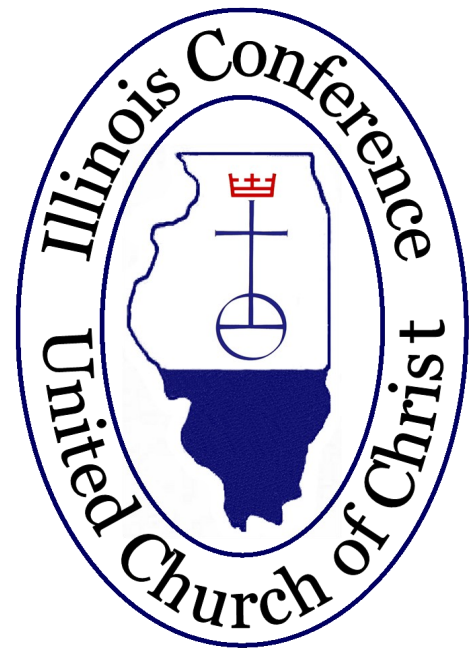


REPORT AND RECOGNITION BOOK



June 8-9, 2018
Elmhurst College
190 Prospect, Elmhurst IL 60126
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2018 ANNUAL REPORTS of the ILLINOIS CONFERENCE UCC

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Conference President's Report

Illinois Conference Annual Celebration

June 8, 2018

This is the third and final Annual Celebration over which I am presiding. Three, because I became president when my predecessor resigned before the end of her term. I have had the privilege of being the first Illinois Conference President to serve a two-year term after the amendments to our Constitution in 2015. It has been a long, and sometimes difficult 27 months, but I fully endorse the two-year term. It takes anyone a period of time to fully acclimate to the position and one year is not long enough to become as effective as possible.

I want to thank so many people for their support and assistance, advice and admonishment. It goes without saying that we all owe a debt of gratitude to our now-retired Conference Minister, Rev. Dr. Jorge L. Morales, to the Ministry Leadership Team, the site directors and staff of our two Outdoor Ministry sites, and of course the administrative support staff, without which no organization can function. The other officers who have served with me, the current and past members of Conference Council, the many committee chairs and committee members and volunteers who all put in countless hours in service to the Conference, have been true to their responsibilities, and have become my friends. And of course, to all of the congregations in the Illinois Conference and their many members, for financial support, but moreover for being witnesses to God's Love in their communities and in the world, my thanks, and the thanks of the Illinois Conference to you all.

This past year has gone quickly. The next major event after the 2017 Annual Celebration was taking a delegation of 54, plus some staff to the 31st General Synod of the United Church of Christ, in Baltimore MD. We had an outstanding delegation, including three high school youth out of CMA who stole the hearts of the entire Synod as they related what it was like to live with gun violence in their community.

Next, I attended the July 26 ground breaking ceremony at Tower Hill, as construction was about to begin on three new modern, 12-month-use cottages. Those cottages have just been completed and are now available to families as well as retreat groups. Six weeks later we took the Conference Council back to Tower Hill for an overnight retreat and Council Meeting. All year, a task we've called Sustainability II, led by Vice President Rev. Kimberly Wood, has combed over surveys and staged listening sessions around the Conference, in order to more clearly define the essential mission of the Illinois Conference as we go forward. As in most parts of the church, giving has declined, and we will soon be faced with either finding new revenue sources, or cutting back expenses. It makes sense to determine just what it is that the congregations who support us through their OCWM giving need from the Conference before we make future plans.

In the December – January time frame, our Conference Minister had surgery and was out of the office for a few weeks, and then came back to work on a partial day basis until he was able to work full time. During this time, the Conference Minister stayed in touch with staff, joined them in meetings by telephone, and went beyond what might have been expected. The staff worked well to see that all bases were covered, and we can be very proud of them all.

By March 1, our Conference Minister had decided not to seek another term in that office and gave notice that his service to the Conference would end May 31, 2018, to be preceded by earned vacation time that would consume the entire month of May. A succession plan had to be implemented quickly. We worked with the United Church of Christ's National coordinator for Conference minister searches, who attended a meeting of our Executive Committee. The Executive Committee decided to commence a search for a short-term (3 to 6 months) Acting Conference Minister, with next steps to be discussed and decided by the full Conference Council. I chaired a small committee, as outlined in our Bylaws, to seek an Acting Conference Minister, and

on April 14 the Conference Council met Rev. Charlene Burch and entered into a covenant with her to serve for up to six months, starting May 1, 2018. Char Burch will be at the Annual Celebration and I hope you will have a chance to meet and welcome her. At that April meeting, the Conference Council voted the next step to be to seek an Intentional Interim Conference Minister who might be with us 18 to 24 months or so. The committee that our Bylaws prescribes for an interim search seemed too small, and didn't adequately represent all the Associations, or give diversity in terms of age and race, so Council also authorized us to seek at least two more members. In fact, we found three who were accepted by the Executive Committee on my recommendation. I will use my report time at the Annual Celebration to update you on the plan of action and the progress to date.

The Annual Celebration Planning Committee has worked hard to make a meaningful gathering for all. By your request, the Annual Celebration will open with Worship, and we have brought back a Friday night banquet with social hour. We have taken out several of the parts of the business sessions that your evaluations indicated were not valuable to you. We have moved virtually all of the recognition to the Friday night banquet, making it a real celebration and streamlining the business sessions.

The slate of officers and committee chairs you will be asked to elect this year are capable and dedicated individuals, as are the officers whose terms continue until next year. I wish them well, and will keep them, all of our congregations and all of you in my prayers as I conclude my service as your president. While sometimes challenging, it has been a pleasure serving the Illinois Conference of the United Church of Christ.

May God's Peace be with You Always,

Michael M. Linder
Outgoing President



Illinois Conference United Church of Christ

Conference Annual Celebration
June 9th and 10th, 2017 at Elmhurst College

Report of the Conference Minister and Conference Marks of Achievements from 2009 to 2018

I want to thank the people of the Illinois Conference for allowing me the privilege of serving as your Illinois Conference Minister for the past eight (8) years. This ministry has in many ways been a blessing and satisfying journey in my life.

The ministry, health and future of our Conference are not charged to the care of its Conference Minister, but to its churches, elected leaders and general membership. Our Conference has very capable and able leaders that are presently discerning the future to which God is calling us. When I was called in 2010 it was around the theme “Building Trust in Changing Times” (from the search Conference profile) and following the adoption of “A New Conceptual Framework for Staffing”.

I want to reference some of our Conference marks of achievements during my tenure as Conference Minister in the years of 2010 - 2018. It is important to note that most achievements are not the result of the effort of any one single individual. Much of what we accomplish is usually the common effort of a team of people working together on common goals and objects. This is true in what has been accomplished in our Illinois Conference in the last eight (8) years.

Building Trust in Changing Times:

Between 2009 and 2018 we lived into and in the “New Conceptual Framework for Staffing” that was adopted just prior to my calling as Conference Minister. Over a nine (9) year period the same level of ministerial



staffing was sustained. During the same period there was the addressing and minimizing of internal stress, conflict and poor communication between elected leadership and the Ministry Leadership Team (MLT.) The need for improved communication had been acknowledged by Conference Executive Committee as far back as September and November of 2007. At that time Conference Executive

Committee had and Association levels were addressed and went away within a few of years and the Associations began to tie Conference Annual Celebration Themes to their Spring and Fall Association Meetings. Conference Annual Celebration Themes had continuity from one year to the other, rather than moving each year from one unrelated area/theme to another. A common Conference, Association letterhead was developed and used across the whole IL Conference. This later also led to local joint Association Fall Meetings resulting in greater collaboration, communication and trust.

A significantly important achievement was an increase of diversity (racial and cultural LGBTQ and gender equality) within the Ministry Leadership Team and Conference staff, with the Calling/hiring of Revs. Evans, Powers, MacPherson, Olson and a short term contract with Rev. Monroe. Also the Outdoor Ministry most recently hired its first African American Camp Site Manager, Mr. Douglas Pompey.

The Sustaining of Covenant Relationships:

Accepted invitations and responded to all invites extended to the Conference Minister by local churches and pastors.

Promoted OCWM and Mission Friends giving, and communicated gratitude for gift from local churches, drafted documents interpreting OCWM as the life line of our Conference ministry and vital expressions/means of living in covenant.

Guiding and staffing the revising of the IL Conference constitution, by-laws and Personnel Policies by the Conference Fair and Just Task Force.

Funding and Grant making:

The level of funding (\$150,000 to \$180,000) allocation of grants for new and renewed church development has been maintained, while increasing the fund balance for the Local Evangelism Envisioning And Planting Ministry (LEEAP) program. Conference achieved National UCC recognition on expertise in new and renewed church development using legacies left by disbanding churches. We also shared gained knowledge and expertise in the areas of legacy, property receivership, management and property repurposing with other UCC Conferences and with the UCC National offices (Rev. David Schoen; Church Legacy and Closure Resources.)

Resources development Fundraising:

The Tower Hill Camp Easement, "Save the Woods. Support the Camp" that had been in discussion for



several years was implemented, resulting in the raising of \$489,000. This was done by establishing and strengthening relationships with home owners, conversation with conservatory leaders and the Deer Creek Open Space Association. This resulted in successful fundraising and establishment of the conservation easement. Mr. Larry McCure provided significant leadership with this project.

Conference adopted Gift Acceptance Policies that were drafted by gifted volunteer leadership and with Rev. Doug Zimmerman playing a vital role

Del Arsonal Parading at Tower Hill and promoting "save the Woods. Support the Camp", Easement.

