

THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

A Voice for Ecumenical Congregations and Christians Around the World

VOLUME 64

JANUARY 2014

NUMBER 4

OFFICERS AND TRUSTEES

President

Bruce Merton

Vice Presidents

Richard Griffith

Charlene Watkins

Treasurer

Nicholas Brame

Secretary

Abraham Wright

Immediate Past President

Sandra Nelson

Trustees

Roberta Smith

Nanci Harris

Glenn Clay

Ted Fielland

Denise Sager

Vermelle Barnes

Charles Addison

Michael Donahue

Janet Burch

Auxiliary Heads

Women's Christian Fellowship:
Ella Clay

Samaritans: Wayne Samuels

Youth: Sarah Wells

Ministerium: William Samuels

"God is doing a new thing..."

64th Annual Conference July 14-17, 2014 - Omaha, NE

by Harry Fockle, Antioch Community Church, Conference Chair

"He ain't heavy, he's my brother."

You've heard that before. It comes with a picture of a young man carrying another young man on his shoulders. It's origin is from Boy's Town in Omaha, Nebraska where this coming July we gather for a powerfilled shoulder carrying Annual Conference.

Omaha has so much to offer not withstanding the incredible hotel facilities of the Downtown Double Tree. In terms of food there is much to pick from in walking distance from the Hotel.

Actually to the amazement of many it is a destination vacation area. You will be pleased with our middle of America venue.

Yet we know it is not about Omaha or any other city we find ourselves in. It is about God and God's mission and call to the Community Churches to meet in Annual Conference.

We renew friendship and make new ones. We worship and we study the Word. We meet in workshops that inspire and "train us in the way we should go." We offer continuing education for our ICCC clergy and oh yes we eat and we eat and we eat.

This year is no different. We will be inspired by great preaching and powerful Bible Studies. Our entertainment will come from world class performers that you will be talking about for a long time to come.

But you know the best part? The best part is God and the Holy Spirit of God will be there! It just does not get any better than that. God and you and me in Omaha. It is a foretaste of the Kingdom Place.

See you in Omaha!!!





2014

President's Message
Rev. Dr. Bruce N. Merton

January is named after Janus, a Roman god, who had two faces. He could look back at the past and forward to the future.

At the beginning of 2014 we are a little like Janus. We look at the past reflectively, longingly, and, maybe, ruefully. We look to the future expectantly, hopefully, anxiously, and, maybe, fearfully.

At the fulcrum of past and future is the present. And what we do with the opportunity of the present largely determines for our lives the effects of the past and our effectiveness in the future.

The scripture urges "redeem your time wisely."

How do we do that?

It all begins by using the fulcrum of the present to renew our primary allegiance to the God, who through Christ, says, "Behold, I make all things new."

Time is a gift from God. You and I have done nothing to deserve it. We can do nothing to earn it. It cannot be purchased.

We cannot stop time, slow time or turn it off.

We cannot bring time back. Once it is gone, it is gone.

You are probably familiar with the anecdote: "Yesterday is the past. Tomorrow is uncertain. Today is God's gift; that's why they call it the present!"

What will you and I do with "the present?" We can waste it, worry over it, spend it on ourselves or dedicate it to

the glory of God and living the lifestyle of Jesus, the Christ, in our day and time.

Renewing our allegiance to God, through Christ, gives us the assurance that we can receive the New Year as an unspoiled, undefiled opportunity to have life and have it more abundantly.

In that renewed relationship we have the opportunity to put into practice what we learned about the lifestyle of Christ, but have often neglected.

We discover that all we have sought for and did not find is vested in God. It waits to be poured into lives that seek to "trust and obey for there's no other way."

By shedding conflicting desires and priorities for a renewed focus on God in Christ, we find that the good we tried for and did not achieve is within our reach and doing.

We have dreamed it, but did not do it!

We have wished it, but lacked the will!

We have claimed faith, but did not live faithfully!

That is the past and it is past! We cannot undo it, reclaim it or relive it!

The future is yet to be!

At the fulcrum of past and future is this day. In "the present" our God, able to do far more abundantly than we could ask or think, waits for us to renew our relationship in faith and practice. If we will, and as we do, God makes all things new thus redeeming the past, assuring our victory in the future and making "the present" a true gift.

