

# THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

November 2019



International Council of Community Churches

Volume 70

A Voice for Ecumenical Congregations and Christians Around the World

Number 2

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## President's Message

by Harry Fooockle

Violence in the streets. People being shot and killed every day. It seems to be the new way to settle our disagreements.

Political rancor brings stalemates to our governing.

People defecting from local churches or worst yet never entering the doors.

Sounds ominous does it not? Any hope out there? Any help?

So many years ago the Apostle Paul wrote to his young friend and heir apparent Timothy. Seems as though they were experiencing like things in the "baby" years of the Christian movement.

You can find Paul's response in I Timothy 4:1-5, but the best part for me would be verses 4 and 5.

*For everything God created is good, and nothing is to be rejected  
If it is received with thanksgiving, because it is consecrated by the Word of God and prayer.*

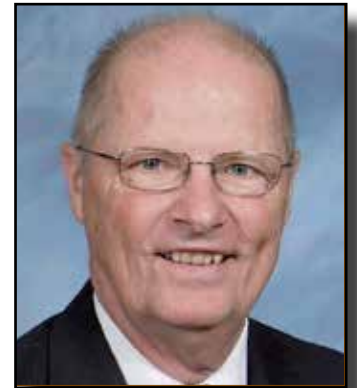
God's creation is good. That means the world, our resources and especially us. If we would celebrate our differences and accept one another as God's good creation in prayerful thoughts of thanksgiving, we would all live in a better place. Better spiritually, physically and emotionally.

Personally, that's the way I view the International Council of Community Churches. We have differing points of views, differing racial and gender mix and yet we come together as one. "One" created by God and it is good because we receive each other with love and thanksgiving.

At our thanksgiving table this year we will remember the ICCC and be thankful because it is created by the word of God and it is good.

Blessings to you all.

*Harry*





## *Executive Director's Message*

### **Phil Tom**

I watch NBC Nightly News faithfully. This news show usually closes with an inspiring story titled Making A Difference. These stories tell about ordinary people doing extraordinary things. Many of the stories are about people overcoming major physical disabilities or life obstacles. A woman who overcame cancer to swim the English Channel four times nonstop. A young man who was born with no legs yet wrestles for Kent State College wrestling team. A convicted felon who learned enough about the law while incarcerated to help other inmates with their legal problems, and who became a Georgetown University law professor. These are stories of faith and courage, of people who refused to give up on themselves, and who have defied the obstacles that life has placed upon them.

In our scripture from Matthew 17, Jesus heals a boy possessed of a demon. His disciples asked Jesus why they could not heal the boy. Jesus's immediate response to the disciples was "because you have so little faith." I have worked with a lot of congregations throughout my various ministries. A familiar story I hear from some congregations when I ask them what they are doing to serve their

community, they respond – we don't have enough members, we are too old, we don't have enough money, we don't.....! Anything I propose to them to help turn their situation around is met with the response "we can't...." What I often sense from these members is not a lack of human and financial resources, but a lack of faith that God can do the impossible.

The church is facing a lot of challenges today – increased secularization, less people going to church, and more people declaring no affiliation with any religious tradition. Considering these challenges, the church needs to

discern at how it can continue to share the good news in this challenging environment. We may have to let go of some of the things and traditions we have been doing in church for many years. We don't have to throw the baby out with the bathwater, but we must be open to the Holy Spirit working with and through us to lead us on a new and different path. In opening ourselves to the work of the Holy Spirit, it may not lead us back to the "good old days" but to ways we could have never imagined.

Nothing is impossible for God! Do you believe this news! Have faith! Trust God and Let God!