The Major Gift Initiative (MGI) was carried out under the Ministry Leadership Team and other key Conference leadership participants. The MGI resulted in rising over \$2,262,000. The Major Gift Initiative funds include \$1,250,000 for Tower Hill Camp, \$500,000 for Pilgrim Park Camp and \$417,173 in undesignated funds to be used for staff support, leadership development and children and youth ministry (the areas of the MGI.) The MGI was proposed and mostly staffed by Rev. Dr. Melbalenia Evans under the consulting services of Deacon Rosalyn Priester.

The Anderson Trust at Tower Hill Camp, in 2014 made available \$138,750, of which a portion was designated for repairs to the Tower Hill dining hall and \$88,750 for scholarships in a trust for children and youth campers.

Legacies from disbanding churches:

There was the cultivation, guiding and securing of legacies from local churches that disbanded, for the support of Conference ministry including LEEAP, Outdoor Ministry (ODM), and Mission with Angola, leadership development, and smaller contributions for OCWM. The receivership, management and repurposing of local church property secured over \$3,353,457 in property sales in 2016 as assets for Conference ministry. This included approximately \$447,270 set aside for equipping leaders (lay and clergy development.)

The Conference saved hundreds of thousands of dollars by maintaining and strengthening relationships with attorneys that provided pro bono services in the receivership and repurposing of property and in services to local churches. Much gratitude is expressed to Mr. Earl Talbot, Mr. Rudy Shade and Mr. Dick Conser for their service as Conference attorneys.

Stewardship in Legal matters:

The Conference Annual Audit records show that Conference had assets in 2008 of \$5,360,000 and assets on April of 2018 of \$6,250,000. The collaboration, with national legal Counsel saved our Conference many dollars in providing legal assistance to churches and in the settling or resolving of law suits that included our Conference as a defendant.

Covenant relationships were maintained and strengthened with ministry partners, including Community Renewal Society, Advocate Health Care, Grace housing and others.

The Chalice Awards:



The Chalice Award was instituted for the recognition of the service of faithful servants to the Church that provided vital leadership and witness at local churches, Association, and wider church levels. Each chalice has been handmade by Rev. Denise Griebler.

The Mission Friends Appeal:

The Mission Friends Appeal has been sustained by individual donors raising between \$25,000 and \$45,000 each year between 2009 and 2018.

UCC National Relationships:

Maintained and strengthened communication with the National offices of the UCC, UCC Board of Directors, Council of Conference Ministers/CCM, Great Lakes Region CCM, Church Executives, National Legal Counsel and National Staff Team Leaders.

The building and sustaining of ecumenical relationships with the Council of Religious Leaders, Muslim Council, Chicago Broadcast Ministries, Ecumenical Chicago, Elmhurst College and others.

Property Receivership, management and Repurposing:

We drafted and adopted strategies and policies for pastoring to members of disbanding churches, and for the receivership, management and repurposing of received/legacy property. Also Collaborated with appropriate staff and attorneys in the appraisal and sale of legacy properties given to our IL Conference. Secured and developed, with attorney support the appropriate documents, including church resolutions needed by local congregations, attorneys and Conference for the receivership and sale and/or recording of legacy property.

Justice and Witness Ministry:

J&W Ministry was increase through the establishment of an Illinois Conference Task Force on Immigration. Advocacy was carried out in support of keeping the national Justice and Witness Ministry from being eliminated at National UCC level by constitution and by-law changes. Resolutions were adopted and supported in partnership with other Conferences, at regional level and at General Synod in the areas of immigration, mass incarceration, the New Jim Crow, Israel and Palestine, gun control and others.

The Conference Ministry Leadership Team impacted the ministry and experiences commonly held at Regional Great Lakes Conference Ministry by showing awareness and commitment on a number of issues including church development, the New Jim Crow and others.

In 2014 the MLT drafted a formula later adopted by Conference Council to share General Synod delegation cost between the individual candidate, his/her local church and the Conference.

Clergy Communities of Practice:

Conference Initiated the Clergy Communities of Practice program in support of local pastors and adopted the same as an integral part of Conference ministry in 2016. Leadership was provided for the CCoP by Rev. Linsey Halpern-Givens, Rev. Dr. David Russell and now by Rev. Lucas King.

New Church Starts:

A number of new church starts took place. Grace UCC, the first racially diverse church in Eastern Association was started in Sauk Village in 2014, in partnership with Covenant UCC (South Holland, IL.) The first Tamil church was started in 2015 in the Fox Valley Association, Christ Tamil UCC.

The three other most recent new church starts are Gilead, Jubilee Farm and Light house, Chicago. We thank Dr. Sammie Dortch for her recent and present leadership in the LEEAP program.

Conference 50th Anniversary:

The 50th Anniversary of the IL Conference (by the merger of the Congregational Christian Association and the Evangelical and Reform Synod.) The celebration included recognition of at least one (1) new church for each year between 1964 and 2014. Conference Annual Meeting power point presentations were given, promotional materials developed, historical documentation shared. The celebration included a document on the E&R Synod written by Rev. William Nagy, placemats with pictures and history of Conference Minister leadership, information on our two Camps and other items.



The Angola Partnership:

Maintained and strengthened the Angola Partnership with two (2) delegations traveling to Africa in 2015 following the 2014 visit by four (4) representatives from the Evangelical Congregational Church of Angola to our Conference Annual Meeting. Rev. Tom Norwalk has provided significant leadership in maintaining and strengthening our Angola Partnership.

Installation of the General Minister and President:

Chicago Illinois and the Illinois Conference were one of the three (3) cities selected for the celebration and Installation of the United Church of Christ President and General Minister Rev. Dr. John C. Dorhauer at Trinity UCC on April 16, 2016.

Placement Coordination:

The Conference centralized the facilitating of ministers profiles by having Ms Connie Owens fill that function (in fall of 2016), becoming one of the first UCC Conference Placement Coordinators, helping to reduce workload for our Associate Conference Ministers in the area of Search and Call.

Others:

A Conference Survey on basic functions was conducted in 2016 with over 220 responses. The survey was done with the assistance of a student from Elmhurst College. The survey was made available to the Conference sustainability, Mission and Structure task force for consideration and action in the groups work.

Special Assistance:

Special Assistance grants continue to be made available to 3 to 5 persons in need each year, while not diminishing the fund balance. Grants on some occasions are made in partnership with the Pension Board of the United Church of Christ, Ministerial Assistance.

Expressions of Gratitude and Appreciation:

Throughout my ministry in the Illinois Conference, I have been blessed by working with many gifted, talented and generous persons. I am deeply grateful for the love and support I have received from so many servants of Christ and the Church while with you in Conference Ministry.



IL Conference Staff gathered for Farewell Luncheon

I want to thank colleagues, members of the MLT for faithful service and commitment to common mission, goal setting, and collaboration. It has been a great privilege to have worked with Rev. Tom Norwalk, Rev. Kathy Lawes, Rev. Dr. Melbalenia Evans, Rev. Dr. Vertie Powers, Rev. Jonathan Knight, Rev. John Buttrick, Rev. Edward Goode, Rev. Michael Denton, Rev. Edward Davis, Rev. Dr. David Russell, Rev. Dr. James Olson, Rev. Paula Comper and Brother Mr. William Serritella. They all have been a

blessing in my life and I will always love them as friends and kin in Christ.

Special thanks to Ms Naomi Else, Ms Carmen Torres, Ms Connie Owens Ms Julie Grendahl, Rev. Wayne Macpherson, Ms Tracy Diehl and Ms Jackie Moore for their commitment and fine services to the Conference and support of our common ministry.

Working with Conference elected leadership has been a growing and blessed experience including very committed Conference presidents. During my tenure as Conference Minister those Conference Presidents include: Rev. Wanda Seydel, Ms Harlette Washington, Rev. Robert vonTrebra, Ms Janice Blickhan, Rev. Doug Zimmerman, Ms Mary Newcomb, Rev. Vanessa Monroe and Mr. Michael Linder - Thank you.

To all with whom I have shared this time, including the many not mentioned, I want to express my deepest gratitude as I embark on a new path and journey. My prayers for all and particularly our elected Conference and ministry leadership is God's continued guidance.

With you serving The Christ,
Rev. Dr. Jorge L. Morales



Annual Report: Interim Associate Conference Minister for Stewardship and Church Vitality

By the Interim Associate Conference Minister

June 8-9, 2018

*"I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth,
do you not perceive it?" (Is.43:18b)*

Yes! I can honestly say I perceive God doing new things, I have seen new forms of Christ's living church emerging. I have moved around the Illinois Conference into all five Associations where each Association is a unique witness of the church gathered and each is an exciting experience of holy energy and mission.

For me Stewardship is an attitude of gratitude for what God has done and is doing. I see the Illinois Conference reaching out to the local church as a steward of vital resources that can help to equip the local church for ministry in this new world. I believe this to be the stewardship mission of the Conference.

To better connect the Illinois Conference "body of Christ", 27 "Visiting Disciples" are visiting churches on a Sunday morning bringing greetings from the wider church and listening to the hopes and needs of that church. The Stewardship Team has responded to churches with information, resources and personal visits. August 25, 2018, we will be hosting two dynamic stewardship workshops with Rev. Michael Piazza at Westchester Community Church and Rev. Eugene Grimm at Zion church in Peru.

Revitalization is God's gift to the church! It is our opportunity to come alive with the Spirit and reach out in service and mission in the community. LEEAP has committed \$178,923 to help equip the revitalization of eleven churches, assist in planting four new church starts and support a project to engage young people and seniors to have transformed lives. We were gifted by the presence and leadership of Rev. Chris Davies from the national UCC setting who facilitated two visits of five days of evolutionary church thinking and sharing for 22 local churches.

To strengthen the spiritual life of our pastors, we now have five Clergy Community of Practice groups with more coming. These groups provide a safe confidential place for our clergy to gain support and grow in learning.

