

THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

A Voice for Ecumenical Congregations and Christians Around the World

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"Come to the Water"

by Harry Fooockle, Vice-President for Planning

This is my second year to chair the Planning Committee preparing for our ICCC Annual Conference. It offers me an opportunity to share with you what I believe happens at Annual Conference and how it impacts our local churches.

My first observation is the dedicated servants from the Council office to committee members. They are intent on your value as God's child and work to present the very best venue of conferencing possible. I thank God for each one.

I view the intent of Annual Conference to provide a place of Bible study that leads all of us into the Kingdom place. We need to offer praise and worship in thanksgiving to God for the gift of salvation through God's Son Jesus our Christ. Hopefully worship will inspire us to go home to our local churches with a new sense of hope for our world.

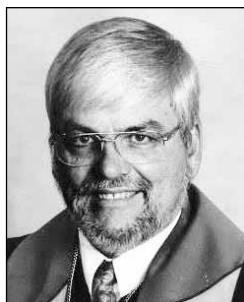
Our workshops are to be designed to offer ministry help and information on how to make it work "back home." They are diverse in local needs and are offered at different times so we can absorb as much as possible. Each workshop should provide resources and/or places where resources are available to help the local church have an effective ministry.

We need to provide times of fellowship that allow us to enjoy each other and who we are and take this feeling home with us. People need to know there is a place that offers us the ability from our Community Churches to "Hook up" with others like us who are in engaged in ministry.

Two final things...for me the Annual Conference and the ICCC itself provides us resources as autonomous churches that we may not be able to find elsewhere.

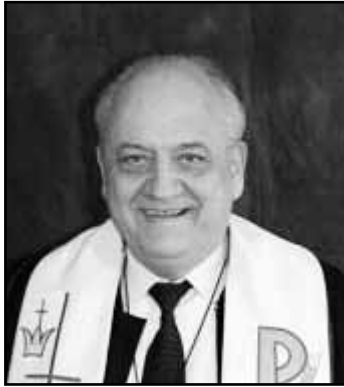
More importantly the ICCC is one of those few places where diversity becomes unity. In a society constantly being torn apart by racial divides, gender issues, sexual orientation, economic disparity, etc. we seem to have found a movement that can bring folk together in unity and peace and that is never out of date.

The Annual Conference and the ICCC – a foretaste of Heaven. I look forward to seeing you this July in Dublin/Columbus and someday in the Kingdom Place.



2015 Workshop AGAPE...The Next Chapter

The purpose of this workshop is to educate the participants about AGAPE and to demonstrate how AGAPE can be used in their respective churches and communities. This will be a very intensive workshop, as we open up the participant's feelings and beliefs about people.



OASES

“Let anyone who is thirsty come to me, and let the one who believes in me drink.” [John 7:37-38]

President's Message

Rev. Dr. Richard O. Griffith

We come to Conference to drink of the Living Water – water that sustains life; water that slakes our spiritual thirst; water that buoys us up in the midst of the floods of life; water that connects us with God's Infinite Ocean.

And, along the pathways of life, sometimes in the deserts of our existence, we have experienced oases – times when we have been nourished (sometimes not knowing it at the time; sometimes even unexpectedly) and we have never been the same (thank God). Let me share with you some of my oases, and perhaps you can celebrate some of yours.

My grandmother – My paternal grandmother came to live with us when she became a widow. For me, she was a source of unconditional love, whose faithful motto was, “Trust in God, and do what's right.” Simple. Profound.

Vacation Church School – I was leaving the 5th grade and my VCS teacher talked about the “Synoptic Gospels,” meaning that Mark was the basis, along with other sources, for Matthew and Mark, with John being an entirely separate (but faithful) telling of the Story. He opened my mind to the Scriptures, giving me concepts to understand inconsistencies, and empowering me to search for the Word behind the words.

My home church and communion – I discovered, after the fact, that our Methodist church was “high church,” meaning that the whole congregation sang almost the entire communion service. From the beginning, I always have appreciated profound liturgy.

My church and their pastors – There is so much I learned after the fact, such as when

the pastor who guided me into ordained ministry refused money for a new organ. Why? It was conditional on firing the African-American Music Director. The Trustees said we needed the organ; he insisted that the price was too high, and would not even permit it to come before the Board.

Associate pastorate – It is one thing to get a theological education; it is another thing to be a pastor. We all have seen educated people who could not pastor and pastors who did not want to be educated. I have written about my mentor in ministry, who helped me combine the best of both disciplines. What a blessing!

Inner city churches – As a suburban white guy, what was I doing serving inner city churches? The bishop knew that when Dr. King was assassinated, I went to Memphis and Atlanta for the funeral and demonstrations. And, with the mysteries of the Methodist appointment system, I was sent to a church in Detroit that only a few years before had been a refuge for people fleeing the 1967 “Summer Rebellion” (the secular media named the civil disturbance the Detroit Riots). They brought their food, clothing and cash for safety, and a week later, nothing was missing, including the cash. 20th Century Sanctuary!

