

179th Annual Conference: Navigating Uncharted Waters

By Rev. Alka Lyall, Annual Conference Committee Chair

The 2018 Annual Conference will gather for another year June 3-5 at Pheasant Run Resort in St. Charles, Ill. This year's theme is "Navigating Uncharted Waters" with a focus on *Romans 5:3b-4* – "trouble produces endurance, endurance produces character, and character produces hope."

Bishop Sally Dyck says the theme will help us focus on how we anticipate the unknowns in life, our ministries, and communities. "As we navigate the many changes in our world and church, we remember those words of St. Paul in Romans 5 who encourages us to grow in faith and move toward hope together as we face unfamiliar and uncertain times," said Bishop Dyck.

Your Annual Conference committee began working shortly after the close of last year's conference, reflecting on your evaluations. While details are still being worked out, here are some broad stroke plans for you as you begin to plan to attend:

- Gary Rand will be working with our worship team to

develop worship services and lead us in worship during Annual Conference.

- The Conference will open on Sunday, June 3 at 4 p.m. with the Ordination Service. Watch for more information about clergy processional and all other related instructions.
- Clergy session, like last year, will be held at an earlier date on **May 15, 2018**. Bishop Sally Dyck will make the official call for that at a later time. Detailed information will also be shared in coming days.
- Among other business pieces, we will celebrate all who are ending their ministry as appointed clergy in a Retirement Service on Monday, June 4, and honor those who have transitioned into eternal life in a Memorial Service on Tuesday, June 5. Please remember to submit names of Lay Members to Annual Conference who have may have died since June 2017 to Megan Casey at mcasey@umcnic.org.

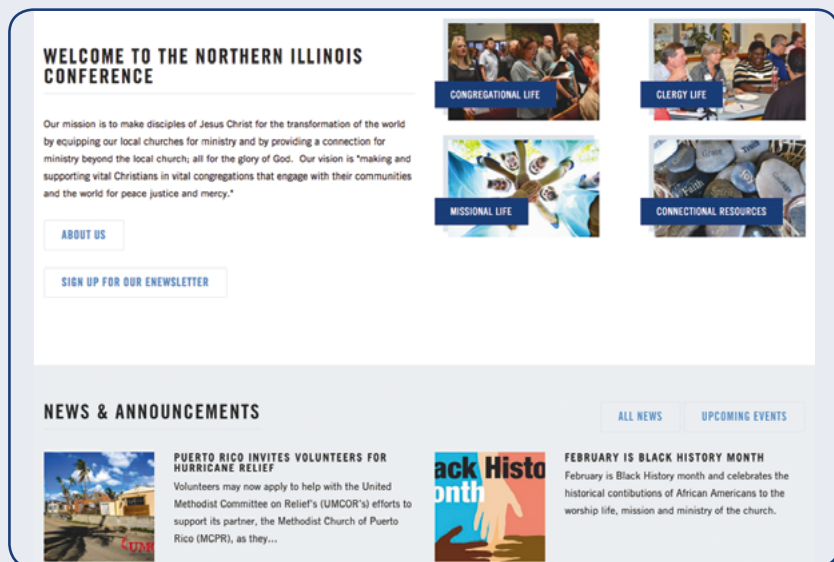
continued on page 2, see From the Cover: AC 2018

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of The United Methodist Church
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Digital makeover - New NIC Website Launched



Take a look around the Northern Illinois Conference's revamped website - same address but new look at www.umcnic.org.

We hope the new design and features will make it easier for visitors to find information, news, events, and resources. It's highly recommended to view this site by using either a Chrome or Firefox browser. Internet Explorer, especially an older version, does not support many of our features.

The site is organized into four main categories under the Annual Conference Shepherding Team umbrella: Congregational Life, Clergy Life, Missional Life, and Connectional Resources.

Click on the image icons below the main photo slider to choose your area of interest.

Along the top banner you will find links to the Annual Conference Shepherding Team, Calendar, News, About Us, Communications and Contact information. Calendar events can be filtered by categories, such as by district, laity or congregational development.

Under About you will find the Bishop's Office, staff information, District pages, and the directory.

Under the Communications' tab, you can find issues of the Reporter, the United Media Resource Center, a Submit News Form, and Sympathy Notices.

Browse the site and get to know more about the Northern Illinois Conference. We welcome your feedback. Please send your thoughts to communications@umcnic.org.



Northern Illinois Conference New Logo

OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

With the launch of the Northern Illinois Conference's new website, we also have a new logo to be used in all communications and to align with The United Methodist Church's branding. Being that the Cross and Flame is highly recognizable and helps people

connect with The United Methodist Church, the logo seeks to strengthen that identity and highlight our connection across the denomination. Many conferences, agencies and churches are now using or

moving to this logo template. For more info on The United Methodist Church's branding and to download a toolkit including logos, fonts and guidelines visit: www.umcom.org/tools/toolkit.

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From Bishop Sally Dyck: A few good reads

During the month of December, I took a renewal leave. For the first few days, I energetically cleaned every closet, cupboard, drawer, shelf, and closet in our condo. I took loads of books, clothes and other articles to the local Goodwill store. It was quite gratifying!

Then I decided to read. I started with *Eleanor: A Spiritual Biography: The Faith of the*

20th Century's Most Influential Woman by Harold Ivan Smith. Eleanor Roosevelt was a “prayer-book Episcopalian,” deeply devoted to the prayers but never involved in the politics of the church (although her husband was at times). Her theological mantra and guiding principles were: love of God and love of neighbor.

She was a prolific writer, writing a few books but mostly columns for popular magazines and other periodicals. She wrote about her faith and also what she observed as she met thousands of people across the country. She met and advocated for the poor, impacting the New Deal.