I have visited local churches where the spirit of vitality is emerging in a multitude of ways and expressions: streaming their worship; serving the Latino neighborhood as a mission of multiple ministries; worshipping in a Chicago bar and reaching millennials; tutoring children at the neighbored school; pastors trained as coaches for churches; being a sustainable agriculture and food justice farm church; 160 year old church becoming Open and Affirming; helping low income neighbors with a monthly laundry day; providing weekend food back packs for hungry school children; providing weekly overnight food and shelter for the homeless; working to raise awareness and make a stand against violence. And this is only the tip of the iceberg.

God is not done with us yet. There is still more "church" to come.

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

2018 Associate Conference Minister's Report
Rev. Dr. Vertie Powers
For the Chicago Metropolitan Association

Little children, you are from God, and have conquered...the one who is in you is greater than the one who is in the world. – 1 John 4:4

I continue to give thanks for the opportunity to serve the people of God, known as the Chicago Metropolitan Association. God continues to work through the people of God to bring the good news and to make that news manifest in our care for the least of these, our brothers and sisters. We care through our social justice advocacy of health care, jobs training/retraining, food and clothing programs, ending the violence, fair and equitable treatment through our criminal justice system, abolishing the tier structure of citizenship, honoring the rights of all of our citizens in the United States in their pursuit of life, liberty, and happiness. I ask today as Rodney King asked all those many years ago, “can’t we all just get along?” As the people of God we work towards making that a reality and that is the beauty of the good news. The good news of Jesus Christ; he is not dead; he is risen just as he said. New life can still rise out of chaos. God is still able to bring about the miracles that we so desperately need in these days. That is why the celebrations of Ordinations and Installations bring such great joy. In those celebrations there is new life. Even as some congregational ministries are closed, they are able to represent new life by the Legacies they are able to leave. And that is cause for great joy. Throughout our Chicago Metropolitan Association new life is blossoming. We are an Easter people. We are a resurrected people.

I am about to do a new thing; now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?
– Isaiah 43:19

Drawn together by the Holy Spirit, we are a distinct and diverse community of Christians that come together as one church, joining faith and action. In covenant with the church in all of its settings, we serve God in the co-creation of a just and sustainable world as made manifest in the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This is the core purpose of the United Church of Christ and speaks to us directly here in the Chicago Metropolitan Association. We are a distinct and diverse community.

Change is never easy, but as we move forward into the newness of God’s present day for us we realize that we don’t have to fear change. We just need to realize that change is happening for change is constant. Christ is still able to move and remove any problem, any obstacle, and any mountain so that his light can shine and pierce the darkness to bring about hope and new life. With the obstacles that we are now facing we cannot afford to be complacent or quiet. I believe the church has a responsibility to all people and not just a select few. It is time now for the church to be the Church and lift her voice to be heard as we address all social injustices even as we work to eradicate racism and fear. We are able to do this and more because we have been empowered by the Holy Spirit to do great works that will exalt and glorify God. Some of that work took place in events throughout the year and that are noted below

During the past year CMA participated in:

- five (5) Ecclesiastical Councils in CMA,
- fifty-six (56) meetings and events in CMA and the Illinois Conference,
- forty-four (44) face to face meetings with MID’s, clergy, and lay leadership,
- twenty-five (25) visits to local churches for worship and special occasions,
- eight Ordinations,
- six Installations,
- four non-traditional Search and Call processes with small congregations, and
- celebrated the retirement of five clergy and the Farewell and Release services.

The Off The Pews initiative continues to grow and expand to other Clusters within the CMA. Last year saw multiple youth participating in classes that covered nutrition, gardening entrepreneurial skills, financial literacy, camping, technology among others. Our Wisdom members attend workshops and seminars on aging, technology, Western and Eastern medical views and financial literacy.

There were five additional events that I participated in that were very meaningful to me. I attended the Community Renewal Society's two day Anti-Racism training with leadership provided by Crossroads; General Synod with some exceptionally bright and engaging young people who were not afraid to share from the heart regarding violence; appeared on the Television show, Different Drummers with two youth to talk about violence and particularly gun violence in Chicago; spent a day reading to youth during the summer Freedom School program; attended the CMA's Winter event where I got to be inspired by my good friend Ron Buford. With the world and technology evolving as quickly as it is I had a day where pastors and I from across the CMA met to talk about our future and what we see as our future.

Again, thank you, Illinois Conference for the opportunity to be God's servant in service to the Chicago Metropolitan Association.

Submitted by,

Rev. Vertie Powers

2018 Associate Conference Minister's Report
Rev. Tom Norwalk
For the Eastern and Western Associations

"Later on that day, the disciples had gathered together, but, fearful of the Jews, had locked all the doors in the house. Jesus entered, stood among them, and said, "Peace to you." Then he showed them his hands and side. Jesus repeated his greeting: "Peace to you. Just as the Father sent me, I send you." Then he took a deep breath and breathed into them. "Receive the Holy Spirit," he said." John 20:19-22

As I prepared this report for the Eastern and Western Associations for their Spring meetings, I was reminded of how important our task is in being witnesses of the Resurrection. The Early Church used the Resurrection of Christ as a greeting to one another: "Christ is Risen! He is Risen Indeed." It was a phrase of celebration which reminded them of the words that Jesus had shared with the disciples and the religious authorities that his resurrection would come to pass. God's promise in Jesus' resurrection is a message of hope and a call to serve. I had the privilege of preaching on the Second Sunday of Easter with the passage above as a portion of the Gospel text. Jesus comes into a place of fear where the disciples had shut themselves to bring a word of peace and a charge to go into the world with the Holy Spirit's fire in their hearts. One of the things that I also noted about this particular text was that in his Resurrection appearance, Jesus made visible to his disciples the wounds that he had endured. "He showed them his hands and side." Our task as the church is to share the power and vitality of God's Spirit alive in us and to share God's good word with the wounded of the world."

I give sincere thanks for the opportunity I have had to serve with sisters and brothers in the fellowship of the Eastern and Western Associations of the Illinois Conference of the United Church of Christ. It is a privilege for me to share the gifts and relationships that God has placed in my life with the congregations where I visit and consult, with the Clergy who are my colleagues and co-workers, and with the lay leaders who give so generously of time, talent and treasure to make the church a community that is nurturing God's vision for transformation. It doesn't mean that our lives are always easy or hopeful – but knowing we are Resurrection people makes a difference, even in times of our own woundedness – it reminds us that we have been given the power and tools to change people's lives.

A significant part of my ministry is working with congregations in time of pastoral transition. In the past year I have worked with church councils and search committees in five (5) congregations in the Western Association and ten (10) congregations in the Eastern Association. Eight (8) of these congregations have called Pastors to serve in settled and designated ministries. One (1) congregation in Western continues in the search process while six (6) in the Eastern Association are in various stages of the process. We give thanks for the ministry of Rev. Ken Kramer who had served St. John in Lincoln until the start of his disability. We also celebrated the retirement of Rev. Jerry Tupper from his service at Congregational UCC in Pekin and Rev. Dr. Thom Parrot-Sheffer retired from ministry at Plainfield Congregational Church. We share our honor for the ministry of Rev. Jim Williams and Rev. Ken Kuenning who now know the hope of resurrection following their deaths. Both served faithfully in the Western Association.

I have the good fortune to celebrate with congregations at Installations as new Pastors are welcomed into new communities of faith and as congregations share anniversaries of their founding and witness to their ministry for the future. I have been invited to preach in many congregations of the Associations, and to be in consultation with Pastors and congregational leaders as they have invited my presence and counsel. It is a true pleasure to staff five (5) Clergy Clusters in the two (2) Associations who join in a regular meeting each month where I am able to share my support and to offer a connection to the wider church.

The Associations have been so very blessed in this past year with significant leadership! Mary Newcomb and Rev. Bob Sherman, as Co-Chairs, have led our Church and Ministry Team members in the Western Association. Rev. Ken Kramer began the year as our Western Moderator, but due to health concerns was unable to fulfill his commitment. Sue Welch, our Vice Moderator, has been able to help when needed and has done a great job along with members of the Planning team. In the Eastern Association, Howard Nelson and Rev. Doug Zimmerman serve as Chair and Vice-Chair of the Committee on Ministry while Rev. Eric Quinney Burnard led our Association Council with the able assistance of David Holston as Vice-Chair. I am very grateful for the many Association members who serve on other Association and Conference Committees and share their gifts with the wider church.

I am grateful for my colleague, Kathy Lawes, with whom I share the joys and responsibilities for ministry in the Western Association. We consult as frequently as we are able and do have the health and vitality of the Association as our mission through the service we share. Both Kathy and I are able to do our work in the Western Association due to the fine ministry of our colleague, Connie Owens. The gift of her Spirit and her strong commitment to the work we do makes the Western Association a place of hospitality and welcome. All of the Conference is also blessed by her ministry as our Search and Call Coordinator. I am always hearing from pastoral candidates of how they have been assisted by Connie. My last set of thanks goes to my partner in life and in ministry, my wife, Becky, who “shares” me with all of you!

“Christ is Risen! He is Risen Indeed!” May this be our word to all we serve!

Blessings,
Rev. Tom Norwalk

2018 Associate Conference Minister's Report
Rev. Dr. James J. Olson OCC
For the Fox Valley and Chicago Metroolitan Associations

Brothers and Sisters in Christ;

Grace and peace to you all. This Annual Celebration Report will detail what I have been up to this past year as the Acting Associate Conference Minister serving the Fox Valley and Chicago Metropolitan Associations. It has been a busy time, as I have continued learning the highways and routes around the Association, finding churches, and working on both the technical aspects of learning this job, and the relational aspects of getting to know everyone.