That church loved me, mentored me, and taught me. What a growth experience, that I was able to use later when I went to another church, predominately European-American when I arrived, and African-American when I left.

Interim ministry – I have just completed 23 months of service as an intentional interim

at a Presbyterian Church. Why was this an additional oasis? I came to appreciate even more that every denomination has its own witness to the Truth, and unique ways of expressing it, as indeed, do we.

ADDITIONAL OASES AVAILABLE

And when we come to Conference, additional Oases will be beckoning.

- A multi session Bible study by a theologian committed to theology for the church – not just an intellectual exercise.
- Preaching from a wide variety of theological witnesses – from Apostolic Succession to main line to evangelical.
- The Agape program, one of the Council's historic witnesses to total inclusion will have a two session workshop. This could be one of the bases of the Council's future.
- Other powerful opportunities for reflection and growth dealing with Social Media, Multicultural Ministry, and Domestic Violence will challenge the participants.

“Come to the water and drink,” continuing the pilgrimage toward a community of Inclusion, where there is neither Jew nor Greek, slave nor free, male nor female, black, white, pink, purple, gay, straight, young, old, liberal, conservative, angel or adversary, but where we all strive to become one in Christ Jesus.

In excitement and anticipation,

Dick



“Who Will go for Us?” – A Lenten Meditation

Don Ashmall
Council Minister

I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? (Is. 6:8, KJV)

In recent years I have been privileged to attend and to participate in several ordinations. The verse from Isaiah is a favorite for inclusion in the services. The Eternal asks the question (somewhat rhetorically if we pay attention to the context) and Isaiah responds “here am I. Send me.” Of course he went! If he hadn’t, somebody else would have been called and that book in the Bible would have another name on it! And who wouldn’t respond as Isaiah did, after seeing a vision of eternal glory so overwhelming that it included just the hem of God’s robe filling the entire huge temple?

That was Isaiah and that was then, and here we are, you and I today. Most of us have never had a vision, and certainly not a vision like Isaiah’s. Most of us have not been terrified by hearing God’s voice thundering so deeply that the hinges of our churches’ doors trembled and shook. And even if we did, it’s a sure thing that none of us will get a book in the Bible named after us.

So why do we keep repeating the passage from Isaiah at ordinations? Surely the majesty of the words isn’t reason enough. Maybe it’s because we keep hearing a whisper; a quiet word; a still, small voice that carries even in its near-silence a distant, portal-shaking rumble. And that hint of eternity calling unto temporality – our temporality – makes the ancient word live for us. So we repeat those words at ordination services. The only problem is, most of the prophets weren’t ordained. They were regular folk who simply paid attention and then spoke God’s truth, and in some cases got books of the Bible named after them.

There’s no harm in quoting Isaiah at an ordination service. The words fit there so long as we keep reminding ourselves that they fit elsewhere too, which is the point. God calls prophets, and painters and plumbers. God calls evangelists, and electricians and elevator repair persons. God calls teachers (of all sorts), and technicians and telecommunications analysts. Every job, paid or unpaid, can be and should be a ministry in which others are served and through which life and work are sanctified.

Now come the groans from some laypersons. “You must be kidding! How could I possibly minister on my job and among my work crew? The people I work around must have thought God was saying ‘trains’ when it was time for them to get their brains.” Now come the laughs from some clergy. “And in what way is this is different from a congregation or two I’ve had to deal with?” The issue is not whether the people around us are intelligently pleasant to work with; if everybody was always pleasant we’d already be in heaven. The issue is not whether the job is always fun; otherwise, they wouldn’t call it work. The issue is not that our good words and our good example are always heeded; Jesus didn’t have much luck with that either.

The issue is one of ministry – of service with the goal of transformation in the Christ. The New Testament speaks about Christians being a royal priesthood. And that royal priesthood is all Christians, no matter where we spend our days or from whom we get a paycheck if there is one. The service is one that may reach out to individuals, to an institution or corporation, to one or more voluntary associations, to the larger society, or even to the planet. The transformation is possible for souls, for families, for people in networks and bureaucracies large and small, and for all humanity. And here’s the rub: even if we

don’t like the surroundings; don’t like the people; don’t like the odds for whatever we call success, God is still calling each of us to the ministry of that royal priesthood.

So if each of us is called to minister (to serve with the goal of transformation) in our own little corner of the world, what will that ministry look like? Sometimes ministry may mean something as elementary as offering a kind word when nobody else is inclined to do so. Sometimes ministry may mean taking on powers and principalities that, often unintentionally but just as cruelly, crush human hope. Sometimes ministry may mean verbal witness, and perhaps more often it may mean witnessing without words. Not sure what specific ministry you’re called to? We dwell in the midst of a hurting world. Choose the place of pain closest to you; do the ministry of service with the goal of transformation today; and stay open to what God may reveal for tomorrow (with or without a vision of angels.)