She also advocated for civil rights, forming strong cross-racial relationships as well as advocating policy. But I was struck by the fact that she had a blind spot: early on she was anti-Semitic. Later in life she had Jewish friends and she began to change her perspective on Jews. Later yet, she advocated to bring more Jewish refugees into the U.S. In fact, her deepest regret in life was that she didn't do more for Jewish refugees after the war. How could somehow have such a blind spot, I wondered? I wonder if we all do!

It's hard to follow a good book but then I read *Prairie Fires: The American Dreams of Laura Ingalls Wilder* by Caroline Fraser. This is a comprehensive and fascinating history of the western expansion into the far Midwest and West. Farming families like the Ingalls and the Wilders sought their own land and fortune. Instead many like them found deep disappointment, despair,

and abject poverty. Life was not what it was cracked up to be years later when she wrote the *Little House on the Prairie* series.

Eleanor Roosevelt and Laura Ingalls Wilder were largely contemporaries. Roosevelt was born in 1884 and died in 1962 while Wilder was born in 1867 and died in 1957. They knew of each other and each other's writings. But it was Wilder's daughter, Rose, who interacted with, albeit detested, Roosevelt. Rose Wilder Lane was also a prolific writer and one of the founders of the Libertarian movement along with Ayn Rand. Any government sponsored or mandated program was detested and protested; sometimes even if it benefited her own family. Lane's “adopted” grandson ran for president at one point, funded by the Koch family (yes, the same).

So did some of the divergence in our country begin during this time with some of these persons and influences? I heard statements at my own family Christmas dinner that were almost verbatim from things that Rose Wilder Lane advocated. Maybe we haven't fully appreciated the historical breadth of our deep political divides.

Yes, that's where this is all leading.

And then I read *Moral Combat: How Sex Divided American Christians & Fractured American Politics* by R. Marie Griffith. First of all, I was attracted to the book because it wasn't written by a United Methodist (that I know of) and isn't about The United Methodist Church per se. In fact, the author directs the Danforth Center on Religion and Politics which seeks to bring people together from (very) diverse perspectives. I've been a part of one of their endeavors and was quite impressed.

The book is also a comprehensive history, looking over the last century in terms of attitudes about gender, sex, and sexual identity. Beginning with suffrage for women, and then crescendoing into attitudes and divisions about birth control, the banning of sexually explicit materials, the role of race in all of these gender and sexual differences, abortion and homosexuality, each of these major components of American life became a more fierce battleground in our differences. We began the 20th century with consensus about gender,

sex and sexual identity but not any longer. All this in the course of a lifetime (of some of my relatives)!

The scope and scale of our historical, cultural differences make it clear that they're not going away anytime soon. We have to figure out how to live in such a diverse, divergent, and divisive culture today.

Then I read Brené Brown's *Braving the Wilderness: The Quest for True Belonging and the Courage to Stand Alone*. A social researcher, Texan and person of faith, she points out that our culture has become so diverse, divergent and divisive that the only things we seem to share are fear and despair. She wrote the book with the post-presidential election in mind but she could have also “dedicated” it to The United Methodist Church!

But pointing to research and going deep into her own heart and faith, she makes it clear that nobody's mind or heart is being changed by legislating, shouting, fighting or hating the other. Brown doesn't say it like this, but it's not far from the page: love God and love your neighbor as yourself because it's the only way forward.

If you struggle with our need to be in relationship with others (and doesn't Jesus call us to that very thing?), then at least read Brown's book. If you think we're so unique as The United Methodist Church and that if we just “fix” the UMC (whatever that looks like to you), and all will be right with your world, then read *Moral Combat*. If you're still scratching your head about what happened in the last presidential election, read (at least the last half of) *Prairie Fires*. If you long for a real-life example of someone “braving the wilderness,” facing opposition with courage, read *Eleanor*.

Or you can just wish that I had wildly enthused about how wonderful and productive it was that I cleaned every closet, cupboard, drawer, and shelf in our condo. I hope you don't wish that but will instead dig a little deeper to understand our “times,” especially in light of other times and people and difficulties...all from the mantra and guideline of loving God and our neighbors...no exceptions!

From the Cover: AC 2018



Navigating Uncharted Waters

- We will be offering the “New Member Orientation” on Sunday, June 3. Watch for location in the upcoming updates.

A few reminders:

- ALL historical documents and proposed legislation for the conference must be submitted* by April 1, 2018 to Rev. Katie Voigt, @ ACdocuments@umcnic.org. No exceptions., please.
- Look for more information and updates in the Conference weekly eNews and the Reporter. Remember to sign up for eNews if you have not already done so at www.umcnic.org (scroll down halfway and click on “sign up for our Newsletter”).

- All this information and more, will also be shared on the Annual Conference page of our Conference website at www.umcnic.org/AC2018. You will find many helpful tools on that page.

Also:

- Childcare will be available for those attending the Annual Conference.
- Cokesbury Bookstore and Display tables will again share the space (selected rooms of the St. Charles Ballroom).
- Our onsite Accessibility Coordinator will be present to help with any needs (vision, movement, hearing, etc.), within our ability. Please be sure to indicate in your registration how we can extend welcome and hospitality to you during Annual Conference.
- If you are interested in ushering, greeting or volunteering during plenaries and worship services, please email Alka Lyall at pastoralkalyall@gmail.com.

Your Annual Conference committee is always in need of your prayerful support as we continue to strive to make your experience at Annual Conference session informative and inspiring but also comfortable.

*All documents must be in the Action/Rationale format with a maximum of 500 words for the rationale, be submitted as a WORD document and editable. At-conference documents must be submitted to her BEFORE the start of the annual conference. The author must submit both a printed version and on a flash drive or similar USB storage device (device may or may not be returned), and the author must bring 1000 copies to the annual conference session for distribution.



Global Migration focus of 2018 Bishop's Appeal

By Rev. Jonathan Crail



65.6 million
forcibly displaced people worldwide



Refugees
22.5 million
17.2 million under UNHCR mandate
5.3 million Palestinian refugees registered by UNRWA



Stateless people
10 million



Refugees resettled
189,300 in 2016



You have five minutes. What would you grab? Who would you grab to bring with you?