Mission Statement



"As people devoted to following Christ we are committed to community, to treasuring diversity, to living our faith in service and love."

ANNUAL CONFERENCE CONFEREES WANT TO SEE YOU IN 2014



THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

**A Voice for
Ecumenical Congregations
(ISSN - 0145-3297)**

A periodical of news, reviews, and reflections for ecumenically oriented and community-minded churches, ministry centers, and clergy.

Published Oct., Nov., Dec., Jan., Feb., Mar., Apr., June by the International Council of Community Churches. Home Office: 21116 Washington Parkway, Frankfort, Illinois 60423-1253. Periodicals postage paid at Frankfort, Illinois and at additional mailing offices. Subscription rate: \$12.00 per year.

Editors:

DeAnn Chatlosh
Don Ashmall

Circulation:

DeAnn Chatlosh

Book Reviews:

Robert M. Puckett

Telephone: 815/464-5690

Fax: 815/464-5692

E-Mail:

ICCC60423@sbcglobal.net

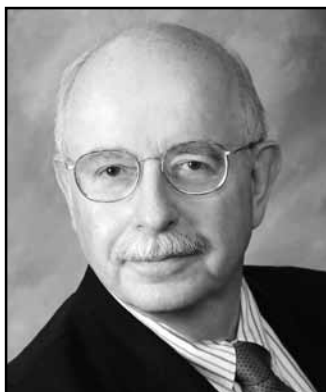
www.ICCCUSA.com

POSTMASTER:

Send address changes to :
ICCC, 21116 Washington Pkwy.
Frankfort, IL 60423-3112.

2014 ICCC Annual Conference Sponsors

“Pledge” is not just a furniture polish! Now is the time to approach potential sponsors for the 2014 ICCC Annual Conference. Ask them to “pledge” \$1000 now as sponsors, with pledge fulfillment to take place by the time conference begins. Potential sponsors include business owners, professionals, and corporate decision-makers and others with the resources and the will to make the Annual Conference a success. There’s more about conference sponsorships in the Resources section of the Council’s website www.icccusa.com.



It's A New Year

Don Ashmall
Council Minister

It's 2014. Happy new year!

A bit of history: a century ago the year 1914 began with European imperial powers ruling over most of the world. Steam engines and (literal) horse power got us from one place to another. In the US most immigration was from Europe. In the US and Europe there was a great deal of faith in “progress,” variously defined. Nearly everyone expected that peace would continue to be the rule among what were then called the “civilized nations.” Almost nobody foresaw the beginning of World War I later in 1914. The few who ventured to predict the future were marginal figures in a literary genre not yet called science fiction. In the Christian church it was assumed that outside missionaries would always persist in their task of bringing the gospel to indigenous populations worldwide, from a majority base in northern hemisphere nations.

A century has taught us that change is the only constant. What “is” is constantly being challenged by all kinds of alternate futures. We in the church have been slow to learn that lesson. In the early 1900’s many theologians (who of all people should have known better) bought into the theory that progress marked by peace was inevitable. They were to be disappointed by a century of conflict. In the 1920’s, many Christians in the US thought prosperity was a constant, only to be surprised by the Great Depression. In the 1960’s US suburban churches built huge Sunday

School wings onto their church buildings on the basis of baby boom population trends – and then somebody went and invented the Pill. Nobody expected that southern hemisphere nations would ever think about sending missionaries to the northern hemisphere, but that too is happening.

With that century’s worth of experience, trying to look into the church’s future is a venture attempted only by fools. But as one who would be a fool for Christ’s sake, I’ll give it a try. If humans are living on this planet then, there are several marks we can expect of vital local churches in the year 2114.

Diversity will rule. Within the same vital Christian congregation, there will be a variety of first languages, a variety of ethnic backgrounds, and a variety of life experiences and expectations. Governmental regulations to slow down or stop population movement have never been successful, and that fact won’t change. If the local church you belong to is ministering in 2114, it’s certain that many of the people in the congregation won’t look like you.