All this is a far cry from the consumerism that imagines we appear at Sunday morning worship to get what we pay for (no wonder so many people say they don’t get anything much out of going to church) and then go home without ever allowing ourselves to be challenged by the Holy One to be the holy priesthood we are. All this is a far cry from accepting but doing nothing about the legacy of those saints who gave of themselves in the quest for justice, reconciliation and Christian unity. Those words from Isaiah demand more; much more. So it’s a good thing that we read the words at ordination services. Maybe we should read them at every service of baptism too.

May your Lent be a time of transformation for you.

REVIEWS

Dr. Robert M. Puckett



CONVICTIONS: A manifesto for progressive Christians; Marcus J. Borg, SPCK, 2014, paperback, 241 pages.

Marcus J. Borg (March 11, 1942 - January 21, 2015) was at the time of his death Distinguished Professor in Religion and Culture, Emeritus, at Oregon State University. His books have sold over a million copies. In this, his final book, he traces his intellectual and spiritual development from his fundamentalist childhood to a mature faith as a brilliant Biblical scholar with an international reputation.

He powerfully addresses the question, "What does it mean to be Christian in America today?" (p. ix) Anyone who has ever encountered serious doubts or a loss of childhood faith will find in this book a path to an adult faith that is powerfully transformative.

He names five categories of divisions in American Christianity today: conservative, conventional, uncertain, former, and progressive. His description of each of these categories enables the reader to understand his own American religious experience. Conservatives insist on biblical infallibility, an emphasis upon life after death, and a literal interpretation of biblical texts. Conventional Christians remain in the church because they grew up in it and find support in community worship. Uncertain Christians are those whose doubts have caused them to be lukewarm in their faith but continue to belong. Former Christians are those who simply left the church because what they learned in church ceased to be compelling. Progressive Christians are those who have found a better way to understand scripture and the human predicament. For them Jesus is the center of Christianity and the way to abundant living.

Borg shares his memories, conversions, and convictions: memories of what he absorbed

growing up, Conversions which were big changes in his understanding of the Bible and God, and the firm convictions brought about by those changes. In this process God became real for him. He learned that Christianity is about loving God and Jesus and seeking to love one another rather than getting their theology right.

He learned that salvation is more about this life than an afterlife. "The root meanings of salvation and being saved are rescue and deliverance: to be rescued, delivered from a negative condition of life to a new and positive way of life...to be saved from one way of life to another." (p. 65) "Christianity at its best--like all of the enduring religions of the world at their best--is a path of transformation." (p. 75). He learned that Jesus is the norm of the Bible. He is the standard by which the Bible is to be understood.

He learned that the Bible can be true without being literally true. For example, the truth found in the parables does not depend upon them being factually true. They have a more-than-literal meaning. "Faith does not mean believing in the literal-factuality ... but about our relationship with God, and about trusting God." (p. 130)

The Bible calls upon Christians to "take seriously God's dream for a more just and nonviolent world." It reveals God's passion for justice and the poor. It calls upon all of us to be people of peace and nonviolence.

The Christian life is about "loving God and loving what God loves. It is about becoming passionate about God and participating in God's passion for a different kind of world, here and now." (p. 231) **BORG'S CONVICTIONS ENABLE ONE TO RECOVER A DEEPER MEANING AND PASSION FOR THEIR FAITH!!!**

Mission Statement



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

THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY
A Voice for
Ecumenical Congregations
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Inclusive Pulpit

The "Inclusive Pulpit" is an annual publication of the ICCC. Included are sermons, prayers, worship materials, poetry and brief historical sketches of local churches and/or their relationship to the Council.

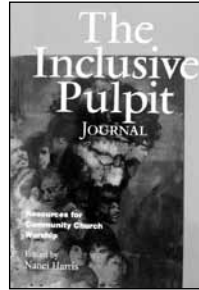
Sermons submitted to the "Inclusive Journal" are entered into a juried competition for the annual Dr. Charles A. Trentham Homiletics Award. Each year the winner receives a commemorative award and a \$250 stipend. Any clergyperson associated with the Council may submit a sermon.

Worship materials may include newly composed liturgies for special occasions as well as arrangements of hymns and newly written hymns. Seasonal prayers, prayers associated with specific scripture lessons and prayers for special occasions are welcome. Because of space limitations, historical sketches must be no longer than 900 words.

The preferred format for materials submitted by email is ".doc" or ".docx" (Microsoft Word.) If submitting materials in another format, please indicate which format in your email. Typewritten materials will be accepted by postal mail; handwritten materials cannot be accepted. All materials are subject to editing.