If you had to flee your home, perhaps never to return, what would you do? Where would you go?

In the five minutes you take to plan your escape, 100 other people (20 people every minute) in some place in the world will also face the desperate and unthinkable reality of running for their lives. For some it's violence and war, for others it's regular and systematic persecution; and for some nature's wrath leaves them no alternative.

Not since the ravages of World War II have we seen so many people displaced from their homes and their countries. Our present reality of over 65 million people living this way means we are truly dealing with a Global Migration Crisis.

Some of the images we see on television or social media are heartbreaking -- a baby boy lying lifeless on beach; packed boats swamped by waves; tent cities crowded with families. Our first inclination is to cry, or turn away so we don't. Our second may be to think, "There are so many, we can't really make a difference." Beyond the overwhelming numbers are real people with real stories, all children of God simply seeking to survive and start over.

As the Church of Jesus Christ, we are exhorted repeatedly in the Scriptures to "welcome the stranger" to "care for the orphan and widow," to "love your neighbor as you love yourself," and to "do to others as you would have them do to you." And we remember the plight of Jesus himself, as Joseph takes

Mary and the infant Jesus to Egypt to flee the wrath of King Herod. Who offered this refugee family shelter and care?

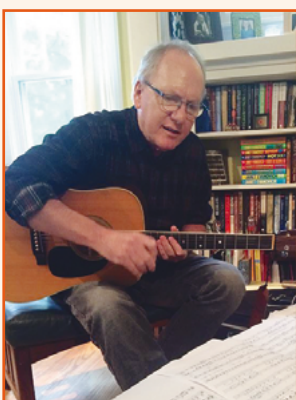
In 2018, we, who make up the Northern Illinois Conference, have a unique opportunity to combine our resources to care for some of the families affected by the Global Migration Crisis. Bishop Sally Dyck invites us to do some local fundraising, to learn about the plight of migrants locally and globally, to consider having a Global Migration Sunday, and to bring a special offering to Annual Conference in June as our 2018 Bishop's Appeal for the denomination's Global Migration Advance (#3022144). This fund was set up in 2014 for donors to designate gifts specifically to support work that alleviates the suffering of migrants.

Last year's Bishop's Appeal raised over \$70,000 to help alleviate and prevent global HIV/AIDS! We can match or surpass that number if each church brings just \$200 or more as a gift. Let's get started now!

Watch for more details and resources coming soon. For immediate resources, visit the following:

- www.umcmigration.org (resources for Global Migration Sunday)
- www.unhcr.org (updates on the worldwide crisis)
- Or contact: Rev. Jonathan Crail or Rhodalyne Crail, NIC Refugee Coordinators
- jcrail@firstumc.net, rgallocrail@niu.edu, or call 815-756-6301 x25

2018 Annual Conference worship leader and band



Gary Rand, 2018 Annual Conference worship leader

The Annual Conference Committee has asked Gary Rand and The Many Band to lead worship this year. Rand loves making music and creating ritual experiences that open up people to mystery, justice, and a greater sense of community. He currently does that at LaSalle Street Church in Chicago and at McCormick Seminary, as well as through a new arts/liturgic collective, pluralguild.com. He's also producing a new band, The Many, a collaboration working to create honest, reflective and prophetic music for people to sing in worship. A regular on the LaSalle softball team, he even thinks bowling can be fun, especially when done ironically.

The Many band is an uncommon, intentionally diverse collective making music for people to sing together about peace and justice and a world where all are welcomed. Drawing on their indie folk and gospel influences, this is music created to help give voice to faith and doubt, questions and fears, laments and longings. It is music that speaks to a non-violent God, a Jesus who is with us and for us, and to a Spirit that can't be easily defined or controlled. It is music for a movement of resistance to hatred and division, a movement for reconciliation and restoration, and music that always reminds us "we are on this earth to love." The Many includes Hannah Rand, Darren Calhoun, Leslie Michelle and Kerry Anne Pritchard and anyone else who wants to sing along. Check them out at themanyarehere.com.



The Many is a diverse band drawing on indie pop and gospel influences.



Why do local church statistics matter?

So a church gains or loses a few members from year to year... no big deal, right? But what if that church has doubled (or

halved) in membership in the span of 40 years? Church statistics not only help answer the question of "How are we doing right now?" but also, "How are we doing in the long run?" A church's leadership can review this data to interpret underlying meanings and help the congregation assess the story being told.

Apart from a church's internal check-in, statistics provide information about the big picture and help researchers see trends, which in turn aid church leaders in making decisions. For example, the number of Hispanic/Latino church members has gained more than 20,000 members in the past five years and is increasing at a rate of approximately 3% per year. This sort of information is integral when making a decision about languages used in church materials, for example. On a more local level, many bishops and annual conference cabinets use these statistics to assist in the clergy appointment process. Churches enjoying extraordinary success in a certain aspect of ministry, as well as those struggling in the same, can be identified.

In The United Methodist Church, the statistics are used by the general agencies for a variety of purposes:

- The General Board of Global Ministries (GBGM) uses them to help annual conferences, districts, and local churches plan how to more effectively minister within their own communities. Church statistics are combined with demographic data by the office of research to help local churches analyze where there are new opportunities for outreach.
- The United Methodist Publishing House (UMPH) uses them to assist in planning resources and marketing. The statistics help to determine where resources are already being used and where there may be opportunities to provide new resources to local churches.
- The General Commission on the Status and Role of Women (COSROW) and the General Commission on Religion and Race (GCORR) use the information to assist in monitoring and raising consciousness of gender and racial/ethnic inclusiveness in The United Methodist Church. Gender and Racial/Ethnic membership information provides a measure of progress toward the United Methodist Church's commitment toward becoming a fully inclusive denomination. While it is recognized churches are about more than the number of persons attending worship or how many persons are baptized in a year, those numbers help bring attention to matters warranting concern or celebration. Sharing with each other the objective data numbers provide helps us to keep our connection vital.