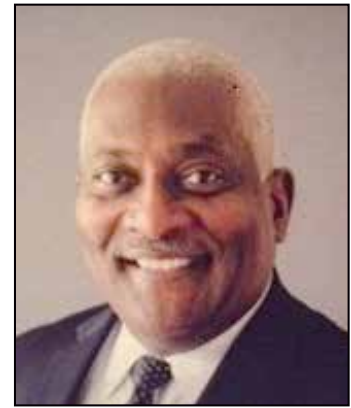


## Attend to Reading! (1 Timothy 4:13)



# Book REVIEW

By Rev. Kenneth N. Nelson

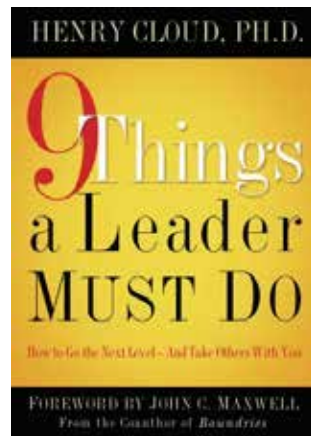


**9 Things a Leader Must Do: How to Go to the Next Level--And Take Others With You** by Henry Cloud (Goodreads Rating 3.96 out of 5); Amazon (Kindle \$6.99; Hardcover \$10.34; Paperback \$10.98); Barnes & Noble (Nook \$2.99; Hardcover \$12.59) Google Books (eBook \$2.99). 128 pages about two to three hours to read; Copyright © 2006 by Integrity Publishers

Leo Tolstoy once said: "Everyone thinks of changing the world, but no one thinks of changing himself." Henry Cloud, a best-selling *New York Times* author, an accomplished conference presenter, and an outstanding leadership coach, may offer some concrete guidance for change. In his book *Nine Things*, Cloud challenges the reader, like Tolstoy, to change themselves. Some describe Cloud's approach as "a simple roadmap to help leaders, and those who want to become leaders, arrive at greater levels of personal growth and corporate influence."

Cloud encourages his readers to become a *Déjà vu* leader. A *Déjà vu* leader exhibits specific behavior patterns and principles that distinguish them from other leaders. If a current or new leader wants to change, they can learn these behavioral patterns and beliefs. Building on King Solomon's advice (Proverb 4:13), Cloud explains that his "...Nine Things are wisdom, principles God himself has set in place for us to learn. In this book, we will look at this wisdom in the lives and experiences of what I call 'déjà vu leaders' to see how it can instruct us. What we gain will help us to find more and more of the success we were created to enjoy."

*Nine Things* represents the nine things a leader must do to change themselves and others. Each chapter or thing encourages the leader to be better. In Chapter 1, Excavate Your Soul, Thing One: *Déjà vu* leaders explore their deep hearts and invest in their inner desires and drives. In Chapter 2, Yank the Diseased Tooth, Thing Two: *Déjà vu* leaders do not allow negative things to take up space in their lives. In Chapter 3, Play the Whole Movie, Thing Three: *Déjà vu* leaders evaluate their decisions in the present based on how they will affect the future. In Chapter 4, Put Superman out of a Job, Thing Four: *Déjà vu* leaders continually ask themselves, "What can I do to make this situation better?" In Chapter 5, Embrace Your Inner Insect, Thing Five: *Déjà vu* leaders achieve big goals by taking small steps over time. In Chapter 6, Earn a Black Belt in Hate, Thing Six: *Déjà vu* leaders develop the ability to hate the right things well.



In Chapter 7, Forget about Playing Fair, Thing Seven: *Déjà vu* leaders give back better than they are given. In Chapter 8, Quit Self-Exaggerating, Thing Eight: *Déjà vu* leaders do not strive to be or to appear more than they really are. In Chapter 9, Ignore the Popularity Polls, Thing Nine: *Déjà vu* leaders do not make decisions based on the fear of other people's reactions.

For example, in Chapter 6, Earn a Black Belt in Hate, *Déjà vu* leaders develop the ability to hate the right things well, which is an exciting approach and contrast to one of the pressing issues of our time. Using Proverbs 6:16-19, Cloud

explains what objects or practices we should hate well. John Maxwell, a noted leadership expert, observes that "... Henry looks at leadership from the inside out and includes his signature message of taking ownership for who we are and how we interact with others." In the conclusion of the book, Cloud offers twelve tips for using the *Nine Things* to help yourself and others to improve. *Nine Things* is a helpful contribution to personal and professional success.

