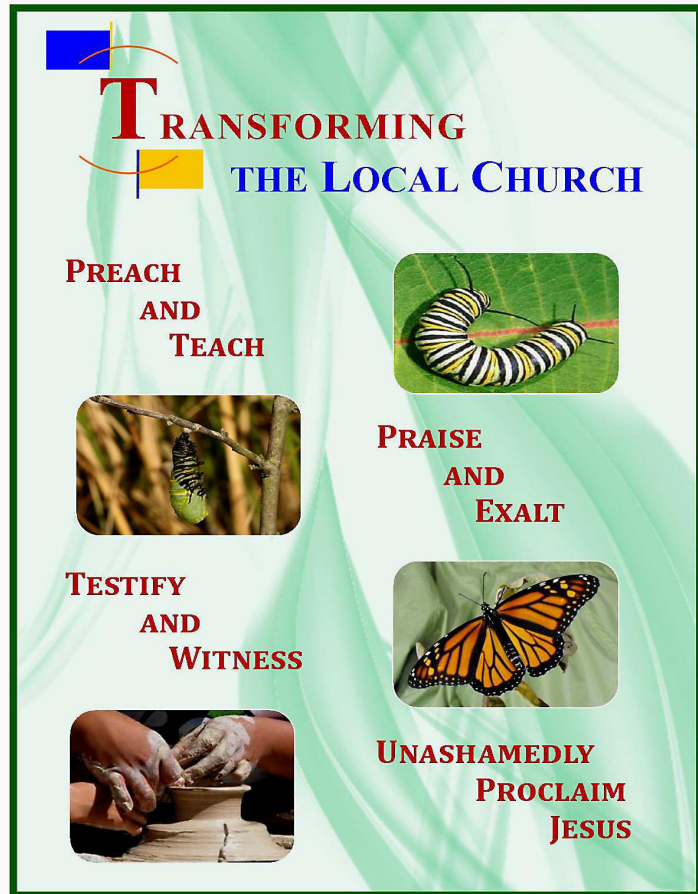
Mr. Jim Skogsbergh, CEO www.advocatehealth.com/

Thank you for providing the bags for the
2016 IL Conference Annual Celebration.



Our Illinois Conference Ministry Leadership Team (MLT) over a period of more than 18 months prayed, discerned and developed a strategy for working toward a “turn around” for local congregations seeking new life and vitality in ministry and mission.

This resource is available to you and your congregation.



“I am about to do a new thing: now it springs forth, do you not perceive it? I will make a way in the wilderness and rivers in the desert.” Isaiah 43:19

THE CHALICE AWARD

The recipients of the Chalice Award are recognized as servants of Christ and the Church, who has demonstrated exemplary leadership, extending self to others and making a significant impact on the ministry and witness of the Illinois Conference of the United Church of Christ, as an extension of God’s love in Christ Jesus, Head of the Church.



2016 Honorees

Mr. Teamous and Ms Barbara Newberne

Dr. Sammie Dortch

Rev. Betty Hornback

Rev. Robert Meissner

**ILLINOIS CONFERENCE 52ND
ANNUAL CELEBRATION**

June 2016 East Peoria, Illinois