DEADLINE IS APRIL 15.

Send your materials to iccc60423@sbcglobal.net; or to 21116 Washington Parkway, Frankfort, IL 60423.



Are you 18-23 years old?

Our Young Adult Annual Conference Program continues to be a growing success! Come and join us as we build God's Kingdom! The Dublin/Columbus sessions will include an opportunity for



Doris Marcisak

young adults to participate in a comprehensive program of study and service with Habitat for Humanity, Mid-Ohio Foodbank and Capital Area Humane Society. For more information, feel free to contact the Young Adult Leader Doris Marcisak at Mist8993@gmail.com.

2014 Annual Conference Sponsors

The International Council of Community Churches is grateful for the following 2014 Annual Conference Sponsors for their investment in the community church movement:

**We-Mac Manufacturing Company,
Kansas City, MO**

**Antioch Community Church,
Kansas City, MO**

**The Ministers & Missionaries Benefit
Board, New York, NY**

We thank you for your financial support of a conference program.



Dear Sisters in Christ,

On behalf of our President, Sister Ella Clay, I would like to cordially invite you to join us for our Women's Christian Fellowship 65th Anniversary Celebration. If you have never attended one of our sessions or haven't been in a while, this year's celebration is going to be exciting and uplifting. Our scheduled meeting time and place will be in the conference booklet. Please consider being our guest.

W.C.F. Coordinator,

Sandra Roberts

**The ICCC's Facebook page
is open to you!**

Join the group, learn what's happening around the Council, and post notices and photos of your church's exciting ministries!





Supper Club

Wednesday, July 15, 2015 at 5:00pm

A short walk* from the Embassy Suites Hotel, J.Liu Restaurant is located in the heart of old Dublin. It was voted in the top 5 of Columbus' neighborhood gems! Visit www.jliurestaurant.com for restaurant information. Below are the menu choices for this optional event.

Choice 1 : Pasta Diavolo \$26.00

Shrimp, Italian sausage, red pepper and penne pasta tossed in a spicy tomato cream sauce and topped with pine nut lime bread crumbs.

Choice 2: Mongolian Beef \$25.00

Tenderloin, scallion, onion and crispy rice noodles with spicy brown sauce served with steamed rice.

Choice 3: Chicken Milanese \$23.50

All white chicken breast panko breaded, flash fried with melted mozzarella, served atop marinara and herbed linguini tossed and garnished with baby arugula.

Choice 4: Crispy Chicken Salad \$21.00

Bacon, smoked corn, tomato, chopped iceberg lettuce, sharp cheddar, green onion and sunflower seeds all tossed with ranch dressing and topped with crispy chicken breast.

Choice 5: Veggie Burger \$21.00

Made daily in house with black beans, brown rice and beets, cast iron seared with melted harvarti cheese, guacamole, shredded lettuce and tomato on a toasted sesame brioche bun.

Each choice includes a soft drink or iced tea, tax and gratuity. Alcoholic beverages are available, billed separately, individually.

Circle your choice.

Submit payment to the Council Office by June 20, 2015. Limited quantity!!

If paying by check: make check payable to: International Council of Community Churches (ICCC)

If paying by credit card: circle one VISA MASTERCARD AMEX DISCOVER

Account Number on Card: _____ Exp.Date: _____

Print name as it appears on card: _____

Signature: _____

ICCC, 21116 Washington Pkwy, Frankfort, IL 60423 – 815/464-5690 – iccc60423@sbeglobal.net

*Embassy Suites shuttle service may be available. Inquire with the hotel. We are also trying to coordinate attendees with cars to drive. If you are driving to conference and are willing to carpool to the Supper Club, please let the Council Office know. J.Liu Restaurant is located at 50 W. Bridge Street, Dublin.

2015 OPTIONAL CONFERENCE MEAL PROGRAMS

The **2015 Annual Conference** offers 4 optional meal program opportunities: the Welcome Luncheon, the Koinonia Luncheon, the Mission Luncheon and the Prayer Luncheon (hosted by the Samaritans). The Conference Banquet Dinner is included in your registration fee. Additional quantities can be reserved for a fee.

Monday, July 13, 2015 at 12:00 p.m. is the **Welcome Luncheon**. This meal includes: Mixed Green Salad with Dressings, Spaghetti Noodles, Penne Pasta Noodles, Meat Marinara Sauce, Creamy Garlic Alfredo Sauce, Garlic Rolls, Assorted Desserts, Non-Alcoholic Beverage.

Tuesday, July 14, 2015 at 1:00 p.m. is the **Koinonia Luncheon**. This meal includes: Braised Pot Roast Simmered with Carrots, Onions, Celery and Fresh Herbs, Roasted Redskin Potatoes, Steamed Asparagus, New York Style Cheesecake, Freshly Brewed Regular and Decaf Coffee, Iced Tea Served Table Side and Water. *Vegetarian Option:* Soy-Lemon Glazed Salmon replaces the Pot Roast.