Ministries will change. In one US East Coast urban neighborhood, single family townhouses were built in the 1890’s for upper middle class families. By the 1950’s these buildings became apartments, largely for low income folk. In the 1980’s the neighborhood was “gentrified” and the buildings became single family homes

REVIEWS

Dr. Robert M. Puckett

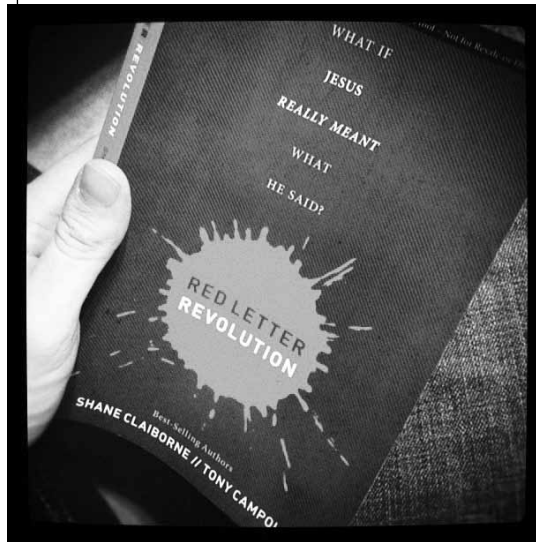
RED LETTER REVOLUTION: What If Jesus Really Meant What He Said?;
Shane Claiborne//Tony Campolo, Thomas Nelson, 2012, 260 pages, \$22.99

I was given a red letter edition of the Bible on the day that I was baptized. Everything attributed to what Jesus said was printed in red. Shane Claiborne and Tony Campolo consider themselves to be Evangelical Christians but they are very different from many others who claim to be Evangelical Christians these days. The difference is that they take very seriously what Jesus said and believe that he meant what he said. Their interpretation of Jesus' teaching reveals Jesus as the champion of the poor, the despised, and the outcast. They insist that an obedient commitment to the teachings of Jesus puts genuine Christians on the front lines in the battle against poverty, injustice, racism, and economic oppression which could change the world for the better.

The authors call themselves "Red Letter Christians" in order to avoid the widespread image that the word *evangelical* portrays someone who is anti-gay, anti-feminist, anti-environmentalist, pro-war, pro-capital punishment, and conservative Republican. Instead they believe that we are called into an intentional community which is committed to peace and a simple lifestyle that puts into practice the teaching of Jesus about how we live.

Claiborne quotes Kierkegaard who said, "The Bible is very easy to understand. But we Christians... pretend to be unable to understand it because we know very well that the minute we understand, we are obliged to act accordingly." We need to be more concerned about living every day

as Jesus meant us to live by loving our neighbor, praying for enemies and gracefully following Jesus who "shows us what God is like with skin on--in a way we can see, touch, and feel." (pp. 6-7)



Throughout this book Claiborne and Campolo propose an authentic Christianity that looks more like Jesus. They declare the good news that "Jesus has survived the embarrassing things that we Christians have done in his name, as found in the dark side of the history of fundamentalism, the messiness of the religious Right, and even more recently, in folks who burn the Koran and hold signs that say 'God Hates Fags.'" The good news is that Jesus had a lot to say about economics, violence, war and peace. "He wasn't just talking about what happens after we die. He was talking about how we live right now. He was talking about widows and orphans, laborers and wages," and the things that concern ordinary people every day. (p. 14)

They devote whole chapters to things like the Family, On Being Pro-life, Homosexuality, Immigration, Empire, Politics, etc.

I particularly liked Tony Campolo's remark about John 3:16: "We should know that in the original language of the Bible, the word for world is *cosmos*, which means literally everything that is ...God's salvation is not just for individuals. His salvation is for everything in this world...God loves chickens; he loves the trees, he loves the mountains. He loves everything he has made and says 'It is good'... This world that God loves will not be destroyed! Instead, it will be renewed." (p. 255) But in order for that to happen Christians must "live simply so others may simply live!!" (p. 20)

Live Simply

ICCC GENERAL FUND JAN. – NOV., 2013

Total Cash Balance	
as of January 1, 2013:.....	\$ 70,529.66
Total Income year to date	
as of November 30:.....	\$183,573.27
Total Expenses year to date	
as of November 30:.....	\$202,413.32
Total Cash Balance as of	
November 30, 2013:.....	\$ 51,689.61

64th Annual Conference

July 14-17, 2014 - Omaha, NE

Hotel Information

The 2014 Annual Conference will be held at the DoubleTree by Hilton Omaha Downtown, 1616 Dodge St., Omaha, NE 68102 Phone: 402-346-7600. Just a short complimentary shuttle ride from Eppley Airfield, the DoubleTree boasts a central location at the crossroads of the country, and is close to Omaha attractions.