I continue to attend the standing committees of the Association. The Committee on Ministry in particular has had a productive year; they have interviewed and accepted several new clergy to the Association; we have ordained and installed several new pastors as well. The Lavon Bayler Scholarship fund was particularly flush this year, so we were able to give several more awards than usual. The Justice & Witness Team continues to offer multiple opportunities for churches and individuals to be involved in the work of making the world a better place. In particular, they offered a successful Lenten Day of Justice, at the Algonquin Church, with several excellent workshops. The Committee on the Church continues visiting various churches of the Association, to re-establish excellent relationships and to provide opportunity for churches to get to know what else is going on in the Association. The Association Council has met regularly to coordinate the work of the Association. I am grateful for the hard work and dedication of those who serve.

At our Fall 2017 meeting, held at Faith Community Church in Bensenville, we welcomed Christ Tamil Church as a full member of the Association, Conference, and denomination. Pastor Godwin Raj was granted full FVA standing. Christ Tamil members spoke about their congregation and their joy at becoming a UCC congregation. Certificates were given, speeches were made, and then Christ Tamil led us in a spirited and joyful worship service incorporating many elements from their tradition...we even learned to sing some Tamil! A superb lunch of the most delicious Indian food followed.

Our Spring 2018 meeting, held at Congregational United Church of Christ in St. Charles was exceptionally well attended with nearly 90 registered, and 29 churches represented. I delivered a "State of the Association" address. 33 of 45 FVA congregations met or exceeded their OCWM goals for 2017, and 27 of those churches were 5-for-5 congregations in 2017. Since 1993, (the earliest that the records in the UCC Data Hub go,) 16 FVA congregations have left the denomination or closed...7 left, 6 closed, and 3 merged into the new Faith Community in Bensenville. Those churches that left but remain open account for 2/3rds of the membership decline since 1993. It is certainly true that churches are feeling pressure from the decline in membership and giving dollars. But, there are signs of growth and health in many churches...I am anecdotally hearing that several churches have Confirmation classes for the first time in years.

As of the writing of this report, I have just two more FVA congregations to visit, and then I will have visited and spoken at every congregation in the Association. It has been a true joy and pleasure to visit each congregation, to see differences and similarities; to experience a moment of grace at every worship service, to hear about your dreams and fears, your hopes for the future and the pride you all have in your pasts.

I continue to work with various churches in the FVA and CMA as they seek new pastoral leadership. Currently I have 11 churches in some stage of the search process, with at least three more on the horizon. Two churches have pastors on family leave, and several pastors are on Sabbatical. I continue to work with various congregations in the ONA process.

Additionally, this past year, I am grateful to have received funding to take and complete the Certificate in Executive Leadership for Ministry at McCormick Seminary. The FVA Council very graciously approved funding sufficient for my course and books and I want to take this opportunity to thank them for their generosity. I hope to apply the things that I have learned in the past year to help strengthen the work and ministry of the FVA.

And, as you know, we are in transition at the Conference level, with the retirement of Rev. Dr. Jorge Morales. We have welcomed the Rev. Char Burch as our Acting Conference Minister. We, the Ministry Leadership Team and other staff of the Illinois Conference covet your prayers during this time of transition. Thank you to all who have aided in the work of the FVA this year, and to my colleagues who have continued to mentor and guide me as I have continued to learn how to be most effective in this ministry. May peace be with you all.

Rev. Dr. James J. Olson OCC

2018 Associate Conference Minister's Report
Rev. Kathy Lawes
For the Prairie and Western Associations

Grace and peace, sisters and brothers in Christ!

For everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven.

-Ecclesiastes 3:1 NRSV

...give thanks in all circumstances; for this is the will of God in Christ Jesus for you.

Thessalonians 5: 18 NRSV

How did the author of Ecclesiastes know? Had s/he experienced all the life events mention? In times of transition – and the church of Jesus Christ is always in transition – it is good to know that other witnesses have gone before us, experiencing life's joys and journeying with grief, knowing that *for everything there is a season, and a time for every matter under heaven*. Interestingly, the author does not include a “time for giving thanks” – perhaps because people of faith don't want to believe there is a contrasting action, such as a time for withholding gratitude. I'm glad. There is always time for giving thanks, and that is what fills this report on my past year of ministry as your Associate Conference Minister Serving the Western and Prairie Associations.

I give God thanks for persons who have discerned God's call upon their lives, and for the congregations that nurture and mentor and raise those persons. Especially I'm thrilled that the Prairie Association ordained Ms Julie Eklund to the Ministry of Word and Sacrament in her home church – Spring Creek, Rockford – which has supported Julie in pursuing this call so lovingly and richly.

I give God thanks for Ms Mary Newcomb and The Rev. Bob Sherman, co-chairs of the Western Association Church and Ministry Committee; for Rev. Judy Harris, chair of the Prairie Association Church and Ministry Committee, and for former chair, Rev. Gary Stillwell. Their leadership and attention to the important tasks and ministries of this committee are vital. They seek to strengthen our churches and pastors through the support they provide not only to the committee but to the entire Association.

I am thankful to God for the 16 licensed pastors serving congregations in the Prairie Association, and for our annual Licensed Ministers' Retreat at Pilgrim Park, where we gather for fellowship, education, re-licensure interviews, and time together in one of our beautiful Outdoor Ministries settings.

I thank God for the ministries of the congregation of the East Main Congregational UCC in Galesburg. After nearly 125 years of faithful witness to the risen Christ, the congregation made the difficult decision to conclude its ministry on October 1, 2017.

To God, I am thankful for the ministries of the Stark Congregational UCC in rural Princeville; this country setting was home of the church for 133 years. Their service of closure and de-consecration of the building and contents on May 15, 2018, testified to the faithful work of faithful people in Jesus' name.

I am grateful to God for the opportunities to work with the Revs. Ken Kramer and Bill Riegle, moderators of the Western and Prairie Associations, respectively. These two Associations are stronger because of their ministries and dedication. When Ken's health precluded him from serving in this capacity, former moderator Rev. Bob Sherman and current vice moderator Ms Sue Welch stepped up; thank you!

I give God thanks for the ministry of the Rev. Tom Norwalk, whose energetic commitment, faithful ministry and deep love for our churches and colleagues both inspire and challenge me to be a better servant. Our shared ministry in the Western Association is rich and rewarding; thank you.

I am grateful to God for the administrative assistance of both Ms Connie Owens (Western Association and Search & Call) and Ms Julie Grendahl (Prairie Association.) They are both attentive to detail, quick to respond, and genuinely supportive of our pastors and churches.

I give God thanks for the lives, ministries and faithful witness of these pastors who have died; each one, in his/her own way, influenced my own ministry:

+Rev. Theodore “Tedd” Bryant, who was ordained in our Byron church, provided pulpit supply at Woodside for several months, and served a UCC congregation in Iowa;

+Rev. Kate Feeney-Bastian who, while no longer living in the Prairie Association, mentored me when she served as pastor and teacher of St. Paul’s, Hinckley;

+Rev. Kenneth “Ken” Kuenning, Pastor Emeritus of the Church of Peace UCC in Rock Island, which he served with faith and conviction from 1969-1995. In 1957, Ken was a delegate to the Uniting General Synod of the United Church of Christ, merging the Evangelical and Reformed Church and the Congregational and Christian Churches, in Cleveland;

+Rev. Ward Malloy, who served as pastor and teacher of Bethany, Freeport. Ward was inspiring, cheerful, faithful and especially kind; and,

+Rev. James “Jim” F. Williams, who served congregations in Illinois, Michigan and Ohio prior to his last pastorate at Bethel Memorial UCC in Creve Coeur from 1985-1996.

I bid farewell to Rev. Dr. Jorge L. Morales as our Conference Minister, and wish him and Marta the very best in this next chapter in their lives. I’m grateful for Rev. Char Burch’s presence and leadership as our Acting Conference Minister, and for the work of our Conference President, Mr. Mike Linder, in guiding us through this transition.

I am ever-grateful for God’s presence, Spirit, and mission in the churches of the Illinois Conference; for the pastors who work diligently and faithfully to care for their congregants, make disciples, and witness to their wider communities. It is indeed a privilege and honor to be in ministry with you.

In the coming year, I am certain that the Spirit will work through and among our congregations to care for, tend to, nurture, feed, bring hope, seek justice, and teach God’s people in the ways of the risen Christ. Legacies of love and faithfulness will continue to be built, and there will be – as there always is – much for which to be grateful.

Yours in Christ’s service,

A handwritten signature in cursive script that reads "Kathryn A. Lawes". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned below the text "Yours in Christ's service,".