**Some Recommended Books for Lead Pastors in 2019 By Jayson D. Bradley** <https://pushpay.com/blog/reading-lists-for-pastors/>

***The Ideal Team Player: How to Recognize and Cultivate The Three Essential Virtues*** Hardcover – April 26, 2016 by Patrick M. Lencioni

***Dare to Serve: How to Drive Superior Results by Serving Others*** Paperback – September 25, 2018 by Cheryl Bachelder

***Didn't See It Coming: Overcoming the Seven Greatest Challenges That No One Expects and Everyone Experiences*** Kindle Edition by Carey Nieuwhof

**SHARE YOUR COMMENTS.** Thank you for sharing your comments. There are encouraging to our discussion. Remember, please share your thoughts at [ICCC60423@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ICCC60423@sbcglobal.net) by the end of the month. And let us know if we have your permission to quote or paraphrase your comments. Thank you.



# An ICCC Congregation in Action

## Imagine Church of the Carolinas, Charlotte, NC

By Rev. Bruce Jones, Senior Pastor



**Worship at Imagine**

Imagine a community grounded in God's risk-taking love, life-changing grace, passionate outreach and open-armed acceptance. Imagine a church that welcomes people from all walks of life and all walks of faith to join us on our spiritual journey. And we mean it. Everyone is welcome here. Everyone. We seek to be a place free of judgment and full of love. Imagine a church that will be an interdenominational faith community; a community where hope grows and where grace is celebrated.

Those were some of the dreams that were expressed when a group of young adults came together in late 2013 and early 2014 with the vision of creating a church which did church differently. After hearing all those "imagine" statements, someone said, "I think we should call it "Imagine Church." The name stuck.



**Missions Sunday**

Imagine Church is a contemporary, biblical, interdenominational faith community serving South Charlotte, North Carolina, and the surrounding region, and early in its development felt compelled to become a member of the International Council of Community Churches. The focus is on those who are far from God -- both those who have heard and drifted away, and those who have never heard or responded, because, as pastor Bruce Jones likes to say, "Everybody needs a place; a place to belong, and a place to become."

From a soft launch in September 2014, and a public opening that November, Imagine Church quickly outgrew its meeting space at Palisades Episcopal School and negotiated a long-term contract to meet on the beautiful, high-tech Charlotte campus of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary. A unique component of Imagine's relationship with the seminary is the important role M.Div. students fulfill as ministerial interns on the church's staff. Heidi Chausse, a Gordon-Conwell student from Mississippi who graduates in May, 2020, has been an intern at Imagine for the last two years. "Imagine has been a great place to serve while in seminary," she said. "It has given me the chance to make practical applications of all the things I have learned about parish ministry. I wouldn't trade anything for this experience, plus it's such a cool church!"



**Bruce with Imagine Church of Carolina's Children**

From the beginning, Imagine has implemented a simple church structure which focuses on five primary ministry environments: worship, Imagine Kids, Imagine Nation Youth, Life Groups, and missions. Children's Minister Lydia Smith, Minister of Youth Tim Gunn, and Missions Coordinator Kari DiDonato make sure that the entire church family, including children and youth, have hands-on opportunities to be involved in need-meeting ministries that make a difference both in the Charlotte area and in places around the world.

In August and September, the Imagine Kids spearheaded a collection of school supplies and assembled them into kits that have been shipped to boys and girls in the Philippines through

*continued on page 5*

## A Word from the WCF

Dr. Connee Fitch-Blanks  
ICCC WCF President



Just recently, I received a gratitude journal as recognition of my stewardship at Commonwealth Community Church. The premise of this journal is to consciously acknowledge on a daily basis, what is good in our lives. In these daily pages you are to take stock of the things that move you to gratitude and appreciate them more fully.

While this has historically been the season of thanks, it is altogether fitting and proper to make gratitude a 24/7 Christian way of life. The poet Rumi once wrote, "wear gratitude like a cloak and it will feed every corner of your life." Giving thanks to God for the great and small life gifts is a humbling yet an enriching human experience.