Per the *Book of Discipline* ¶606.7, All pastors of local churches are required to submit a year-end statistical report each year. The statistical reports are set up in three Tables, these tables are updated by GCFA at the change of the quadrennium. Therefore, the tables have been updated and some questions have been changed and others added.

The information provided in Table 2 is what is used to calculate a church's shared ministry assessment. If a church is not reporting expenses correctly, their shared ministry will not be accurate and once statistical reports are finalized, they cannot be changed. For example capital expenses are not included in the shared ministry formula, but property and maintenance expenses are. Therefore, for example reporting a new roof incorrectly, which would be considered a capital expense, could cause a church to pay a higher shared ministry amount than they would have if completed correctly.

Enter your statistical reports at www.umctables.org.

You will need your Local Church Login:

Username = GCFA # (6 digits)

Password = Conference ID # (5 digits)

To find these numbers and more information visit:
www.umcnic.org/shepherding-team/connectional-resources/statistical-reporting

Reports are due by 11:59 p.m. on February 28, 2018.

If you have questions, please contact Apportionments Manager David W. Quinn at dquinn@umcnic.org.

Hurricane Maria Response in Puerto Rico



PHOTO: MISAEL D. RODRÍGUEZ QUIJANO

UMCOR shares process for applying to volunteer in Puerto Rico

Thank you for your interest in volunteering for the United Methodist Committee on Relief's (UMCOR's) efforts to support its partner, the Methodist Church of Puerto Rico (MCPR), as they work to rebuild after Hurricane Maria.

UMCOR has received a formal invitation from Bishop Hector Ortiz of MCPR requesting volunteers to support reconstruction following Hurricanes Irma and Maria. Potential volunteers, please note that it is imperative that all individuals and teams go through the channels described below before making plans of any kind to deploy to Puerto Rico. This request comes from Bishop Ortiz and is affirmed by UMCOR as MCPR continues to prepare to receive and host teams. Teams or individuals who arrive in Puerto Rico without going through the appropriate channels may cause further difficulties for our neighbors in Puerto Rico and/or put volunteers at risk because the proper infrastructure may not be in place to accommodate them.

At the invitation of UMCOR's U.S. Disaster Response leadership, United Methodist Volunteers in Mission of the North Central Jurisdiction (UMVIM-NCJ) is cooperatively engaged in supporting UMCOR's partnership with MCPR to collaborate, establish, and implement a centralized volunteer coordination mechanism for Puerto Rico.

To that end, UMVIM-NCJ is pleased to announce that Jason Frazer has stepped into the new position as Puerto Rico volunteer coordinator – Mainland. Jason's expertise in disas-

We awarded
\$5 million
in disaster relief supplies and recovery grants



ter response provides an easy steppingstone for team leaders seeking to serve in Puerto Rico. The uniqueness of the recovery efforts requires an additional awareness of the way God moves through us in the most challenging of places.

Letty Damian, who speaks both English and Spanish, will serve as the assistant volunteer coordinator. Jason and Letty will work collaboratively with UMCOR, UMVIM, and MCPR's volunteer coordinator.

If you are interested in applying to schedule a volunteer team visit to Puerto Rico to help with their reconstruction efforts, please visit:
www.umcor.org/UMCOR/puerto-rico-volunteers.

UMCOR Early Response Teams will signal their availability through their conference disaster response coordinators.

Thank you again for helping UMCOR and the people of The United Methodist Church support our neighbors in Puerto Rico.

NIC churches help ChildServ give the gift of joy



ChildServ thanks Grace United Methodist Church in Lake Bluff, Ill., among many other NIC churches for their continued support and generosity by donating toys, warm clothes and books so that the children in the agency's Lake County programs have a special, happy holidays.

the generosity and hard work of 125 volunteers – from corporations such as United Airlines and Power Construction Company, LLC., and faith communities like First United Methodist Church of La Grange and Fourth Presbyterian Church of Chicago – who shared their time and talent wrapping and organizing presents for delivery to the children in ChildServ's care.

To get involved with ChildServ and help children to build better lives, visit www.childserv.org.

ChildServ thanks all the many churches, groups and individuals for donating items totaling a value of over \$69,200 for its annual Holiday Gift Drive. ChildServ received hundreds of toys, books and clothes to help make Christmas a little brighter for the more than 1,100 children in the organization's care.

"This year's Holiday Gift Drive was the most successful in agency history," said Dan Kotowski, President and CEO of ChildServ. "We are truly grateful for the incredible support and kindness of our donors, ensuring that our children experienced the love and joy of Christmas."

ChildServ's 2017 Holiday Gift Drive featured 63 contributions – 25 faith partners, 21 individual donors, ten corporations and seven community groups from across the Chicagoland area – who donated gifts for children, teens and young adults, ranging in age from newborn to 24-years-old.

The 22 congregations who participated from the United Methodist's Northern Illinois Conference were: Chicago: Berry, Villa Park, Chestnut Square at The Glen, Deerfield: Christ, Oak Park: Euclid Ave, Evergreen Park, Antioch: First, Arlington Heights: First, Barrington: First, Downers Grove: First, LaGrange: First, Park Ridge: First, Waukegan: First, Lake Bluff: Grace, Chicago: Morgan Park, Northbrook, Schaumburg: Our Redeemer, Elk Grove Village: Prince of Peace, Chicago: Redeemer of Calvary, Barrington: Salem, Mt. Prospect: Trinity, and Wespeth.

The event's success was also made possible through



Reserve your seat for this year's ChildServ's Legacy Banquet Sunday, February 11, 2 to 4 p.m.