Rev. Kathy Lawes

Associate Conference Minister Serving Prairie and Western Associations

2018 ILLINOS CONFERENCE CELEBRATING SPECIAL RECOGNITIONS

ORDAINED SINCE LAST ANNUAL MEETING:

CMA

Rev. Troy Underwood
Rev. Denise Grossman
Rev. Kathryn Price
Rev. Jasmin Taylor
Rev. Ashley Dowden
Rev. Regena Glenn-Caldwell

EASTERN

Rev. Mark Jacobs

FOX VALLEY

Rev. Amanda Nagy
Rev. James Fisher

PRAIRIE

Rev. Julie Eklund

WESTERN

None

PASTORS NEW IN ILLINOIS:

CMA

Rev. Cynthia Stahler

EASTERN

Rev. Grant Speece

FOX VALLEY

Rev. Josh Kuipers
Rev. Sean Weston
Rev. Karen Nachtigall
Rev. Lynn James

PRAIRIE

Rev. Ted Engelsdorfer
Rev. Rita Root
Rev. Dr. Adam Webber
Rev. Dr. Kent Ulery
Rev. Steve Welker

WESTERN

Rev. Santina Poor
Rev. David Lorenzen

NEW POSITIONS WITHIN ILLINOIS:

CMA

Rev. Calvin Bloesch
Rev. Michael Daly
Rev. Ashley Dowden
Rev. Lisa Goods
Rev. Jamie Hawley
Rev. Michelle Hughes
Rev. Daniel Sather
Rev. Emily Snowden

EASTERN

Rev. Melbalenia Evans
Rev. Mark Jacobs
Rev. Deborah Owen

FOX VALLEY

Rev. James Fisher
Rev. Godwin Raj

PRAIRIE

Rev. Michelle Prentice-Leslie
Pastor Colleen Lawrence

WESTERN

Rev. Jane Courtright
Rev. Dixie Croxton
Rev. Laurie Hill
Rev. Jan Johnson
Rev. Robert Sherman

REMEMBERING THE SAINTS♥:

"For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor rulers, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Romans 8:38-39 (RSV)

CMA

Rev. Walter Coffey, Jr.	02/05/18
Rev. Arthur "Don" Coleman	10/27/17
Rev. Laslo Hunyady	03/02/17
Rev. Douglas Runnels	04/05/18
Rev. George Rice	

EASTERN

None

FOX VALLEY

Rev. Glenn Mensing	11/22-17
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PRAIRIE

Rev. Theodore "Tedd" Bryant	03/13/18
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WESTERN

Rev. James Williams	12/15/17
Rev. Kenneth Kuenning	04/05/18
Rev. Kenneth Kramer	05/15/18

ORDINATION ANNIVERSARIES: *(certificates given for 50 years with 5 year increments)*

CMA

Rev. Armin Limper	70 yrs.
Rev. Geralds Rees	55 yrs.
Rev. John Bell	50 yrs.
Rev. Michael Barker	45 yrs.
Rev. Curt Fuller	45 yrs.
Rev. Susan Thistlethwaite	45 yrs.
Rev. Peggy McClanahan	40 yrs.
Rev. Eliezer Pascua	40 yrs.
Rev. Joseph Shank	40 yrs.
Rev. Donald Fairley	35 yrs.
Rev. Myrna Gilgore	35 yrs.
Rev. M. Susan Harlow	35 yrs.
Rev. Ann James	35 yrs.
Rev. Michael Montgomery	35 yrs.
Rev. Brenda Aghahawa	30 yrs.
Rev. Brenda Barnes Jamieson	30 yrs.
Rev. Zenobia Brooks	30 yrs.
Rev. Sharon Ellis-Davis	30 yrs.
Rev. Mary Matthews-Thompson	30 yrs.
Rev. Mary Parish	30 yrs.
Rev. Chong Won Yi	30 yrs.
Rev. Alma Crawford	25 yrs.
Rev. Nicole Grasse	25 yrs.
Rev. Margaret Neal	25 yrs.
Rev. Janet Aldrich	20 yrs.
Rev. Mark Jargstorf	20 yrs.
Rev. Carol Jennings	20 yrs.
Rev. Kevin McLemore	20 yrs.
Rev. Rhoda Barnes	15 yrs.
Rev. Alletta Jumper	15 yrs.
Rev. Rebecca Love	15 yrs.
Rev. Janet Moore	15 yrs.
Rev. Phyllis Pennesssee	15 yrs.
Rev. David Wywialowski	15 yrs.
Rev. Yoruba Brewer	10 yrs.
Rev. Jason Coulter	10 yrs.
Rev. Sarah Garcia	10 yrs.
Rev. Andrea Lasticly	10 yrs.
Rev. Aaron McLeod	10 yrs.
Rev. Mar Elizabeth Moran-Cross	10 yrs.
Rev. Reginald Williams, Jr.	10 yrs.
Rev. Mark Barclay	5 yrs.
Rev. Sandra Florentino	5 yrs.
Rev. Gwendolyn Moore	5 yrs.
Rev. Harriet Joyner	5 yrs.
Rev. Kim Shelton	5 yrs.
Rev. Brandyn Simmons	5 yrs.
Rev. Janet Smith	5 yrs.

EASTERN:

Rev. Robert Cetina	55 yrs.
Rev. John Libert	45 yrs.
Rev. Dr. MaryAnn Dier-Zimmerman	35 yrs.
Rev. Grant Speece	30 yrs.
Rev. Connie Williams-Moodie	25 yrs.
Rev. Mary Anderson	25 yrs.
Rev. Patricia Rittenhouse	25 yrs.
Rev. Rosa Frias	15 yrs.

FOX VALLEY

Rev. Philip Desenis	65 yrs.
Rev. Robert Kasper	65 yrs.
Rev. Arthur Zillgitt	60 yrs.
Rev. Paul Meltzer	55 yrs.
Rev. Robert Stout	55 yrs.
Rev. Welton Warkentin	55 yrs.
Rev. Paris Donehoo	45 yrs.
Rev. Elizabeth Hambrick-Stowe	45 yrs.
Rev. Gary McCann	45 yrs.
Rev. David Pattee	30 yrs.
Rev. Richard Malmberg	25 yrs.
Rev. Catherine Batten Balk	20 yrs.
Rev. Kirk Moore	20 yrs.
Rev. Lois Bucher	20 yrs.
Rev. Brandon Woosley	20 yrs.
Rev. Nancy Schatzeder	15 yrs.
Rev. Paige Wolfanger	15 yrs.
Rev. Eric Fistler	10 yrs.
Rev. Terrence Gallagher	10 yrs.
Rev. Nancy Fraley	5 yrs.
Rev. Jillian Zarlenga	5 yrs.

PRAIRIE

Rev. James Powers	45 yrs.
Rev. Hugh Knapp	45 yrs.
Rev. Martha Brunell	40 yrs.
Rev. Deborah Jarvis	30 yrs.
Rev. Chuck Maney	15 yrs.
Rev. Dawn Jones	10 yrs.
Rev. Dave Bateman	5 yrs.

ORDINATION ANNIVERSARIES: *(certificates given for 50 years with 5 year increments)* con't.

WESTERN

Rev. Dr. John Noonan, Jr.	55 yrs.
Rev. Dwight Borden	45 yrs.
Rev. Richard Reinwald	45 yrs.
Rev. James Winship	45 yrs.
Rev. Daniel Dexter	35 yrs.
Rev. Stephen Barch	25 yrs.
Rev. Lynn Bohlmann	10 yrs.
Rev. Mariah Marlin-Warfield	10 yrs.
Rev. Mary Alice Suter	5 yrs.

RETIRING:

CMA

Rev. Sally Iberg
Rev. John Hobbs
Rev. Dr. Jorge L. Morales
Rev. Avena Ward

FOX VALLEY

None

WESTERN

None

PRAIRIE

Rev. Ralph Carr
Rev. Mary Gay McKinney
Rev. Sue Shanks

EASTERN

Rev. Dr. Thom Parrott-Sheffer

CHURCH ANNIVERSARIES: *(certificates given for 100 years with 25 year increments)*

CMA

None

PRAIRIE

1st Congregational, Lee Center 175 yrs

EASTERN

United Church of Chebanse	150 yrs.
St. Paul's, Minonk	150 yrs.
Illini Congregational, Warrensburg	150 yrs.

WESTERN

None

FOX VALLEY

1st Congregational, Waukegan	175 yrs.
Lyonsville Congregational, Indian Head Park	175 yrs.

**2018 BALLOT
of the
ILLINOIS CONFERENCE
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

OFFICERS OF THE CONFERENCE:

'20	PRESIDENT	Rev. Kim Wood (Prairie)	Two year term
'20	1st VICE PRES	Mr. David Holston (Eastern)	Two year term
'20	SECRETARY	Ms Kathy Hummel (FVA) (election for 2nd Term)	Two year term
'19	TREASURER	Mr. Len Adell (WA) (no election this year)	2nd two year term
Floor Nomination(s)		_____	

CHAIRPERSONS of STANDING COMMITTEES:

'19	Annual Meeting Planning	Rev. Jana Chwalisz, (FVA) (no election this year)	1st term
'20	FAB	Rev. Dave Bateman (PA)	2nd term
'19	Nominating Cmte.	Ms Belinda Gross (no election this year)	1st term
'19	Personnel Cmte.	Rev. Tom Ewing (EA) (no election this year)	2nd term

OTHER CHAIRPERSONS:

'20	Mission Support	Rev. Kris Hewitt, (FVA)	1st term
'20	Justice/Witness	Rev. Marilyn Pagán-Banks (CMA)	2nd term
'19	Outdoor Ministry Cmte.	Mr. Brett Johnson (FVA) (completing term of Larry McCure)	
'20	LEEAP	Rev. Jason Coulter (CMA)	1st term
Floor Nomination(s)		_____	

ILLINOIS CONFERENCE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
2017 ANNUAL CELEBRATION JUNE 9 – 10, 2017
ELMHURST COLLEGE, ELMHURST, IL

FRIDAY, JUNE 9, 2017

1ST GATHERING

Mike Linder, President, welcomed everyone and called the meeting to order.

Rev. Josh Kuipers led the opening prayer.

Dr. Troy VanAken welcomed Conference Delegates to Elmhurst College and gave opening remarks.

Rev. Dr. Vertie Powers and Rev. Dr. James Olson welcomed all to the Annual Celebration of the Illinois Conference.

Mike Linder announced that the Parliamentarian for this meeting is unable to attend due to a family emergency. If anyone needs parliamentary help they can consult Rev. Kim Wood. Mike also announced that Kathy Hummel, Conference Secretary, will serve as Secretary for this meeting, Rev. Kim Wood will handle announcements and speak-outs, and that Marva Campbell-Pruitt will serve as timer.