Wednesday, July 15, 2015 at 1:00 p.m. is the **Mission Luncheon**. This meal includes: Tender Medallions of Sliced Pork Served with a Shiitake and Portabella Mushroom Medley with a Sun-Dried Apricot Sherry Sauce, Classic Rice Pilaf, Glazed Baby Carrots, Double Chocolate Cake, Freshly Brewed Coffees & Teas, Iced Tea Served Table Side and Water. *Vegetarian Option:* Polenta & Roasted Vegetable Napoleon served with a Light Garlic Cream Sauce.

Thursday, July 16, 2015 at 11:30 a.m. is the **Prayer Luncheon**. This meal includes: Almond Encrusted Chicken Breast Served over Red & Green Chopped Romaine Lettuce, Topped with Mandarin Orange Segments, Grape Tomatoes & Diced Red Onions, Warm Rolls & Butter, Lemon Cream Cake, Freshly Brewed Coffees & Teas, Iced Tea Served Table Side and Water. *Vegetarian Option:* Grilled Vegetable Wrap with Feta Cheese, Served with Pasta Salad & Chips.

Thursday, at 6:30 p.m. is the **Conference Banquet**. This meal includes: Fresh Market Salad, Grilled Flat Iron Steak served on an Herbed Compound Butter, Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Green Beans Amandine, Warm Rolls & Butter, Baked Caramel Apple Pie, and Freshly Brewed Coffees & Teas. *Chicken Option:* Double Breast of Boneless Chicken Rolled and Stuffed with Fresh Spinach, Garlic, Parmesan Cheese & Basil Topped with a Classic Mornay Sauce. *Vegetarian Option:* Breaded Eggplant Cutlets Lightly Sautéed, Layered with Herbed Ricotta Cheese and Topped with Tangy Marinara and Fresh Grated Parmesan Cheese. *Kid's Meal Option:* Cheese Pizza and Applesauce.

2015 MEAL RESERVATION FORM

Mail this form & payment to: ICCC, 21116 Washington Pkwy, Frankfort, IL 60423

Name: _____

Please reserve _____ places at \$20.00 each for **Monday's Welcome Luncheon**

Please reserve _____ places at \$28.00 each for **Tuesday's Koinonia Luncheon**

Check for Vegetarian Option preference

Please reserve _____ places at \$30.00 each for **Wednesday's Mission Luncheon**

Check for Vegetarian Option preference

Please reserve _____ places at \$24.00 each for **Thursday's Prayer Luncheon**

Check for Vegetarian Option preference

****Please reserve add'l. _____ places at \$46.00 each for *Thursday's Banquet Dinner***

Flat Iron Steak Chicken Vegetarian

****Please reserve add'l. _____ places at \$18.00 each for children under 12yrs.**

****A Banquet ticket is already included in registration. Order only if additional tickets are needed.**

Total Enclosed \$ _____

If paying by check: make check payable to: International Council of Community Churches (ICCC)

If paying by credit card: VISA MASTERCARD AMERICAN EXPRESS DISCOVER

Account Number on Card: _____ Expiration Date: _____

Print name as it appears on card: _____

Mail this form with your payment to: ICCC, 21116 Washington Pkwy, Frankfort, IL 60423

Deadline for meal function reservations is June 20th. There will only be a VERY LIMITED supply of tickets available at Conference registration, so please purchase your tickets before the deadline. After the June 20th deadline meal reservations will not be accepted in the Council Office.

****The Conference Banquet is included in the registration fee. You do not need to reserve a ticket for this meal, unless you require additional tickets.**

ICCC Registration Form 2015 Annual Conference: July 13-16 "Come to the Water" Dublin/Columbus, Ohio

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

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

_____ (_____) _____

➤ ➤ ➤ **FOR THE ELEMENTARY, TWEEN AND YOUTH PROGRAMS ONLY!** ⬅ ⬅ ⬅

- Age (on 7-1-2015) _____ Grade completed by (7-1-2015) _____
- If **under 18**, an adult who is registered for the Conference and who will serve as a sponsor and assume responsibility for said young person 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 (Ages 6-9)	\$ 60.00	\$
Tween (Ages 10-12)	\$125.00	\$
Youth (Ages 13-17)	\$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, 2015	\$ 35.00	\$
CC	TOTAL ENCLOSED	\$

A Banquet ticket is included in your registration fee. This meal includes: Fresh Market Salad, Grilled Flat Iron Steak served on an Herbed Compound Butter, Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Green Beans Amantine, Warm Rolls & Butter, Baked Caramel Apple Pie, and Freshly Brewed Coffees & Teas. *Chicken Option:* Double Breast of Boneless Chicken Rolled and Stuffed with Fresh Spinach, Garlic, Parmesan Cheese & Basil Topped with a Classic Mornay Sauce. *Vegetarian Option:* Breaded Eggplant cutlets Lightly Sautéed, Layered with Herbed Ricotta Cheese and Topped with Tangy Marinara and Fresh Grated Parmesan Cheese. *Kid's Meal Option:* Cheese Pizza and Applesauce.