I encourage you take time for "you" and note your thoughts. What made you feel happy, a random act of kindness bestowed on you, the opportunity for you to pay it forward. Buyer be ware, the effort can be addictive.

To my Heavenly Father, family, friends and First Lady Cheryl Samuels, I just want to say thank you!

### Sharing Joys with:

- The **Second Community Church** in Columbus, OH announced last month its successful hiring of **Rev. Brian Holland** as their new Bi-Vocational Pastor. Rev. Brian Holland's installation service will be Nov. 3rd at 5:00pm. Second Community Church welcomes you, if you'd like to attend. As you may know, Second Community Church also celebrated its 58th anniversary this year. *"Whenever God's people regardless of denominational label, value and appreciate the milestones and blessing of one another, we are a part of something wonderful and pleasant."* ~ Deacon Daniel Nelson, Chairman of SCC's Board.
- Recently, **Bishop Serge Theriault, Christian Catholic Rite of Community Churches**, submitted the following announcement: *"Let it be known that in accordance with Articles 4.3 and 8.3f of our Constitution, the Reverend Willard Dionne, M.A., L.Th., D.Chr. has been elected as Coadjutor Bishop, on proposal of the Church Board (Resolution No. 104). His consecration will take place on May 31, 2020 which is Pentecost Sunday. May the Lord complete in him the good work He has begun!"* Congratulations!
- Congratulations to Rev. **Dr. Sharyon Cosey, ABBA Church of Renewed Faith** (Chicago, IL), as she celebrates her 15th Pastor Anniversary. The church will celebrate with her on Nov. 10th from 2pm-6pm.



### Upcoming ICCC meetings:

- The Eastern Zone, Region B will meet on November 9th at Palisades Community Church, 5200 Cathedral Ave. NW, Washington, DC. For information, contact Regional Trustee Myrtis Brame myrtisjb@aol.com

## Imagine Church cont'd. from page 4

a program Imagine Church directs called Philippine Hope. The Imagine Nation Youth are sending over a generator to aid that ministry, too. In November, the church family shifts its attention to providing a complete Thanksgiving dinner to scores of families in the Charlotte area. What's more, each dinner is personally delivered by an Imagine Church family. Then in December, it's bicycles for children who wish for one at Christmas and also toys -- lots of toys -- that are given to area boys and girls in a joint venture between Imagine Church and a local TV station. In the winter months, the church then helps host Room at the Inn, to provide hot meals, laundry service, and a warm place to spend the night for some of Charlotte's homeless population in conjunction with Charlotte Urban Ministries.

These are just some of the ways Imagine Church seeks to fulfill its biblical mission of expressing discipleship through service (Mark 10:43-45). "It may be a blessing to those on the receiving end," Jones said, "but it's certainly a blessing to us, too. In our desire to help make a difference in someone else's life, we believe we're honoring God at the same time."

Imagine Church has become known in the Charlotte region as a church of open-armed acceptance and regard for the poor, hurting, and brokenhearted. The church's leadership is committed to the principle that everyone is made in God's image, so everyone is precious in God's sight and has something of great value to offer. The church has also adopted the central tenet of the International Council of Community Churches that diversity is a gift from God and should be celebrated and embraced. "In our diversity," Imagine's core values state, "we are united by the love of Christ."

Jones says that Imagine Church believes that when we connect with the pain and possibility of the world, we are changed. "Because we're serious about following Jesus," he says, "being with the poor, hurting and brokenhearted is not an option. It's essential."

Imagine Church meets at the Charlotte campus of Gordon-Conwell Theological Seminary, 14542 Choate Circle, Charlotte, North Carolina, 28273. For more information, visit [www.ImagineChurchNow.org](http://www.ImagineChurchNow.org).



## Why I Support the ICCC

By Carolyn Nichols, People's Community Church, Detroit, MI

I attended conference for the first time in 1992. I was chosen by my church to be a youth chaperone at the time.