Each standard guest room features style and comforting amenities such as internet access (fee assessed), flat panel HD TV, a spacious work desk, complimentary remote printing, coffee maker and much more including the comfort of the Sweet Dreams by DoubleTree plush top king/queen sized beds. Enjoy onsite services like a modern fitness center, an indoor pool and a business center.

Visit Signatures Restaurant for a delicious meal. This stylish venue showcases US cuisine and an extensive buffet service, as well as an a la carte menu.

Hotel Reservations

For those conferees planning on attending the conference you will need to call DoubleTree by Hilton to reserve your room at **800-222-8733** or **402-346-7600**. Inform the reservations clerk that you are attending the 2014 ICCC Annual Conference to get the special rate of \$119.00 + tax per night. This rate will be offered three days prior and after the conference (subject to availability at the time of reservation). **The cut-off date for hotel reservations is June 30, 2014.** After this date, normal hotel rates will be in effect and space may no longer be available. You can also make a reservation online: http://doubletree.hilton.com/en/dt/groups/personalized/O/OMAH-DT-ICC-20140711/index.jhtml?WT.mc_id=POG. **Please note:** the special rate of \$119 + tax is negotiated only for conferees. Those utilizing this special rate are expected to register for the conference. Thank you for your cooperation. Check-in: 3:00 p.m. Check-Out: 12:00 p.m.



Transportation To and From the Hotel

The Eppley Airfield is only 4.57mi from the DoubleTree by Hilton, which offers complimentary shuttle service. Taxi service from the airport averages \$10.00 one-way. Self parking is available at the hotel for \$7.00/day.

For hotel information, visit their website: <http://www.doubletreeomahadowntown.com>. For airport information, visit their website: <http://www.flyoma.com> or call 402-661-8017.

Conference Registration includes:

- General Sessions
- Workshops & Bible Study
- Exhibits
- Conference Banquet
- All Conference Reception
- One year subscription to *The Christian Community*

Optional Conference Activities That Require Additional Fee:

- Koinonia Luncheon
- Mission Luncheon
- Prayer Breakfast
- Welcome Luncheon

KNOWLEDGE IS GOLD

Would you like to go further with your education?

Apply for a Jordan Scholarship

Contact the Council Office for an application.

ICCC60423@sbcglobal.net of 815-464-5690

New Year *cont'd from pg 2*

again. Lately some have been changed back into apartments and the average income in the area has been decreasing. Neighborhood churches that could not adjust to the changes went out of business. The pace of change is increasing, and the pace of change in ministries will have to keep up.

Technology will make demands and present opportunities. Can you imagine having a conversation about the church with a 1914 church member? How would you explain internet Bible studies, television evangelists, DVD's in Sunday School classes, Youtube videos of local church worship services, and so many other innovations? If the changes of the last century seem amazing, "you ain't seen nothin' yet!"

Some things won't change. Joy, peace and hope will be shared by vital congregations then as now. Relationships will be built. Spiritual and physical needs will still be met by dedicated Christians. And one other thing: there will still be a need to proclaim and to exemplify the unity of Christ's church. In its sixty-three years of ministry, the ICCC has had more than one structure and more than one name. We have always said that the structure is subordinate to the mission. Given the pace of change the Council won't look as it does now and may not even carry the same name (Inter-galactic Council !?!) But the vision of Christ's people drawn into the unity of God's love will remain, and still inspire discipleship in one Spirit.

One more constant: you and I are called to build the future even as we move into it. The quest for Christian unity in peace and justice is a holy one. I pray that you will join with me as we advance that quest by deed as well as by word in 2014 and beyond.

May God bless you in 2014.

2014 Annual Conference Program Book/Church Directory Ad Space

Indicate below the ad size you will submit.