Naomi Else gave the Registrar's report; 138 delegates present, all Associations represented

Mike Linder reviewed the agenda. There is one addition to the agenda to Gathering 2 and Gathering 3. A resolution from the Fox Valley Association; "Ban on Fossil Fuel Subsidies & Divestment Initiatives. Finance Climate Action, Not Fossil Fuel Subsidies"

Bill McCarthy moved to accept the agenda as amended. Barbara Schmidt seconded the motion.

AM17-06-01

VOTED to approve above motion

PASSED

Michael Linder called everyone's attention to the "Covenant of Hospitality and Welcoming" in our meeting packets.

Rev. Jorge Morales introduced Illinois Conference staff and former staff.

Michael Linder introduced Honored guests

Michael Linder asked the body to grant voice without vote to guests, speakers and to our covenant partner representatives. NO OBJECTIONS

Michael Linder gave the Conference President's report.

Rev. Kathy Lawes and Rev. Tom Norwalk presented the Necrology of Saints

Rev. Dave Bateman introduced the 2018 budget process and stated that the budget will be shared for comments at the Fall Association Meetings followed by Conference Council approval in November.

Sheryl Magee presented the 2017-2018 Nomination Ballot.

Mike Linder asked for nominations from the floor. Hearing none he called for a motion.

Marva Campbell-Pruitt moved to accept the ballot as presented. Rev. Catherine Erwin seconded the motion.

AM17-06-02 VOTED to approve the above motion **PASSED**

Rev. Kim Wood explained the process for announcements and speak-outs.

Rev. Emily Davis blessed the evening meal.

2nd GATHERING

Michael Linder called the body to order.

Lisa Seiwert gave a brief presentation on Chicago Theological Seminary.

Rev. Tom Norwalk gave a brief presentation on the Angola Partnership and introduced Rev. Dr. Mendez Sambalundo, Rev. Mike Solberg, and Nancy Reed.

Rev. Dr. Jorge Morales and Rev. Dr. Melbalenia Evans introduced James Skogsbergh, President and CEO of Advocate Health Care and presented him with a gift recognizing Advocate's contribution to the Major Gifts Initiative. Mr. Skogsbergh accepted the gift and shared greetings and news from Advocate Health Care.

Rev. Jorge Morales introduced the Chalice Awards recipients. Rev. Dr. Vertie Powers, Rev. Kathy Lawes, Rev. Tom Norwalk, and Rev. Dr. James J. Olson, OCC presented the Chalice Awards to Rev. Donald Schmidt and Ms Barbara Schmidt, Rev. Bob Dell and Ms Joyce Dell, Rev. Barbara and Mr. Robert Taylor, and Rev. Bruce Salter and Ms Betty Salter.

Rev. Kim Wood shared announcements.

3rd GATHERING

Michael Linder called the body to order.

Rev. Dr. David Russell gave the Stewardship and Church Development report and shared a video about two new church starts.

Rev. Dr. Jorge Morales gave the Conference Minister's report and challenged us to step up.

Rev. Dr. Jorge Morales introduced Rev. Dr. Melbalenia Evans as the Major Gifts Initiative (MGI) initiator. Rev. Dr. Evans gave a short presentation about the MGI and explained the focus on Children, Youth, and Young Adult Education, Conference Staffing, Justice and Witness Ministry, and Leadership Development.

Rev. Dr. Evans introduced Deacon Rosalyn Priester as the MGI Consultant and presented her with a gift of gratitude. She also introduced the members of the team and presented them with a certificate of acknowledgement: Dr. Sammie Dortch, Rev. Bill Grice, Larry McCure, Rev. Dr. Jorge Morales, Rev. Tom Norwalk, Rev. Malcolm Griffith, Rev. Joseph Mills, Teamous Newberne, Rev. Doug Zimmerman, Rev. Dr. Vertie Powers, and Rev. Dr. David Russell.

Rev. Dr. Evans presented the Crystal Award to Rev. Roger Dart and Harriet Dart (Congregational Church of Deerfield), Bob and Barb Dieckmann (accepted by Kathy Hummel in their absence), and Dr. Sammie Dortch for their extravagant gifts to MGI. Dr. Evans also recognized the following major donors; Robert and Bobbi Taylor, Robert and Barbara Raymond, and Michael Linder.

Rev. Evans and Rev. Morales unveiled the Giving Tree. Rev. Evans invited the delegates and attendees to join the Ministerial Leadership Team, Conference Staff, Conference Council, churches, lay leaders and others to participate in the MGI by filling out the form provided in the meeting packet.

Rev. Dave Bateman gave the end of year financial report.

Rev. Marilyn Pagán-Banks moved to accept the financial reports pending audit. Motion seconded.

AM17-06-03 VOTED to approve the above motion **PASSED**

Rev. Dr. Curtis De Young gave a presentation on Community Renewal Society. He thanked Rev. Morales for his participation on the board and introduced Dr. Sammie Dortch as the new chair of the board.

Rev. Kim Whistler-Vasko announced the Great Lakes Regional Youth Event that will be here at Elmhurst College in 2018.

Rev. Terry Gallagher moved to adopt the Resolution “Ban on Fossil Fuel Subsidies & Divestment Initiatives. Finance Climate Action, Not Fossil Fuel Subsidies.” and to suspend the required one year of study. Rev. Don Schmidt seconded the motion.

Michael Linder explained the process to suspend the year of study. Motion to suspend the rules.

AM17-06-04 VOTED to approve the above motion **PASSED**

Michael Linder explained the rules of debate. Rev. Gallagher spoke to the resolution followed by debate. Motion to adopt the resolution.

AM17-06-05 VOTED to approve the above motion **PASSED**

Michael Linder will ask the Conference Council to review the current process for resolutions for next year.

Rev. Kim Wood shared announcements

4TH GATHERING

Mike Linder called the body to order.

Rev. Roger Dart presented the Illinois Conference Disaster Response Team report. Rev. Dart expressed appreciation to two (2) churches from our Conference; Granville UCC for being the first church to send a group of volunteers to Florida after hurricane Matthew and to Open Table UCC for feeding the first responders and the victims of the Ottawa and Naplate tornado.

Larry McCure and Rev. Carol Currier-Frighetto gave the Outdoor Ministries report.

Rev. Tom Norwalk, Rev. Kathy Lawes, Rev. Dr. James J. Olson, and Rev. Dr. Vertie Powers presented the Anniversaries and Retirement recognition.

Rev. Jana Chwalisz recognized Rev. Thom Parrott-Sheffer as the outgoing chair of the Annual Celebration Committee and announced that the 2018 Annual Celebration would be at Elmhurst College on June 8 & 9.

Rev. Dr. Jorge Morales led the installation service

Rev. Kim Wood shared announcements.

Rev. Michael Jones blessed lunch.

5TH GATHERING

Mike Linder called the body to order.

John Kendall moved that the meeting be adjourned. Rev. Jana Chwalisz seconded the motion.

AM17-06-06 VOTED to approve the above motion **PASSED**

Mike Linder adjourned the meeting.

Respectfully submitted,
Kathy Hummel, Conference Secretary

Finance, Administration, and Business (FAB) Committee
Illinois Conference, United Church of Christ
Annual Report June, 2018

The new cabins at Tower Hill are about to come online after final inspection. Still to be resolved is installation of larger water main to accommodate township requirements. The camp is allowed to function this summer and replacement is likely late summer/fall. We are blessed to have these facility upgrades and already the new cottages have requests for use.

A proposal to upgrade the conference center at Pilgrim Park has resulted in preliminary drawings and possible fund raising opportunities. These are exciting times for our outdoor ministries opportunities and require us to review and determine the mission and vision of outdoor ministries in the Illinois Conference.

While the camps continue to operate at a deficit, there has been progress made in reducing those deficits and identifying possible opportunities for income growth.

The Illinois Conference audit for 2015-2016 was received and reviewed. In an effort to become more timely, the 2017 audit is being conducted and a draft should be received prior to the 2018 Annual Celebration.

A change in process was approved that will place received property in a separate account until disposition occurs at which time the income and expenses will be finalized and net proceeds recognized. This is a change from entering an appraised value at time of receiving and adjusting for significant losses from those values at final disposition. It was felt that while both conform to accounting procedures, this change more clearly represents the value of the gift received.

OCWM continues to be a concern as we continue to have a shrinking Conference and churches are facing their own stressful times. The Stewardship Committee is looking at ways and events to focus on better stewardship and increased giving. There is also a focus on legacy giving that helps to enable the Illinois Conference to sustain and grow their vision and mission.

We are planning again to bring the narrative budgets to the fall meetings of the Associations for information and input. It is our hope that this allows more people to be informed and participate in the process and build on the relationships Associations have with the local churches and strengthen the connections to the Illinois Conference.

We continue to dream dreams and see visions of what might be and seek the leading of the Holy Spirit in our endeavors. I personally feel blessed to work with a committee whose feet are firmly planted in both reality and legacy of the Illinois Conference, yet continue to explore and enable possibilities through creative thinking and imaginative solutions. You are a joy to work with and I have deep appreciation for the skills, talents and friendship of each of you.

Respectfully submitted, Dave Bateman, Chair



Illinois Conference United Church of Christ Report on the Major Gift Initiative



The Major Gift Initiative (MGI) was originally proposed at the Ministry Leadership Team (MLT) table by Rev. Dr. Melbalenia Evans. Dr. Evans also recommended Deacon Rosalyn Priester, a member of Trinity UCC, Chicago, who had experience as a fundraiser, to be the consultant for the Initiative.

The MLT went through the exercise of identifying individuals believed to have had the capacity to contribute dollars for ministry. A team made up of the members of the MLT and several selected Conference leaders were invited to be the MGI Team.