I would awaken the youth, make sure they had breakfast and then send them off to their sessions. I would then make the Women's Christian Fellowship morning worship service, praying I had not missed much of the session. I continued to chaperone the youth for several years.



I retired from chaperoning the youth and enjoyed the conference so much that I decided to continue to attend. The workshops, bible study, meeting new people and reconnecting with old friends – the entire worship experience was so rewarding.

I have said it often and will continue to repeat that I found the Women's Christian Fellowship a wonderful way to start my day. The fellowship with other women from all over the country, the information I gleaned from other women and what they were doing in their home churches was informative. I also enjoyed the singing. I always enjoy singing! (LOL)

One day during a Women's Christian Fellowship meeting, the meeting was stalled while the President called for someone to volunteer to become the secretary. As I looked around the room no one was volunteering, so I thought if we are to get started, I guess I must volunteer. I did, and that began another phase of my involvement with the ICCC. I soon became President and found joining the conference calls with the leadership of the Conference again gratifying and informative. Now, I must say that I have not always agreed with all of the decisions made by the leadership. However, I have faith in them that even if I did not agree, with the help of Jesus Christ as our leader, that it would all be for the best. Thus far, it has been.

I was a part of the leadership for a short period of time. In that time I gained much respect and admiration for those that lead this organization. Through the years we have had many men and women, whom I have come to admire. I have been thoroughly impressed by the leaders of this organization, past and present.

My church home has had some situations that have caused us to call upon the Council Minister and the Executive Director for assistance. I am happy to report that each time, the Council Minister and/or the Executive Director has been there to guide us and render any assistance that was needed. In each case the individuals have come to meet with us for the direction that we needed.

I understand that the Council is not where we may want to be in numbers. I also understand that we as Christians need to wait upon the Lord and continue to keep our eyes on Jesus and follow the path that he would have us take.

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***Proverbs 3:5, reminds us to: Trust in the Lord with all your heart, and lean not on your own understanding.***

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## A Purpose and A Promise

By Jerry Brown  
VP Conference Planning

Remember the big events in your life? Remember when you got engaged or married, when your first child was born, when your team won the World Series or the Super Bowl? Weren't you excited?



Didn't you want to share that great news with everyone?

What about that moment when you realized that Jesus Christ, the Son of God actually died for you – not for the world, not for all those “churchy” people...but for YOU! Isn't that exciting news worth sharing?

That's the excitement we want to bring to our annual conference this year in Dublin, OH. We want to share the amazing, wonderful news that our faults and our sins are forgiven, our salvation is assured, our Forever Home is prepared, and Jesus lived and died for ME! And His final words to His followers gave us a *purpose* (“Go, therefore, and make disciples of ALL nations”) and a *promise* (“I will be with you always, even to the end of the age.”)

What an incredible opportunity we will have to worship together and share that message with each other; as we join in Bible Study together to learn with each other; as we share meals together, and break bread with each other; and then, the most important part of the conference, as we depart together and take that message home to share with a hurting, broken world.

Our planning committee is working to make this, our 70th annual meeting, the best one ever. In fact, we are looking at so many great proposals, we are trying to thin them out, and choose the very best, to make your time in Dublin powerful, impactful, and rewarding.

We urge you to plan now to join us in Dublin for an inspiring week of activities to learn and share with each other. Then we can take that message home to share with our communities so that we can bring rejuvenation to our local churches, as well as our Council. This will be an opportunity for us to recognize and appreciate our *purpose* and God's *promise* for us.

***“Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations...And surely, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.”***  
**Matthew 28:19,20**

*In addition to traditional giving,  
the ICCC offers the following ways to donate:*

**GIVE+ Church**

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## TEXT to GIVE!

**You can now make a contribution to ICCC with a quick text message!**

Simply send a text to 815-506-9017

with the amount you would like to contribute. Make sure to include the dollar sign before the amount.

Example: \$25.