Location: Avalon Banquets 1905 East Higgins Road, Elk Grove Village

Recognizing Lucy Rider Meyer Courage Award Winner: Wespeth

Cost: Individual ticket \$65



Rev. Janet Wolf

Keynote Speaker:

Rev. Janet Wolf "Dislocated by Grace: Listening to Children"

Rev. Janet Wolf is the Director of Children's Defense Fund Haley Farm and Nonviolent Organizing. She previously served as faculty chair and professor at American Baptist College in Nashville, a historically Black college and home to many of the national civil rights leaders. For the United Methodist Church, the Rev. Wolf served as pastor of rural and urban congregations for 12 years. As director of public policy and community outreach with Religious Leaders for a More Just and Compassionate Drug Policy, she worked with a national interfaith coalition on harm reduction, alternatives to incarceration and restorative justice. For 12 years she also served as a community organizer around poverty rights.

Visit childservlegacy.eventbrite.com to reserve your seat or contact Kim Coffing at kcoffing@childserv.org or at (773) 239-8710.



Toy ministry grows

A few years ago, Rockford: Aldersgate began a ministry of making handmade wooden toys for children. This Toy Making Ministry has evolved into a year-round process. From cutting out the 16 different models to sanding to priming to painting and packaging, the toy makers make ambulances, fire trucks, police cars, "daisy" cars, trucks, race cars, jeeps, helicopters, buses, tractors, tow trucks, race cars, farm tractors, Batmobiles, princess cars and pick-up trucks.

The process involves over two dozen people including a Boy Scout Pack, a Girl Scout Troop and Wesley Willows residents. One church member also contributed 100 hand puppets to this year's ministry.

This year, Aldersgate delivered nearly 1,500 handmade toys to 13 agencies including: The Carrie Lynn Center, Children's Home and Aid, Crystal Lake Fire Department, Maya's House, Rockford Memorial Hospital, Rosecrance, St. Anthony Hospital, Swedish-American Hospital, Trinity Day Care, and United Way. For more information visit aldersgaterkfd.webs.com.

◀ **Andy Gannon**, member of Aldersgate, (third from left) is delivering toys to one of the Rosecrance facilities in Rockford.



This I Celebrate!

Lay Missioner reaches community through food pantry

By Rev. Martin Lee, Dir. of Congregational Development and Redevelopment

As Illinois struggles through dangerously cold temperatures, Lay Missioner Ramiro Rodriguez opens a food pantry at 4:00 p.m. every Thursday, no matter the weather. He knows that those in need have no respite.

Hunger increases with the cold because bodies use energy just to stay warm. He knows this because at one time he was living under a bridge, homeless. He knows the needs of a community seeking the basic needs of food and shelter. When he was homeless and losing hope, by God's grace, he stepped inside Amor de Dios UMC and found a welcome and comfort there.

Ramiro later joined the Conference Hispanic Academy for Faith Community Development to become a Lay Missioner. He has served the pantry for the last ten years. He works as an electrician, but he always takes Thursdays off to serve in the pantry ministry. He goes to the Chicago Food Depository to learn about operating an effective pantry ministry. Because of the Conference Academy, he was able to find his gifts and talents to lead his congregation as a Lay Missioner. He also enjoys playing guitar to lead worship at Amor de Dios United Methodist Church.

Chicago Southern District Superintendent Jacques Conway stopped by the pantry to thank him for his faithfulness and leadership in serving the community. Rev. Conway said that he is an amazing servant of God who understands his community and serves the people tirelessly. He said that when he visited he could see the difference Ramiro was making.

One of the church members, Jacki Serrno, a high school senior, came along with him to the Conference Hispanic Academy. She was encouraged and challenged by her schoolteachers and the Academy participants to pursue a college degree. She got a bachelor's degree in communications. Now she is a full-time reporter at the Chicago Tribune, working on their Spanish language newspaper.

Ramiro, Jacki and Amor de Dios United Methodist Church are the light of the Little Village. This is a community facing many different challenges, but the servants at this United Methodist Church are working hard to serve the people, especially during this cold weather.

This I celebrate!

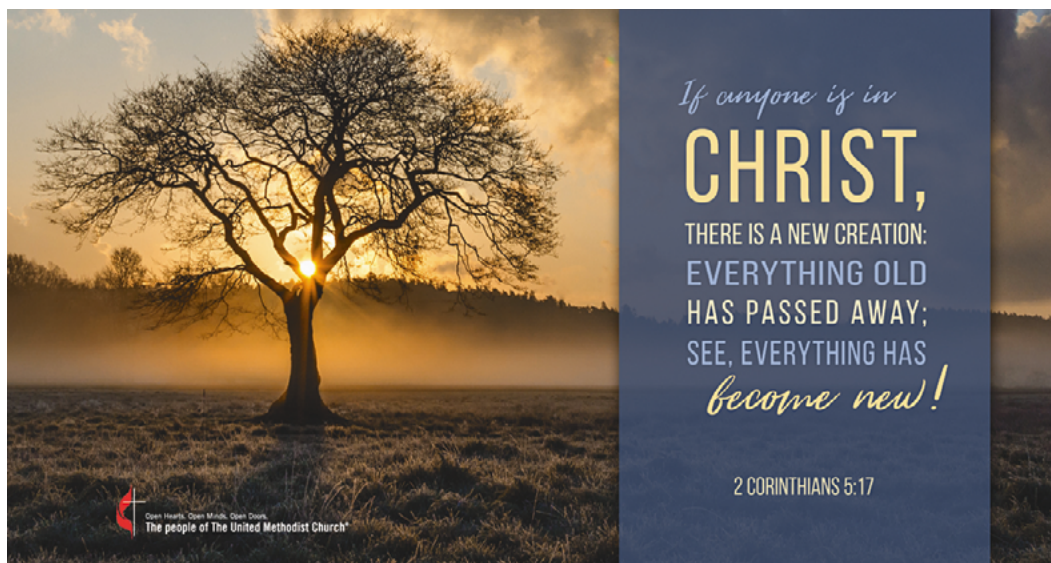
Camps & Outdoor Retreat Ministries News



It's never too early to start planning for summer camp! Check out the middle insert for registration information and a listing of offerings at both Wesley Woods and Camp Reynoldswood.