This group of individuals were trained in the art of "making the ask". During the training (led by Deacon Priester) we discovered that several of the trainees were uncomfortable approaching people asking for a gift of money. They did not feel they could do both preach the gospel and raise dollars, could not link spirituality and stewardship. After one-on-one interviews with MGI team members those expressing discomfort with making the ask received a thank you, were told that they had been heard about their discomfort and informed they would not need to be part of the team.

The consultant, Deacon Priester guided the team in setting a goal for the dollars to be raise over a three-year period.

The Illinois Conference became members of the Donors Forum (now Forefront) and used that organization in receiving giving information and capacity on potential donors. After the MGI Team was trained, information on potential donors gathered, assignments were made to Team members.

The Team members implemented their training in contacting, making appointments and meeting with potential donors to "make the ask".

The Team developed ways to acknowledge those making contributions, including the development of a giving tree, that is in display at the entrance of the Illinois Conference, Westchester office.

The Initiative set a goal of \$2 Million and raised \$2,262,000 in designated and undesignated dollars. The major benefactors of the initiate that had four (4) defined areas of support were the Illinois Conference camps. The attached donor gift sheet provides a more detailed report on the Initiative.

We express deep appreciation to the MGI Team, which was made up of the following members: Rev. Dr. Melbalenia Evans, Rev. Tom Norwalk, Deacon Rosalyn Priester, Mr. Teamous Newberne, Rev. Joseph Mills, Rev. Doug Zimmerman, Rev. Dr. David Russell, Rev. Dr. James J. Olson, Mr. Larry McCure, Rev. Malcolm Griffith, Dr. Sammie Dortch, Rev. Dr. Vertie Powers and Rev. Dr. Jorge L. Morales

Illinois Conference United Church of Christ					
REPORT: MAKING THE ASK CAMPAIGN					
FOR THE PERIOD: JANUARY 1, 2014 to FEBRUARY 28, 2018					
Date	Name	Credit	COMMITMENT	DESIGNATED	UNDESIGNATED
General Operating Fund: Making the Ask Campaign					
07/28/2016	DONOR	\$75,000	\$75,000	NO	\$75,000
11/18/2016	DONOR	\$1,500	\$1,500	NO	\$1,500
	DONOR	\$0	\$2,500	NO	\$0
12/6/2016	DONOR	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$1,500,000	\$0
03/16/2015	DONOR	\$100	\$100	NO	\$100
VARIOUS	DONOR	\$1,000	\$1,000	NO	\$1,000
VARIOUS	DONOR	\$500	\$500	NO	\$500
04/26/2016	DONOR	\$304	\$304	NO	\$304
VARIOUS	DONOR	\$15,000	\$25,000	NO	\$15,000
VARIOUS	DONOR	\$3,750	\$3,000	NO	\$3,750
VARIOUS	DONOR	\$500	?	NO	\$500
04/20/2015	DONOR	\$23,823	\$23,823	NO	\$23,823
10/13/2017	DONOR	\$5,000	\$5,000	NO	\$5,000
VARIOUS	DONOR	\$200	\$200	NO	\$200
10/13/2017	DONOR	\$5,000	\$5,000	NO	\$5,000
03/16/2015	DONOR	\$23,096	\$23,096	NO	\$23,096
03/16/2015	DONOR	\$1,000	\$1,000	NO	\$1,000
07/20/2015/6	DONOR	\$700	\$3,000	NO	\$700
10/24/2016	DONOR	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$10,000	\$0
12/24/2016	DONOR	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$0
12/24/2016	DONOR	\$1,500	\$1,500	\$0	\$1,500
11/25/2016	DONOR	\$2,000	\$3,000	\$2,000	\$0
VARIOUS	DONOR	\$3,000	\$3,000	\$2,000	\$0
VARIOUS	DONOR	\$0	\$5,000	NO	\$0
12/31/2015	DONOR	\$2,500	\$2,500	NO	\$2,500
PAYROLL	DONOR	\$500	\$500	NO	\$500
09/24/2015	DONOR	\$2,500	\$2,500		\$2,500
PAYROLL	DONOR	\$1,000	\$5,000	NO	\$1,000
07/31/2016	DONOR	\$100	\$1,000	NO	\$100
03/30/2016	DONOR	\$15,000	\$15,000		\$15,000
06/08/2016	DONOR	\$50,000	\$10,000		\$50,000
PAYROLL	DONOR	\$1,500	\$1,500		\$1,500
07/20/2015	DONOR	\$50,000	\$50,000		\$50,000
VARIOUS	DONOR	\$100	?	NO	\$100
VARIOUS	DONOR	\$500	\$500	NO	\$500
VARIOUS	DONOR	\$1,000	\$1,000	NO	\$1,000
VARIOUS	DONOR	\$10,000	\$20,000	NO	\$10,000
	DONOR	\$450,000	\$450,000	\$325,000	\$125,000
VARIOUS	DONOR	\$1,500	\$1,500	NO	\$1,500
General-Making the Ask Campaign		\$2,262,173	\$2,256,523	\$1,842,000	\$419,173

Report of the Angola Partnership Team for 2018

The Angola Partnership Team shares as its mission the building and strengthening of relationships with our Partner Church, The Evangelical Congregational Christian Church of Angola (IECA). In 2004, the Illinois Conference entered into a formal relationship with this Partner Church and has been about the work of engaging in opportunities to support the work and rebuilding of our Partner church after 30 years of colonial and civil war. In this year, 2017-2018, we continue to strive to engage with our Partners in significant ways to embrace the common ministry we share in two different places.

This past year we have been fortunate to host several visitors from Angola who have come to the Illinois Conference in order to learn and sharpen their English language skills. We welcomed Helder, Rev. Sambalundo and Jelembi who stayed with host families arranged by the partnership as they had the opportunity to gain new skills and to visit our Conference churches to grow our knowledge of our Angolan partnership.

One of our relationships that has been nurtured is the long-distance learning program of Chicago Theological Seminary. Luis Samacumbi, who has visited with the Illinois Conference through several delegation trips is in the midst of Master of Divinity coursework through this program. It enables him to work on his degree from Angola.

In May, 2018, we are pleased to send a delegation of to visit in Angola. Our team will be visiting the Gelangue Mission station and participate as the Church in Angola does long-range planning for the coming five years. It will be a time for our collaboration to grow even more fully in our common witness.

We are also in the midst of a fund-raising project for Angolan Hymnals. We have helped our partner church to publish 50,000 copies of their hymnals which through their sales will generate over \$350,000 for the opening of a Church sponsored University located at the Dondi Mission Station. We look forward to this opening in Spring, 2019.

Nancy Reed, Convenor of the Angola Team
Rev. Tom Norwalk, Staff to the Angola Team

Local Evangelistic, Envisioning and Planting (LEEAP) 2018 Annual Report

Purpose:

The work with which the LEEAP Committee is tasked is to annually make recommendations for financial allocations that support the evangelism of the churches in the Illinois Conference. The committee convenes in early fall. Proposals are solicited from July through September, and recommendations for funding are made to Conference Council in February. The funding is dispersed on a quarterly basis. The resources are provided from the sale of churches that have decided to close. There are two primary purposes for which the receiving churches can use the funding:

- Launching new church plants (starts)
- Revitalizing existing ministries

Successes:

Largely the creative ministries envisioned in the proposals for new church plants and revitalizing of existing initiatives submitted to the LEEAP Committee are impressive. These ministries are an indicator of the continuing awareness of the importance of the mission of the church as a beacon throughout time. The sheer number of requests continues to speak to the faith community's desire to bridge the gap between church and society.

In 2018 several members of the Illinois Conference LEEAP Committee traveled to the Wisconsin Conference to share evangelistic ministry experiences. Both Conferences brought unique ideas to the table.

Challenges:

While the outcomes of the process are basically successful, there is a need for refinement, e.g.,

- Increasing the understanding of the basic proposal/grant writing funding process;
- Aligning of funding guidelines and churches' needs;
- Reporting and timely submission of required reports on progress of funded initiative; and
- Recruiting a diverse pool of committee members.

Strategies:

In spring 2018, the committee is exploring broadening its mission to include more interaction among committee and grantees during the funding cycle and also initiate non grant resources that can help equip churches to be vital emerging ministries of God's continuing Spirit.

Submitted by Sammie M. Dortch

The Illinois Conference Mission Support Committee 2018 Report to Conference Council

The Mission Support Committee's goal is to provide funding to churches and/or organizations that demonstrate efforts to minister to and provide services to the marginalized members of the community.

Toward that end an announcement was posted that provided the information that applications were being accepted as well as an end date for the applications to be received. Upon receipt of all applications sent by the due date, we met and divided the applications among committee members so that site visits could be made. Site visits are made to determine if the Churches or Organizations met the criteria that has been set to receive a grant.