Within a few minutes, you'll be sent a text with a link to register (one-time only registration). Click on the link and enter your cardholder name and credit or debit card information. Once your registration is complete, you will receive a text verification and a receipt via email. **For future giving**, simply send a text with the amount you wish to give, and it will process automatically! **TRY IT!!**



Scan the QR barcode image to the left with your smartphone! It will take you directly to an ICCC donation page!



## 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., Feb., Mar., Apr., May, 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.

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*International Council of Community Churches*

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

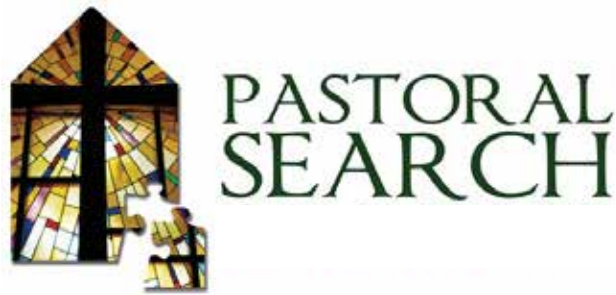
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### *Pastor*

**Annisquam Village Church** <https://annisquamvillagechurch.org>, a nearly 300 year old independent interdenominational church in Gloucester, MA. is seeking a full time pastor. We are a congregation with many theological understandings, bound by our devotion to the timeless teachings of Christ. "Connecting a Spiritually Diverse Community to God and to the World" is our vision and purpose.

We seek an experienced pastor with divinity degree credentials who recognizes the value that different perspectives and cultures bring to our church. Our pastor will embrace the unique character of this faith community, the Annisquam Village community, and greater Gloucester, and must bring a message of hope to help navigate these changing times. With a sense of enthusiasm and energy our pastor will take on opportunities to bolster the success of AVC, and paint a compelling picture of our vision as a faith community so that we continue to grow spiritually, numerically, and in relevance.

The AVC Pastor will be responsible for weekly worship services, providing pastoral care and counseling for the congregation and Annisquam Village Community. Our pastor will be a facilitator for connecting the church to the larger community of Cape Ann and will have a leadership role in increasing membership. Our pastor will be responsible for managing the church including staff (administrator, sexton, music director, children's minister, nursery leader), creating a climate where all are motivated to do their best. Our pastor will be a resource for programs and mission activities, develop and oversee annual budget with the treasurer, and direct the annual meeting and monthly board meetings.

For more information or to submit your resume, please contact the Annisquam Village Church Search Committee at [avcsearch-group@gmail.com](mailto:avcsearch-group@gmail.com).

### *Senior Pastor*

**Park Road Community Church**, 1019 Park Road, NW, Washington, DC, is in need of a senior pastor. Prefers a graduate of an accredited seminary or school of theology. Will consider candidates with equivalent training or experience, or with a concrete plan for completion of seminary training.

Candidates should have experience as a pastor or experience performing the seven primary pastoral responsibilities with a willingness to spend an average of at least 20 hours weekly attending to the needs of the church.

A commitment to abide by the Community Church concept as outlined by the International Council of Community Churches is a must.

Salary range: \$30,000 - \$40,000. For more information visit the church's website: [www.parkroadcommunitychurch.org](http://www.parkroadcommunitychurch.org).

Resumes should be forwarded to the Search Committee, Park Road Community Church, PO Box 29523, Washington, DC 20017.

### *Senior Minister*

**The Historic People's Community Church** (PCC) fosters a tradition of being a singing, praying, tithing, teaching, serving, and loving church, and is guided by one of its golden text 'I am come that they might have life and that they may have it more abundantly.' – John 10:10.

This Historic Church, a member of the International Council of Community Churches (ICCC) and located in the vibrant city of Detroit, Michigan is currently seeking an experienced Senior Minister to be the Spiritual Leader of its Congregation. The Senior Minister is responsible for leading and moving the Congregation toward the fulfillment of God's mission for PCC. The Senior Minister will have an unwavering faith and a firm relationship with Jesus Christ and is dedicated to cultivating others in Christ.

For complete information visit <http://www.icccnow.org/careers/> or contact People's Community Church office (313) 871-4676.