Winter Ski Camp
@ Wesley Woods - February 23-25, 2018

For registration and information visit at
www.niccamp.org



If anyone is in
CHRIST,
THERE IS A NEW CREATION:
EVERYTHING OLD
HAS PASSED AWAY;
SEE, EVERYTHING HAS
become new!

2 CORINTHIANS 5:17

Open Hearts, Open Minds, Open Doors.
The people of The United Methodist Church

New Year's resolutions to equip new leaders!

Do you want to get your church hopping in the New Year? Below are six motivating and inspiring ways to get your new leaders off to a positive start. When your leaders are engaged and focused, people in your congregation and community will become excited about the church and its ministries.

1. Equip leaders with specific tasks.

Give the new leaders copies of Guidelines, written by Discipleship Ministries. Each Guidelines booklet provides a solid foundation for planning and understanding specific ministries. Be SMART (Specific, Measurable, Attainable, Relevant, Time-Bound) as you set goals, keeping the church's purpose and mission at the forefront of your plan.

Give committees and volunteers plenty of time to plan and develop their work by using a ministry calendar or a project timeline. Once you have a project timeline, plug the dates into your editorial calendar. Alleviate stress by giving yourself plenty of time to create a Vacation Bible School curriculum, or to coordinate annual events.

2. Offer coaching.

In the local church, it often is hard to break old patterns of leadership. This may be especially true if outgoing leaders have bad habits yet, mentor the incoming leaders. If church leaders are stuck in patterns that need to change, enlist someone from outside to help. For instance, you could find another United Methodist church that has a well-functioning worship committee and ask that chairperson to coach your new worship chairperson. Some annual conferences have congregational developers or coaches. Paid coaches can be expensive, but you might find funding from your conference's congregational development office. United Methodist Communications offers in-person and online training as well. Visit umcom.org for resources.

3. Provide resources.

Offer internal training and promote district and conference training. Also, plan some spiritual retreats. Provide continuing education for your leaders. Here are some examples:

- Take 15 minutes at church council to do some teaching or training.
- Invite your leaders to read a book and talk about it.
- Create a curriculum and offer a class on leadership.
- Promote district and conference training events.

If you need a retreat, but don't have the time (or gifts) to lead it, invite another pastor or lay person to facilitate it (and then find a way to return the favor).

4. Pray for new leaders.

Commit to praying for your leaders, and involve others in the prayer process. Identify people who are called specifically to a ministry of prayer and commission them to pray daily for church leaders. A great resource for different prayer methods is at www.upperroom.org.

5. Say "thank you."

Thank your leaders every chance you get and never forget why they are volunteering — to serve our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.



Civil Rights legends Dr. Timuel D. Black, the Rev. Dr. Calvin S. Morris, and the Rev. Martin L. Deppe, along with emcee Primus J. Mootry (2nd from left) lead a Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. worship celebration on Jan. 14, 2018 at Morgan Park UMC.

Civil Rights legends lead annual Martin Luther King Jr. celebration

By Anne Marie Gerhardt

Nearly 50 years following the death of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., the Civil Rights leader's message still rings true today for many who are still fighting for equality and justice in 2018. Three Civil Rights veterans shared their personal stories of working alongside and linking arms with King in Chicago during the 1960s at a worship celebration on Jan. 14, 2018 at Morgan Park United Methodist Church on the city's far southwest side.

The Northern Illinois Conference and the Chicago Black Methodist for Church Renewal (BMCR) sponsored this annual event on the day before King's birthday holiday. The speakers included Dr. Timuel D. Black, the Rev. Martin L. Deppe, and the Rev. Dr. Calvin S. Morris. Brenetta Howell Barrett was scheduled to speak but was unable to attend. The theme of the celebration was "MLK Dream Keepers... Staying the Course!"

Chicago BMCR President Dennis M. Oglesby, Jr., Senior Pastor of Transformation Community UMC in Harvey, Ill., said the event was a rare opportunity to meet iconic civil rights heroes who were King's partners in the Movement and remain drum majors for justice.

"These leaders," said Oglesby, "believed in King and sacrificed their lives for the higher goal of achieving equality for all."

Dr. Timuel Black, who will turn 100 this year, recalled marching with King in Chicago's Marquette Park on Aug. 5, 1966, to call for open housing. King was hit by a rock and knocked down, but Black said that didn't stop him and only reinforced his non-violence principles.

"Dr. King carried a spirituality and realized he had a responsibility to the future," said Black. "Dr. King inspired millions of people not just in America but around the world. Let's keep moving forward with his message and spirituality."

The Rev. Martin L. Deppe, retired United Methodist pastor, recalled the historic, first meeting in a church basement with King to initiate "Operation Breadbasket" and to advocate for jobs in Chicago's African-American communities.

"Our motto was 'keep a slice of bread in your community' and the message was 'your ministers fight for jobs and justice,'" said Deppe who has recently written a book on the subject and added that the fundamental premise still works today.

The Rev. Dr. Calvin S. Morris worked with King serving as Associate Director of the Southern Christian Leadership Conference's Operation Breadbasket in Chicago from 1967-71. Morris said the Civil Rights Movement was undergirded by names many of us will never know and it's important to continue to share King's legacy with the younger generation.

"Dr. King's sense of common humanity was profound and genuine," said Morris who closed his remarks with a prayer.

"I pray that God will come into all of our hearts and come to stay because in that sense we will honor people like Martin Luther King, Jr. and honor those people whose names we will never know."

Bishop Sally Dyck welcomed everyone at the beginning of the program and said if King were alive today he would be addressing the poverty and racism that still exists in this country as well as peace around the world. Bishop Dyck said it was a real honor to have some of King's fellow Civil Rights Activists at the event to share their experiences.