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

Flat Iron Steak Chicken 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.

Goals for the 65th Annual Conference

by Shyreece Pompey, VC for Regional Relationships

It is with great joy of serving the Lord that I look forward to this year's "Come to the Water" 65th Annual Conference. There are three capacities in which I serve that I'd like to accomplish a few interactive goals through projects or activities.



First, as Spiritual Leader for the Women's Christian Fellowship I plan to establish an environment (prayer room) where saints can lift up effectual prayers to God. Individual closet prayers are encouraged in the Word of God but so is corporate prayer. Acts 12:5 declares, "So Peter was kept in prison, but the church was earnestly praying to God for him." We, the Women's Christian Fellowship, welcome all persons, not just the women, to join us in prayer.

Second, ICCC Children's ministry is growing in spirit and has become a vital part of the fellowship. The generational gap within the ICCC family is closing! I absolutely enjoy helping the children in grades Kindergarten through fourth grade use sound biblical principles during the life of the conference that they share with the entire congregation through praise and worship. Watching God at work through the children as they share their humble worship expressions is spiritually edifying for all. Engaging our attending ICCC conference children in thematic lesson activities with concrete/tangible projects helps them take abstract spiritual truths and apply them to their own little lives. This nurtures their life in Christ Jesus as well as helps them and their families stay connected to all of the spiritual happenings in the ICCC conference. It is critical that ALL people enjoy each other through fellowship and learning experiences while at the "Come to the Water" ICCC 65th Annual conference.

Finally, as the newly elected VP for Regional Relationships I hope to create colossal artifacts that depict the various churches in the regions and how their local vision and events supports or connects to the overarching ICCC Vision 2020. Many times we as a body are doing many great things in the part of God's global garden where He has planted us. Remember that "He has determined the exact times and the exact places where we should live" (Acts 17:26). The ICCC 2020 vision states, "To be an integral partner in the worldwide ecumenical movement." It would be awesome to capture and creatively display, using visual representation, the various churches in the regions and what they are doing that may already connect to the ICCC Vision 2020. To intentionally make that connection will be a great fire starter as we grow closer together as an ICCC family in Christ Jesus. Therefore I want to purposely know your local church better and share your connected ICCC activities with the ICCC family at large. Please mail your church's newsletters, pictures, brochures, bulletins etc. to Shyreece Pompey, 7182 Willobee St., Coloma, MI 49038. This project will be a great undertaking for the Regional Relationships committee but you will be pleased to see how your local church is or might be already moving toward fulfilling the goals of Vision 2020.

ICCC Endowment Fund Off to a Good Start But More Needed to Reach 2015 Goals

Thanks to a major gift to the Endowment Fund this past December, the Fund now has \$267,680 in assets as of midnight January 30th. That's after the Fund gave the Council \$10,254 in earnings earlier that month. The trustees are most grateful for the strong response to their end-of-2014 fund-raising appeal.

The Endowment Fund's Trustees are announcing two fund-raising goals to be attained by June 30th 2015, the last day of the Fund's fiscal year:

Target Goal: \$280,000. This is achievable but we need to grow the Fund's assets by \$13,000 in the next 5 months through gifts plus the Fund's appreciation and dividends from its investments.

"Reach for the Stars" Goal: \$300,000. This "stretch" goal is a lofty one that involves raising from \$25,000 to \$30,000 by this June 30th depending upon the stock market's growth. But if achieved it will represent a major milestone for the Fund. And for the ICCC as well as it will enable the Fund to provide additional financial support to the Council for years to come.

IMPORTANT: The Endowment Trustees ask that all gifts to the Endowment Fund be above and beyond the gifts needed to support the Council's daily operations.

A Call to Pray!

For all those who wish to join us in fervent prayer please call 1-605-562-0020; member id number 378277696 on the following date in your respective time zones. Pacific Time is 5 pm; Mountain Time is 6 pm; Central Time is 7 pm; and Eastern Time is 8 pm.

During our prayer phone conferences I look forward to hearing your praise reports (answered prayer) as well as prayer request. Let us never forget that God still answers prayer and tell Him "Thank You".