	<u>HEIGHT</u>	<u>WIDTH</u>	<u>PAGE SIZE</u>	<u>COST</u>
_____	8"	x 11"	Full	\$200.00
_____	8"	x 5.5"	One Half	100.00
_____	4"	x 5"	One Quarter	50.00

Name: _____

Organization: _____

Address: _____

City/State/Zip: _____

Phone: () _____ Fax: () _____

E-mail: _____

Mail this completed form along with your ad and payment to:
INTERNATIONAL COUNCIL OF COMMUNITY CHURCHES
21116 Washington Parkway
Frankfort, Illinois 60423-3112

OR email to ICC60423@sbcglobal.net (must be paid by credit/debit card)

- Check or Money Order made payable to ICCC
- Visa Mastercard American Express Discover

Acct. # _____

Exp. Date _____

Print name as it appears on card: _____

Signature of card holder: _____

DEADLINE FOR SUBMISSION: MAY 31, 2014.

PLEASE MAKE SURE YOUR AD IS CAMERA-READY (THE AD WILL GO IN BOOK AS IS).

THE COUNCIL CANNOT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR DESIGNING ADS.

ICCC Registration Form
2014 Annual Conference: July 14-17
"God is doing a new thing..."
Omaha, Nebraska

Name (as you would like it on badge) _____

Street Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Telephone (_____) _____ E-mail Address: _____

Church (member of) _____

Gender: Male Female

First Conference: Yes No

Status: Clergy Laity Infant Child Elementary Youth Young Adult Adult

Name and Telephone number of a person to be notified in an emergency (_____) _____

➤ ➤ ➤ **FOR THE ELEMENTARY AND YOUTH PROGRAMS ONLY!** ◀ ◀ ◀

- Age (on 7-1-2014) _____ Grade completed by (7-1-2014) _____
- If **18 years or under**, an adult who is registered for the Conference and who will serve as a sponsor and assume responsibility for said young person and must sign below.

Sponsor Signature

Print Sponsor Name

CONFERENCE FEES

Fill in Dollar Amount for this
Registration

Infants (not occupying chair at banquet)	\$ 0.00	\$
Child (Ages 1-5)	\$ 35.00	\$
Elementary (Completed Grade K through Grade 6)	\$ 60.00	\$
Youth (Completed Grade 7 through Grade 12)	\$145.00	\$
Young Adult (Ages 18-23)	\$170.00	\$
Adult	\$195.00	\$
Continuing Education Certificate (for Clergy only)	\$ 10.00	\$
Daily Registrants Circle Day(s) M T W Th	\$ 35.00/day	\$
Late Fee - Add After June 20, 2014	\$ 35.00	\$
CC	TOTAL ENCLOSED	\$

A Banquet ticket is included in your registration fee. This meal includes: Spinach Salad with Strawberries, Almond Pepper Confetti, Orange Vinaigrette, Crown Roast Pork, with Sweet Potatoes, Seasonal Vegetables, Rolls & Butter, Classic Tiramisu Cake, Regular and Decaf Coffee, Iced Tea and Water. Beef Option: Roasted Strip Loin, Pinot Noir Sauce, Red Duchess Potatoes, Seasonal Vegetables. Vegetarian Option: Bowtie Pasta, Capers, Tomato, Black Olives, Red Onions, Spinach, Parmesan and a Champagne Cream Sauce. Kid's Meal Option: Chicken Strips and French Fries.

Please circle one of the following for your preference at Thursday's Banquet Dinner.

Crown Roast Pork Beef Option Vegetarian Option Kid's Meal Option

Please return this form with payment to: ICCC, 21116 Washington Pkwy., Frankfort, IL 60423

Check or Money Order made payable to ICCC

VISA MASTERCARD AMERICAN EXPRESS DISCOVER

Acct. #: _____ Exp. Date: _____

Print name as it appears on card: _____

Signature _____

One form per person. Pre-Registration ends on June 20th. All registrations after this time will be assessed a late fee of \$35.00. Late registrations will be accepted at Conference only. Do not send to the Council Office.

CANCELLATIONS: A \$25 administration fee will be assessed for each.