"We need to remember those who worked with King so we can remember to keep the faith and keep on keeping on," said Dyck.

Primus J. Mootry, former executive director of the Better Boys Foundation in Chicago, emceed the celebration and the youth choir from St. Mark UMC in Chicago, Sounds of Judah, sang several selections with 12-year-old Caleb Bunton singing a stirring solo. U.S. Congressman Danny K. Davis, a guest at the event, also spoke and said if King were alive today he would tell us to be "alert."

Deppe may have summed up the event's purpose with his closing remarks. "We have to leave here energized to organize, to work, to pray, to consult, to study and to give something of our lives and labor so the younger generations of all colors may lift their heads high with a new confidence, new hope, and new beginning."

A special thank you to everyone who contributed to the offering at the service for hurricane relief in Puerto Rico.



February is Black History month and celebrates the historical contributions of African Americans to the worship life, mission and ministry of the church. For resources visit: www.umcnic.org/news/february-is-black-history-month.



ACT now to end racism

ACT stands for Awaken, Confront and Transform. The United Methodist Church and the Council of Bishops are encouraging churches to join this national campaign to end racism from April 3- 5, 2018, in Washington, D.C. Thousands of Christians are expected to gather for a rally on the National Mall on April 4, the 50th anniversary of the assassination of the Rev. Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. A worship service is planned for the evening of April 3 and organized visits to legislators on April 5.

All United Methodists are encouraged to attend. This is an issue that affects all of our churches and this entire great nation. So, bring your whole church. Rent a bus and come together with local Pan-Methodist congregations in your area.

Volunteers are now being amassed and more information about this event will be coming soon.

This campaign has grown out of the National Council of Churches in the U.S., as they have discerned a call to ecumenically intensify our work together toward racial justice. The challenge is to our churches and nation to tell the truth about the complicity, compliance and coercions of racism in this time, believing truth will lead to transformative action in both church and society. For more information visit nationalcouncilofchurches.us.



Upcoming Conference focuses on Cross-Cultural Appointments

Hundreds of pastors in cross-racial/cross-cultural ministry from across the country will attend Facing the Future 2018, the General Commission on Religion and Race's (GCORR) third national conference from May 7-9, 2018 in Newark, NJ.

Facing the Future 2018 will be rooted in biblical and theological frameworks, feature peer-to-peer learning, deep self-reflection, and opportunities for self-initiated networking in a nurturing environment of affirmation.

If you would like to attend or sponsor clergy in your district or conference, visit www.facingthefuture2018.com.

DYK???

Did You Know? "The UMC speaks to sexual harassment"



By Rev. Arlene Christopherson, Assistant to the Bishop/Dir. Connectional Ministries

Almost 30 years ago I attended my first mandatory Clergy Boundary Training. I had been in ministry for a few years before being invited to this event. I had no idea it was a "new thing." However, it didn't take long to feel the resistance, anger, even resentment in the room as our presenter offered a lecture on the dos and don'ts of clergy behavior. In the 1990s this was a new horizon for pastors, understanding the difference between being pastoral, co-dependent, even abusive in our use of the sacred power and authority of ministry.

Fast forward 30 years and Northern Illinois Conference clergy are seasoned veterans of Ethics and Boundary training. It can still be a tense conversation as we struggle to define the difference between pastor and friend, between personal and public, between compassion and co-dependence.

Clergy ethics and boundaries have become even more complicated as we experience the power of social media. We struggle to understand how social media can "complement" or "compromise" the trust we strive to cultivate in our ministry.

Clergy training has evolved. While always including a list of dos and don'ts, we now understand that balance in our personal and professional lives, good habits of self-care and healthy relationships all factor into good judgment on the part of a pastor.

Just a week after our most recent training concluded, the conversation of sexual ethics and harassment became a national focus. Tragically, we have been reminded that abuse of power and authority is not only a problem for the church but for the whole of our society. Lawmakers on Capitol Hill will now participate in mandatory boundary training, companies are reviewing their policies and practices, and many who have been harassed or abused are finding strength and voice in this moment of public reflection.

The local church, well versed in Safe Sanctuaries for the protection of children and youth, has also begun to take notice of how we engage in healthy respectful relationships between adults; laity to laity.

Visit www.umcnic.org/shepherding-team/congregational-life and click on "Forms/Grants/Resources" for a fact sheet concerning sexual harassment and the Local Church. The sheet includes definitions from our United Methodist *Book of Resolutions* for sexual misconduct, sexual harassment, and pornography as well as resources for our work. Other resources on the website include a helpful article that outlines the spectrum of sexual misconduct from non-offensive actions to egregious behaviors.

If your church leadership wishes to learn more and equip your congregation to be a safe place for all ages there is a 3-session SPRC training video series on the Missouri Conference website for SPRC boundary training:

www.moumethodist.org/boundaryPPRC.

The tragic stories of harassment and abuse in the news have heightened our awareness. Now is the moment to learn more, go deeper and work to be a church that fosters safety from harassment and abuse for all ages. As the church models respect for each other and care of one another, we can be a positive influence in all our relationships, within and beyond the congregation.

Stay Connected

Sign up for the weekly NIC eNews & Appointment Announcements and Sympathy notices.

Visit www.umcnic.org and scroll down to enter your email and name under "Sign up for our eNewsletter".

FEBRUARY/MARCH CALENDAR NEWS

Shift Training Series

February 7, 9:30 a.m. – 3:30 p.m.

Location: The Augsburg Room at the Evangelical Lutheran Church in American (ELCA) Churchwide Ministries Center, 8765 W. Higgins Road, Chicago

"Membership to Discipleship"

Are you doing things the same old way and getting the same old results? The Shifts for Leadership training by Phil Maynard offers a better way. Discover the tools and methods to move your congregation into healthy church systems that create a new way of doing life together.