April 13, 2015

Scripture Focus—"In that day the mountains will drip new wine, and the hills will flow with milk, all the ravines of Judah will run with water. A fountain will flow out of the LORD'S house and will water the valley of acacias." (Joel 3:18)

Prayer Focus—Sustained in Christ Jesus

Sis. Shyreece Pompey - ICCC/WCF Spiritual Leader

Laity Nominations

Each year the Council recognizes two laypeople for service to the Council and to their local congregations. The Laywoman and Layman awards are designed to express our appreciation to individuals who:

1. Shared the open, welcoming, joyful spirit of the Council as well as items of Council news with their local congregations;
2. Shared events, joys and concerns of their congregations with the wider fellowship of the Council.
3. Acted as advocate and interpreter of the Council within their local congregations.
4. Participated in area and regional events as well as attending Annual Conference.

You may nominate a candidate for ICCC Laywoman and/or Layman of the year. Please include in your nomination:

- A. Your name and contact information.
- B. The name and contact information of your nominee.
- C. A short biographical sketch of your nominee.
- D. Specifics on how the nominee has fulfilled the expectations for the award listed above.

Submit your nominations by email to iccc60423@sbcglobal.net, or by postal mail to ICCC, 21116 Washington Parkway, Frankfort, IL 60423. Deadline for nominations is April 15th.

Annual Conference Sponsorship Opportunities

The International Council of Community Churches is grateful for your empowerment in the community church movement. Your business, professional association, labor union, service group, etc. may invest in the cause of furthering Christian unity by providing a sponsorship in the Annual Conference. We have listed several possibilities below. If you wish to explore other potential opportunities for sponsorship including exclusive sponsorship of a segment of the Conference program, please let us know. Conference sponsorship opportunities begin at \$1000.

General conference sponsorship	\$1000
Bible Study – multiple plenary sessions	\$2500
Prayer Room (24/7 during conference)	\$1500
Clergy continuing education event	\$3000
All- Conference luncheon	\$1500
All-Conference Banquet	\$2000
Full Day Sponsorship	\$500

The International Council of Community Churches is a 501 (c)3 organization under IRS regulations. All sponsorships are tax-deductible to the extent allowed by law and your tax situation. Contact the Council Office for details.

Know your Trustee!



John Carroll

Trustee for Eastern Region Zone A (ME, NH, VT, NY, MA, CT, PA, NJ)

I am married to Rev. Carla Dietz, pastor of Greendale Peoples Church, Worcester MA.

I am a retired human resources executive working as Business Manager for The First Baptist Church, Worcester.

Having been a UCC church member for decades there are many parallels with ICCC churches: independent local entities seeking to love one another, address social injustice, practice the gospel, serve all in their local community and do so without the dogma and strict polity that exists in other denominations.

My goals for the region are to create forums where best practices and accomplishments can be shared and to help match churches needing expertise in a specific area with those that have experience in the same.

As a trustee I bring over seven years experience in church management and administration and a strong faith anchor.

2015 Annual Conference Tax Exemption

The Embassy Suites Hotel, Dublin, OH offers a guide to Tax Exempt Status. If you are a Charity, Church 501(c)3 or a Non Profit Organization you may be able to claim that exempt status from OH State Tax. For details and forms, contact the Council Office.

REQUEST FOR EXHIBIT SPACE

I.C.C.C. Annual Conference
July 13-16, 2015
Dublin/Columbus, Ohio

Please reserve a 6' x 30" space in the exhibit area of the 2015 Annual Conference of the International Council of Community Churches.

An attendant _____ will be present
_____ will not be present

Name of Attendant: _____

My Name: _____

My Organization: _____

Organization Address: _____

Brief Description: _____

Phone: () _____ Fax: () _____

There is a fee of \$50.00 per exhibit space, for the July 13-16, 2015 time period, payable in advance. If you need electric, there is an additional fee. Please return this request form, with payment made payable to the International Council of Community Churches, for consideration by June 15, 2015 to:

International Council of Community Churches
21116 Washington Parkway
Frankfort, IL 60423-3112

If you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact us at 815-464-5690 or ICCC 60423@sbcglobal.net

Thank you for taking advantage of this opportunity for exhibiting.

*Designated Gifts:
Questions and Answers*

Questions:

1. "If I my church (or I as an individual) want to invest in a specific program or outreach of the Council, may we do so by designated gifts?"
2. "Will those designated gifts 'count' when our annual financial participation in the Council is reported?"

Answers:

1. **Yes!**
2. **Yes!**

Council programs and outreach strengthened by recent designated gifts include the following. This is not a comprehensive list; other designations are possible.

AGAPE. This adventure in communication and understanding was made a Council program in 1997. A rewrite of materials and a program re-start are being made possible by designated gifts.

Computer updates. Designated gifts are bringing the Council's computers and internet presence into the twenty-first century.

Sister Church support. Designated gifts to assist churches where the Ebola virus crisis continues; to underwrite repairs to churches damaged by natural disasters; and to underwrite "southern hemisphere" churches' participation in the Council are a material sign of our spiritual fellowship.

Ecumenical Agencies. All ICCC support for the National Council of Churches, World Council of Churches, Christian Churches Together, and Churches Uniting in Christ is from designated gifts. There is no line item in the ICCC budget to support these.