Sharing Joys:

- **Christ Church of Peace**, Jacksonville, FL, where **Rev. Harvey Carr** is the Senior Pastor, is among several Council churches that maintain an open-membership Facebook page for sharing prayer concerns as well as publicizing church events.
- **Christ Community Church**, Grand Rapids, MI, **Rev. Lynne Kammeraad**, Senior Pastor and **Saint Nicholas Mission**, Chelsea, MA, **Rev. David Dismas**, Senior Pastor, were among many Council churches that offered special worship services of healing and hope for people who were hurting during the Christmas season.
- Did you know that it is possible to broadcast your church's worship service on the internet's Youtube site? **Tellico Village Community Church**, **Rev. Marty Singley**, Senior Pastor, is one community church doing so.
- Congratulations to **Tellico Village Community Church** Associate Pastor **Rhonda Blevins** and her husband, Terry, on the arrival of their second son, Rhys Lawson Blevins, born December 8th.

**Our prayers are with:**

- **Charles Addison**, **Havenscourt Community Church**, Oakland, CA whose son-in-law, **Paul Bates**, passed away on Nov. 28th.
- **St. Anne Woods Chapel** and the families of: **Alex L. Glenn** (brother of **Christine Gibbs** and **James Glenn**) who passed July 11, 2013, **Leonard Jerome Sims** (nephew of **Ruth Glenn**) who passed August 28, 2013 and **Ralph Hodges** who passed November 9, 2013.

Seeking a Senior Minister

Emmanuel Baptist Church of Ridgewood, NJ has an opening for a Senior Minister. We are a progressive church which emphasizes inclusiveness and social justice as our understanding of Christianity. We are interested in pastoral candidates who are supportive of this philosophy and theology.

The community of Ridgewood is known for its excellent schools, community services, transportation facilities to NY City, the arts, and quality of life. Our church is a member of the American Baptist Churches, and maintains affiliation with the International Council of Community Churches and the Center for Progressive Christianity.

Please contact search committee chair Brent Saardema at 973-427-7310 or profbrent@juno.com with expressions of interest.

Seeking a Senior Pastor

Emmanuel Community Church is seeking a Senior Pastor who must be able to lead church in providing sound Christian education for youth and adults; preach in a style that sticks to scripture and is practical for everyday living; and help all auxiliary officers use their gifts and talents to function effectively in building God's Kingdom.

All interested candidates should mail resume and cover letter to Emmanuel Community Church, 322 Elkenburg St, South Haven, MI 49090. Attention to Pulpit Search Committee.

Seeking a Senior Pastor

"I am come that they might have life and that they may have it more abundantly." – St. John 10:10

People's Community Church is a Singing, Praying, Tithing, Serving and Loving congregation, seeking a spiritual and energetic pastor. People's Community Church was organized in 1954 and is a charter member of the International Council of Community Churches. In response to God's call and through the Power of the Holy Spirit, it is the mission of People's Community Church to be a Community of Faith through which the Kingdom of God might be revealed. The Pastoral Search Committee request your resume along with a video, CD or recording of a recent sermon.

The candidate must be an ordained minister, a graduate of a university and an accredited theological seminary with a divinity degree or its equivalence.

He/she must also have actively pastored for at least three years in a congregation that is recognized by the International Council of Community Churches. Must have the love of the gospel; demonstrating qualities of strong leadership in the areas of preaching, teaching, administration, community relations and be able to relate to all generations of the congregation. He/she must demonstrate the ability to stimulate positive church growth in the inter-city area of Detroit.

Interested candidates may submit requested documents to the attention of the Search Committee for Pastoral Leadership, People's Community Church, 8601 Woodward Ave., Detroit, MI 48202 – Carolyn Ford, Chairperson. Initial interest may also communicate via email at personaltouch_22@att.net.

Non-Denominational**Church Seeks Full-Time Pastor**

Roser Community Church (www.roserschurch.com) is a Lay-Led 400 member church. We seek an energetic Pastor with post-graduate congregational experience. Ability to work within our traditional worship format along with the skills to build on our youth and adult Christian education programs. Applicants must be a graduate of a divinity school recognized by the American Association of Theological Schools and an ordained Christian minister of the Gospel. If interested send resume, salary requirements and recent sermon to Search Committee - Roser Community Church, P.O. Box 2141, Anna Maria, FL 34216.