We received 18 grant applications requesting an amount totaling \$91,500.00. However, we had a working budget of only \$62,000.00. Therefore, our next step was to meet to determine the amount of funds we would recommend to Conference Council for each Church/Organization that met the criteria. One church and two organizations did not, but because we felt that they do good work, we referred them to other grants administered by the Illinois Conference. We submitted our recommendations to Council on February 10, 2018 and below are the recommendations to and subsequent approval of the Conference Council for Mission Funds to be granted:

\$ 3,000.00	A Just Harvest	Chicago, IL
\$ 4,000.00	Back Bay Mission	Biloxi, MS
\$ 4,000.00	Churches United/Quad Cities	Bettendorf, IA
\$ 3,000.00	Education & Family Life Institute	Ford Heights, IL
\$ 3,000.00	First Congregational UCC	DeKalb, IL
\$ 3,000.00	Fox River Valley Initiative	Glen Ellyn, IL
\$ 5,000.00	Good News Partners	Chicago, IL
\$ 5,000.00	Greater Chicago Broadcast Ministries	Chicago, IL
\$ 5,000.00	Housing Forward/PADS Shelter Program	Chicago, IL
\$ 3,000.00	Lake County United/Mental Health	Libertyville, IL
\$ 5,000.00	Oak Park River Forest Food Pantry	Oak Park, IL
\$ 5,000.00	San Lucas UCC	Chicago, IL
\$ 5,000.00	Sembrando After School Program	Chicago, IL
\$ 4,000.00	St. Paul UCC Preschool Outreach	Crystal Lake, IL
\$ 5,000.00	The Night Ministry	Chicago, IL
\$62,000.00		

Respectfully Submitted,

Juanita Bradley, Chair
Illinois Conference Mission Support Committee
Ms. Armanda Killingham, Rev. Roger Dart – CMA
Mr. Gary Dahn, Rev. Connie Williams-Moodie – Eastern
Rev. Kris Hewitt, Ms. Virginia Hopley – Fox Valley

Outdoor Ministry Committee
Report for Illinois Conference Annual Celebration
June 2018

PILGRIM PARK

Some of my best memories are from Pilgrim Park! I will always have a special place in my heart for it.
— Comment on Pilgrim Park Facebook page

- We engaged an architect and had designs drawn up for an addition to the Conference Center at Pilgrim Park that will provide an additional 10 hotel-type rooms and two (2) meetings spaces. This will enable us to welcome more groups and free up the existing Upper Conference space and the Chapel for simultaneous use.
- We continue work on a fundraising campaign to take place over the next year or so for the addition, with base support of \$250,000 from an Advocate Health Care gift and \$250,000 legacy gift from Congregational Church of West Chicago.
- We updated two (2) bathrooms in the existing Conference Center to make them more handicap accessible, a need pointed out by some of our guests with disabilities.
- We accepted an in-kind donation from Lambert Construction of services for replacement of the bridge over Brush Creek between the pond and the swimming pool, with Pilgrim Park covering the materials. Construction is to take place this fall.
- We built a new patio seating area between the Upper Conference Center & dining hall entrances.

Pilgrim Park continues to be managed by Mitch Kloster, who lives on site with his wife, Natalie, a camp employee. They welcomed a baby boy April 2018.

TOWER HILL

I went here as a kid, my kids came here for camp, now we come back to visit and all have such great memories!
— Comment on Tower Hill Facebook page

- We broke ground, constructed and have opened three (3) new cottages across from the existing playground on the entry road. These cottages are now being rented out and providing a source of revenue for the camp.
- We have engaged an architect to complete a review of Gammon Hall.
- We adopted a severe weather policy for use of the campground after a large group of tent campers sought shelter in other buildings during a thunderstorm.
- We welcomed work groups that built new decks on Edwards and all of the A-Frames and re-roofed A-frame #3

Tower Hill continues to be managed by Douglas (D.C.) Pompey, and this past fall the “acting” part of his title was removed after a Personnel Committee evaluation.

— Submitted by Brett Johnson, ODM Chair, 2017-18

Personnel Committee Report

The Personnel Committee has met five (5) times since the 2017 Conference Annual Celebration. Additionally, some other items of business were conducted via e-mail.

Executive evaluations were completed for Rev. Dr. Jorge Morales and Mr. Douglas (D.C.) Pompey. The final step in performance reviews for Rev. Kathy Lawes and Mr. Mitch Kloster will be completed early this summer. Beginning this summer, the evaluation process will begin for Rev. Dr. James Olsen. Rev. Tom Norwalk's review will begin in the fall.

The committee recommended that Mr. Douglas (D.C.) Pompey be instated as the Site Manager of Tower Hill Camp and Retreat Center, thereby removing the status of "acting" from his title. The committee also recommended that the site managers at both Conference outdoor ministry settings be provided the same salary and employment package options.

In November 2017, the committee met with and then recommended that Rev. Dr. David Russell's Interim contract be extended until the end of June 2018. In the early spring of 2018, Personnel recommended that the timeframe again be extended until the end of December 2018.

Personnel Committee reviewed and recommended the approval of Rev. Dr. Vertie Power's sabbatical request for the spring of 2018.

At our March 2018 meeting, we received Rev. Dr. Jorge Morales' letter that was e-mailed to the Illinois Conference Council and members of the Illinois Conference announcing his decision not to seek a third term as Conference Minister, thereby ending his employment as of May 31, 2018. A motion was passed accepting this letter. With Conference President Mike Linder, we reviewed the Constitutional process of selecting a new Conference Minister.

In March, we received a memo from Mr. William Serritella, controller, asking us to review our Family Medical Leave Policy and, in particular, how it pertains to the birth of children. The policy was somewhat ambiguous. This was done and recommended for approval by the Council. After it's approval, we discovered we need to clarify some of the language of the policy. We began to do that at our May 2018 meeting and will continue throughout the summer.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Tom Ewing
Chair

Report of the Tuthill Commission for 2018

The Tuthill Commission was created by the Illinois Conference Council to assist in the administration of the Tuthill Trust. In October, 1924, Frank H. Tuthill of Evanston IL, gave the Congregational Conference of Illinois, 380 shares of the capital stock of the Tuthill Spring Company. This generous gift was “to be devoted to foreign missionary purposes under the provisions of the by-laws of the Conference.” Over the succeeding years, the trust has appreciated in value and provides an annual distribution of approximately \$40,000 for grants to UCC-related projects endorsed and supported by our UCC/DOC Global Ministry Partners.

Grants may be made to projects which have as their purpose:

The establishment and maintenance of personnel

Education

Health Care

Emergency Disaster Relief

Community and Leadership Development

Conference Delegations or visits to strengthen Conference partnerships

The Commission is made up of seven (7) members consisting of a Chairperson appointed by the Conference Council, and six (6) members elected from the Conference including one (1) member from each of the five (5) Associations and a Member at large.

In the past year grants were made to continue support for:

Support of Capacity Building Efforts of the Protestant Churches of East Timor

Support of Missionary Appointment: Tom and Monica Libble \$10,000 (3rd Grant)

Support of Dumaguete Lalauman Center in the Philippines

\$7,000 (2nd Grant)

Support of Maya University in Guatemala

\$10,000 (1st Grant)

Support of Youth Empowerment Program in Zimbabwe

\$7,500 (1st Grant)

Support of Youth and Community Center in Jordan

\$7,500 (1st Grant)

Rev. Tom Norwalk, Staff to the Tuthill Commission

Immigration Task Force Report

June 2018

Introduction

This year the Task Force spent very little time meeting as a group, rather spent time on taking direct action. We joined with other groups to protest the U.S. Government's policies and practices on immigration. We evaluated grant requests, decided on recipients and disbursed the money. Our remaining time was spent supporting the many churches and Associations in the Conference which are involved in immigration justice and mission work including:

Border Wall - Current Version



- protesting at the Immigration and Customs Enforcement Buildings (ICE. Congress in Chicago, Detention Center in Broadview),
- providing Sanctuary at the church or supporting those in Sanctuary at other churches
- becoming an Immigrant Welcoming Church
- being part of a Good Neighbor Team in support of a refugee family or providing other support to a refugee family (financial, tutoring, furniture donation, transportation, etc.)

Refugee Support

Refugees are forced to flee their country of nationality as they are under threat and it is not safe for them to remain. We are accompanying our refugee neighbors, both in the United States and around the world, as they seek safety and security. We are promoting welcome.

Refugees arrive here with nothing, often without documentation such as a birth certificate. Usually they do not know our language, laws or customs. Congregations is partner with those nonprofit organizations working with which provide after the United Nations High Commission on Refugees and the United States State Department complete their Refugee Services. The nonprofit agencies along with volunteers and church partners work with the refugees during the first 6-12 months helping with tutoring

Some churches partner with an agency for 6-9 months for in depth team efforts with a family. For example First Congregational UCC Naperville sponsored two families from Syria. The "Good Neighbor Teams" helped furnish two apartments, provided kitchen setups, transportation, medical issues, understand pharmacies, obtaining a bank account, grade placement, and navigate the food pantry, more. At the end of the "official time together" both families and the teams had a picnic



Asylum Seekers

Wellington UCC is an example of a church sponsoring two families who are seeking asylum. The main difference in services required by asylees vs refugees are large legal fees, which Wellington has obtained pro-bono. The congregation has provided financial, emotional and spiritual support for both families. It takes years to go through the entire asylum process.

Immigrant Welcoming Congregations and Sanctuary

A few UCC churches are providing or are available to provide Sanctuary in the IL Conference. Many more churches are providing support to those needing sanctuary at other churches.

Several of our churches are Immigrant Welcoming Churches and more are in the process of becoming so. These churches proactively welcome immigrants creating an environment of safety and friendship.

Detainee Visitors

Some of our congregants visit immigrant detainees to provide friendship and support. There is also a program for child detainees, who have diverse religious backgrounds, with monthly interfaith programs. These programs are staffed by volunteers.

Invitation

We welcome your participation in the Task Force and activities! Please contact Sara Wohlleb at sara.wohlleb@gmail.com or (773) 293-3680 or Diane Herr at dianeherrpub@att.net or (630)820-2387 to find out more.

Find us on Facebook at <https://www.facebook.com/UCC-IL-Conf-Immigration-170321673019344/>

Visit our webpage on the IL Conference UCC website (<http://www.ilucc.org/immigration-task-force.php>) where you can find Congregational Resources on Immigration, including past presentations and reports.

Child in Refugee Camp Waiting



Border Wall Prototypes



Respectfully submitted,
Diane Herr