

REPORT OF THE ILLINOIS CONFERENCE PRESIDENT

By Rev. Jon Prain

This report shall be my final written report as Illinois Conference President. My term concludes at the end of the 2024 Annual Celebration.

I wish to thank many people for their help and support during my term. I wish to begin by thanking God. I would not have made it through the recent years without the help and presence of God. I also wish to thank my wife (Mary), daughter (Elizabeth), and son (Robert) for tolerating my frequent physical, mental, and emotional absences in the past seven years due to my Illinois Conference commitments. My thanks are similarly extended to the members and friends of the Avon Federated Church where I serve as pastor.

I have been blessed to have served with some of the best elected leaders and staff members imaginable. They are the individuals to whom the majority of the credit must be given for the successes of recent years. Their hard work and efforts cannot be praised or acknowledged enough. This has been a team effort and the team has been a strong and talented one. Thank you! Thank you! Thank you!

I wish to lift up two major business items and invite your support for them.

I would invite you to vote “YES” for the proposed new Constitution and Bylaws. Many years of hard work have been devoted to developing this new governance structure and to creating the proposed constitution and bylaws. The work has been particularly intense for the past two years. The Conference has been blessed to have a very dedicated, gifted, and hard-working task force that has led this process. I would like to note that—when the Conference Council voted to approve the final draft of the Constitution and Bylaws and to recommend its adoption by the entire Conference—the vote was unanimous. That is nothing short of miraculous. Please vote “Yes” for the proposed constitution and bylaws.

I would also invite your support (and your “Yes” vote) for the report and recommendations of the “Camp Forward” Task Force. The task force is recommending that our two Conference camps become two separate and independent 501(c) (3) charitable organizations—that will have strong connections to the Illinois Conference UCC. It is believed that this action is the best pathway to follow in order to ensure the long-term viability and success of the camps. Just like the Governance Task Force, the Illinois Conference has been very blessed to have the gifted, hard-working, and very dedicated members of Camp Forward Task Force. These people love our camps. They have thoroughly researched this subject matter and they have made their recommendations. It is important to note that the Conference Council voted unanimously to approve the recommendations of the Camp Forward Task Force and to recommend their adoption by the Illinois Conference. Please vote “yes” for the Camp Forward recommendations.

As I conclude my term as Illinois Conference President, I extend my heartfelt prayers and blessings to each of you.

