



Illinois Conference of the United Church of Christ

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Welcome to the team Rev. Kim Wood as Acting Associate Conference Minister serving Eastern and Western Association.

Rev. Kimberly (Kim) Wood has served as a pastor in the Illinois Conference for 27 years. She holds a Master of Divinity degree from Bethany Theological Seminary, and a Bachelor of Social Work degree from the George Williams School of Social Work at Aurora University. Rev. Wood is experienced as both a settled and intentional interim minister and has worked extensively with congregations in the areas of transition, growth and vitality.

Rev. Wood's experience in the United Church of Christ ranges from the local church to the National setting. She has served as moderator of the Fox Valley Association, as a member of both the Illinois Conference Personnel Committee and the Conference Council, and as Co-Chair of the Illinois Conference Fitness Review Response Team. She was a member of the inaugural class of the Unified Board of the United Church of Christ from 2013-15, where she was part of the Wider Church Ministries Committee and served on the General Synod Planning Committee. She is an Open and Affirming Consultant and Building an Inclusive Church trainer and was part of the team to train local church trainers for the God Is Still Speaking and Ready! Set! Grow! Initiatives. Most recently, Rev. Wood has served as President of the Illinois Conference.

"All of these structures and ministries of the United Church of Christ," says Rev. Wood," are designed to support, resource, empower, and build relationships among local congregations. The United Church of Christ manifests God's covenant by the very nature of our design. Each setting is distinct. Yet we thrive on the relationships defined not only within our congregations, but also in Associations, Conferences, the General Synod, and global ministries. God engages in relationship and invites us to do the same. God remains distinct yet becomes one with us through Jesus and then binds us as one through the Holy Spirit."

Rev. Wood is passionate about empowering others to use their gifts and talents to serve God through Jesus Christ. Her ecumenical background serve her well as she seeks ways for the Holy Spirit to take hold of ideas and opportunities and give them wings. She grew up first in a rural church built by her great-great-grandparents which was part of a denomination that did not ordain women. Yet the church family that set her roots taught her to nurture and use the gifts God had woven into her creation. God shaped a community where she learned to put faith at life's center and serve God by serving others.

Like the fertile farms surrounding that church, kith and kin cultivated a rich environment that fed her call and provided solid ground for it to take root. God then flung the seeds of her faith wide in the winds of the Holy Spirit, planting her in various faith communities to learn and grow. From a Baptist background in southern Indiana, her family then moved geographically and denominationally into the Christian Church, Disciples of Christ and then the Presbyterian Church USA. Her faith journey led her to the United Church of Christ in 1979. And God asked, "How will you serve here?" Her educational journey in the Area Chicago Theological Schools system, where she was able to take classes at Chicago Theological Seminary, Lutheran School of Theology at Chicago, Northern Baptist Theological Seminary, and Catholic Theological Union, in addition to her coursework at Bethany Theological Seminary, provides an ecumenical palette that serves her well in engaging the diversity of the UCC and provides a broader sense of creativity and ingenuity in developing church and community partnerships. Says Rev. Wood, "We, the United Church of Christ, in both nature and purpose, exhibit God's covenant in our own existence by seeking to live out Christ's call that they may all be one. (John 17:21a)." *That They May All Be One* is central to her call to minister, lead, and serve.

Rev. Wood and her husband, Ron, have been married 31 years and have 4 children: Ashley and husband Kyle, and Jon and girlfriend Taylor, live in the Chicagoland area; Bethany is a grad student in Georgia; and Jacob is in high school and is an international martial arts competitor. They enjoy music, sports, travel, and family gatherings.