Registration Fee: \$20 per workshop (includes lunch and workbook)

For more information visit:

www.umcnic.org/calendar/shift-event-to-lifestyle

Questions contact: Laura Lopez 312-346-9766 ext. 724 email: llopez@umcnic.org

Sponsored by the NIC Office of Congregational Development and Redevelopment.

Clergy Tax Seminar

February 8, 9 a.m.

Location: Sycamore UMC, 160 Johnson Ave., Sycamore, IL

To register visit:

www.umcnic.org/calendar/clergy-tax-seminar

Questions contact Carolyn Cook, 312-334-0704 or ccoock@umcnic.org.



Laity Convocation

February 17, 9 a.m. - 12:45 p.m.

Location: Sycamore UMC, 160 Johnson Ave., Sycamore, IL

Cost: After February 3 \$15 per person, \$50 per church

"From Why to How: Executing your Plan for Ministry"

Keynote Speaker: Rev. Dr. Junius Dotson, General Secretary of Discipleship Ministries

Join us to learn strategies on transforming ministry plans into action. At Laity Convocation 2017, we learned to listen to each other and about our "Why." This year we will continue to discover our "Why" along with our "HOW."

Register: www.umcnic.org/calendar/laity-convocation.

Aurora District Lay Academy

Location: Trinity UMC, 2505 Boomer Ln., Yorkville, IL
This Lenten Season, deepen your commitment. Be a disciple for Christ.

Five Sundays during Lent:

February 18, 25 and March 4, 11, 18, 2:00 p.m. – 5:00 p.m.

\$40.00 Registration Fee by February 10, 2018

Mail check payable to "Aurora Lay Academy" to 717 N. Washington St., Wheaton, IL 60187 Phone: 630-709-3953, mary.mecker@gmail.com

For a registration form visit:

www.umcnic.org/calendar/aurora-district-lay-academy-1

District Leadership Trainings for laity and clergy



Chicago Southern District

Saturday, Feb. 24, 2018, 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Location: Korean UMC of South Suburban Chicago, 19320 Kedzie Ave., Flossmoor, IL
"Fresh Ideas for our Churches"

Aurora District

Date: March 3

More details to come

Visit: www.umcnic.org/calendar for more info and registration or contact your District Administrator.

JANUARY APPOINTMENTS: Visit www.umcnic.org/appointments for Monday updates

Cathy Caliendo (Elder) to retirement from Cicero: Wesley (Chicago Southern District) and River Forest (Chicago Northwestern District). Cathy became a Probationary Member in 2006 and a Full Member in 2012. During her ministry, Cathy served Cicero: Wesley and River Forest.

Rodney Dye (Elder) to retirement from Erie (DeKalb District). Rod became a Probationary Member of the Northern Illinois Conference in 2001 and a Full Member in 2004. During his ministry, Rod served Apple River, Lanark, and Erie.

Dean Francis (Elder) to retirement from Evanston: First (Chicago Northwestern District). Dean became a Probationary Member in the Western Michigan Conference in 1980 and a Full Member in Western Michigan in 1983. He transferred to Northern Illinois in 1995 and served at Evanston: First.

Harlene Harden (Elder) to retirement from Sycamore Associate (DeKalb District). Harlene became a Probationary Member of the Northern Illinois Conference in 1994 and a Full Member in 2000. During her ministry, Harlene served at Chicago: Fellowship/Pullman, Waukegan: First (Associate), Chicago: St. James and Sycamore (Associate).

Greta McDonald (Elder) to retirement from Downers Grove: First (Aurora District). Greta became a Probationary Member of the Northern Illinois Conference in 1975 and a Full Member in 1979. During her ministry Greta served Elizabeth, Libertyville: First, New Lenox and Downers Grove: First.

Jason Turner (Elder) from Elmhurst: Faith Evangelical (Elgin District) to Extension Ministry at Dayone Pact. Effective July 17, 2017.

George David (Retired Elder) to Elmhurst: Faith Evangelical (Elgin District) as interim following Jason Turner's appointment to extension Ministry. Effective August 1, 2017.

Jonathan Hutchison (Retired Elder) returning to retirement from part-time service to Elgin: Wesley (Elgin District). Effective December 31, 2017.

Becky Nicol (Elder) to Geneva (Associate part-time) (Aurora District) from Leave of Absence. Effective August 1, 2017.

Joe Monroe (Local Pastor) to Sycamore (Associate Part-Time) (DeKalb District) while also serving at Maple Park: Grace (part-time). Effective November 1, 2017.

Nick Nicholas (Deacon) to Naperville: Community (Aurora District) as Director of Youth and Young Adult Ministries, from Manchester UMC in Missouri. Effective November 16, 2017.

David Haley (Elder) to retirement from Skokie: Central (Chicago Northwestern District). David began his ministry in the Memphis Conference as probationary member in 1974 and a full member in 1977. He transferred to Northern Illinois in 1980 and served Hermosa-Salem, Chicago: Berry Memorial, West Chicago: First and Skokie: Central.

Scott McClellan (Elder) to retirement from McHenry: First (Elgin District). Scott became a Probationary Member of the Northern Illinois Conference in 1982 and a full member in 1984. During his ministry Scott served at Chicago: Bethel, Ravenswood, Hebron, Lindenhurst: Trinity, Wheaton: Aldersgate, Lena, Winslow, McConnell, Morris: First and McHenry: First.

Brett McCleneghan (Elder) to retirement from appointment to another denomination. Brett became a probationary member of the Northern Illinois Conference in 1979 and a full member in 1982. During his ministry Brett served Palatine: First (Associate), Park Ridge: First (Associate), Glenview (Co-Pastor), Northbrook and Park Ridge: Community UCC.

Job Openings

For the latest NIC job openings, visit www.umcnic.org/jobs

Submit News

Please submit items at least two weeks prior to publication date. Include your name, address, email, phone number and name of local church. Space is limited. Electronic submissions are preferred with high-resolution attached jpegs.

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