Your faithful investment in the entire Council budget is essential, but designated gifts are always welcome. Please help Office Administrator DeAnn Anzaldi and be sure to accompany designated gifts with statements that explain where the funds are to be used. Thank you to all who invest in the ICCC!

Sharing Joys:

- **The Faith Clinic Community Church, Vince Monden, Pastor** had their 1st Anniversary/Founder's Week Celebration January 28-30th hosted at the Refuge Baptist Church in Columbus, OH. "We are a non-denominational body that witnesses to the inclusive love of God that overcomes all divisions. We are a part of a movement that prioritizes purpose over procedures and vision over survival." Pastor Monden will be joining us at the Opening Worship for the **2015 Annual Conference** in Dublin, July 13th.
- The Pulpit Search Committee at **Emmanuel Baptist Church**, Ridgewood, NJ is pleased to announce they have called Rev. Dr. **Kenneth Gill** as their new Senior Pastor. The congregation overwhelmingly supported his candidacy and looks forward to him joining their church family this spring.
- The **ICCC** welcomes two new church members! **Door County People of Faith**, Sturgeon Bay, WI is a new spiritual group and congregation while keeping it simple, will strive to make a positive difference in their lives and the lives of others. They support the full inclusion of all people in their community. Senior Pastor is Rev. Dr. **Bruce Joffe**. More information can be found on their website: www.doorcountypeopleoffaith.org. The **Unitarian Christian Emerging Church**, East Longmeadow, MA, is a contemporary, progressive and inspirational christian- unitarian denomination serving marginalized & disenfranchised Christian Unitarians & other faith based progressive; a collaborative of Unitarian Christians seeking a modern relationship with God, and our teacher the Christ Jesus - one in faith. Senior Pastor **Edward Knight**. More information can be found on their website: www.ucec.us.
- On Saturday, Jan. 31, the **Chapel-By-The-Sea**, Senior Pastor **Herb Freitag**, Clearwater, FL, held its sixth annual Beach Walk walk. Over 200 people (Chapel members and folks from the community, kids and adults, young and old) gathered at the Palm Pavilion at 8:00 a.m. to register, get their t-shirts, and consume coffee, fruit, and muffins, as they got ready for the two-mile round-trip walk on the beach and back to the church for a pancake and egg breakfast. There they picked up their "goody bags", enjoyed a great deal of camaraderie, and bid on numerous items in a silent auction, while being entertained by soft and soothing music. Over \$17,000 was raised by walkers, sponsors, and contributors, of which \$13,700 was given to two Religious Community Services programs – the Food Bank and the Haven (the spouse abuse shelter) after minimal expenses were met and some money was put aside as seed funds for next year's walk. This program has grown every year since its inception and about 50 people worked on the project in addition to the walkers. Needless to say, there were nothing but winners – the Chapel, RCS, its clients, and everyone who participated.



- Rev. Dr. **Marilyn Rossner** received much thanks after contributing towards a bus purchase for Simthemobile Homes for the Intellectually Disabled in South Africa. Now they will be able to take residents to and from the hospital without any struggle. "We are so grateful for what you did to us. We pray to the Almighty that He blesses all of you." - J. Majola
- A special interfaith celebration was held in the Ottawa-Gatineau community on January 25th to celebrate World Religion Day acknowledged by the United Nations in a spirit of peace and unity. Bishop **Serge Theriault, The Canadian Chapter**, participated.

**Our prayers are with:**

- **Vermelle Barnes, Park Road Community Church**, Washington, DC and her family as they mourn the death of her nephew **Robert Lee Spells**, who died on Christmas Day, 2014.
- **Palisades Community Church**, Washington, DC, **Jeffrey N. Stinehelfer**. Senior Pastor, and the family of **James Rogers**, who passed away on February 1st. Jim had been their ICCC Key Layperson and attended conference for many years.
- **Douglas Memorial Community Church**, Baltimore, MD, **Todd Yeary**, Senior Pastor, and the family of **Carl and Merlene Adair**, ICCC Key Layperson and active members of the conference. Within three weeks of each other, both Carl and Merlene have passed on to eternal life. Carl, January 20th and Merlene February 10th. Services were held February 2nd and 21st, respectively. "Our church is really in mourning but God knew best. Please pray for their 3 daughters, Lori, Sherri and Carla. Sherri especially, she lived with them." -submitted by a church member.
- **Ruth E. Glenn, St. Anne Woods Chapel**, Pembroke, IL whose sister, **Ethel Lee Griffin** died at her home in Tuscaloosa, AL on October 25, 2014.
- **St. Anne Wood Chapel** as they lost 30 year member **Jimmie Lee Hughes** on October 9, 2014, surrounded by family at his home. He was their church Deacon and served on the church's Deacon Board.

