

THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

May 2020



International Council of Community Churches

Volume 70

A Voice for Ecumenical Congregations and Christians Around the World

Number 7

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President's Message by Harry Fooockle



DIFFERENCE
MAKERS

fake news

there's a word thrown around today

almost incessantly

somewhere around 1,987 years or so ago

fake news was thrown around

some say a man rose from the dead

some say a man's body was stolen

fake news

at least one of them

you choose which one

your answer makes a difference

I choose raised from the dead

now I need to tell others

our world needs a difference maker

ICCC we are difference makers

WCF Annual Conference Workshop

*Rev. Karen Neely,
WCF Chaplain/Spiritual Advisor*

If we help one person, I will be thrilled! If we help five people? How exciting!

Let us see what good we can do together.

At the 2019 ICCC Annual Conference a WCF scholarship fund was seeded to assist women by covering their 2020 conference registration costs. This is especially, not exclusively, encouraged for first-time conferees.

A simple application is now available and the WCF asks that you share this information with your church and community. We hope that people will apply from financial need and desire to attend so that we can share why we love and serve the ICCC. For an application, visit the ICCC's website, www.icccnow.org/annual-conference/

If you would like to make a contribution to the WCF Annual Conference Scholarship Fund, designate your contribution here through our website, or send a check to the council office with a note of designation.



Executive Director's Message

Phil Tom

A Time to Reboot

"And I tell you that you are Peter, and on this rock, I will build my church, and the gates of Hades will not overcome it."

Matthew 16:18

The coronavirus epidemic has turned our lives upside down and forced our nation, if not our world to look inside its soul and to reassess our values and priorities. We are witnessing the consequences of our ongoing disparities and dysfunctions in our health care system, our economic system, and our social system. COVID 19 impacts rich and poor, urban and rural, people of all color but it has been documented that the majority of deaths from COVID 19 has impacted Black and Brown people who experience inadequate or no health care, low paying jobs that provide no health insurance or sick leave, food deserts that cause poor eating habits, lack of adequate protection in jobs such as for farm workers and poultry workers. I pray that when we pass this crisis, that our nation will address these inequities and work to change our public policies to correct these unjust systems and practices.

The coronavirus epidemic has also turned the life of The Church upside down. Our gathered physical community on Sunday morning and other times during the week have now been transformed into being a virtual community via our phones and computers. Yes, we miss being physically together, and to pass the peace, and to hug one another. We have adapted to this environment by learning how to conduct worship, bible studies and other activities online via Zoom, Facebook Live, and other forms of social media. We are learning how to do "church stuff" differently by having drive-in worship services, bringing various voices of our choir together online, texting daily prayers to our members, and having group prayers on a phone line.

One of the major takeaways for The Church from this pandemic is that we realize that The Church is not the building, it is the people of God. Somehow, some folks feel

that you cannot be Church without a permanent church home. Our church homes are important places for our gathering. They are the places where we worship and pray together, study the bible, get baptized, get married, and say farewell to our loved one. What we have learned during this crisis is that we do not need a church building to do all these things. Every space is God's sacred ground.

When we return to our "new normal," I pray that we do not go back to business as usual and our former habits. I hope that the new lessons we have learned during this crisis in how to be Church will stay with us and be expanded. Let us continue to be transformed and renewed by God's Holy Spirit, to be The Church and to share God's good news, in Word and in deed.



Attend to Reading! (1 Timothy 4:13)



Book SUGGESTIONS

By Rev. Ken Nelson



We extend our best prayers and thoughts to you and your families and friends. We still have hope (Psalm 119:74; Romans 15:13) that the healing of our country and world is coming soon (Psalm 6:2; Jeremiah 33:6; Matthew 10:1)! In this pandemic, we are taking a different approach to our reviews to provide a balance between quick reads (articles) and longer reads (books). Let us know how it works for you.

COVID-19 READING OFFERING

In a recent *Library Journal* article, Neal Wyatt identifies reading options dealing with Covid-19 from entertainment and books (<https://www.libraryjournal.com/?detailStory=Covid-19-Book-Industry-reading-social-distancing-bookpulse>). If you are trying to stay ahead of Covid-19, then here are a couple of authors and books worth investigating.



Sloane Crosley, author of the New York Times bestsellers *I Was Told There'd Be Cake* (left) writes what could be a hopeful essay titled "Someday, We'll Look Back on All of This and Write a Novel."

(<https://www.nytimes.com/2020/03/17/books/review/sloane-crosley-pandemic-novel-coronavirus.html>). Crosley maintains that "the nature of tragedy is that it takes more than it gives, but it's also

produced some of our most iconic literature. Crosley may be taking up space for the Times or she may have an excellent description of our new normal. It does seem true that when we gather and recovery from tragedies, we do have a different perspective about living and sharing than those who may have experienced the same things with us. After the staggering Covid-19 reports, we may need more stories of love, generosity, hope and transformation. It seems taking the principles of Christianity may have new life.



On a lighter side, this year is the 20th anniversary of *O: The Oprah Magazine*, which has developed some interesting book topics. If you are feeling down or want a twist to isolation, Jonathan Borge, senior editor, *O Magazine* offers his happiness collection in an article titled "[20 Happiness Books That'll Make You](#)

[Feel Good at the Turn of Every Page.](#)" Borge observes that "...these books aren't just about seeking external happiness: They're about finding happiness within." In this mixture of authors, you may find some of faith and unfaith. For example, *The Art of Happiness* by the Dalai Lama and *The Power of Positive Thinking* by Norman Vincent Peale made the list and if you are seeking scientific examples then there are at least three books on the list. My favorite happiness book, The Holy Bible, did not make the list, but it still works for some of you.

In *The Exchange* article, Pastor Greg Laurie, the senior pastor of Harvest churches in California and Hawaii and the founder of the Harvest crusades, writes about "Will COVID-19 Lead to the Next Great American Awakening?" Laurie makes some hopeful comments about our future in this article (<https://www.christianitytoday.com/edstetzer/2020/april/will-covid-19-lead-to-next-great-american-awakening.html>). "In many ways, we now are doing the very things," Laurie writes, "we should have been doing all along: Spending time with our families, sharing meals, talking to our neighbors, helping one another and taking long walks outside (while maintaining social distancing of course)."

Laurie then goes on to state:

I think we finally are beginning to realize we need God. I recently came across an article for an academic journal that studied the role of religion and faith in the COVID-19 pandemic. The article found that Google searches about prayer skyrocketed when the coronavirus went global, and in fact, the search intensity doubled for every 80,000 new confirmed COVID-19 cases.

Laurie mentions some facts that are not mentioned in the media that more and more people are moving to God and the church should be ready to receive them (at least six feet away, for now).

SHARE YOUR COMMENTS. Thank you for sharing your comments. They are encouraging to our discussion. Remember, please share your thoughts at ICCCNOW@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 for your feedback and have a blessed month!

Why I Support the ICCC

By Reverend Leroy McCreary

The reasons are many. At the time I recommended People's Community Church to join the ICCC, I was engaged in an active national search for a national Christian body to connect with that would serve as a substitute for becoming a member of a denomination. At some stage in my search, I mentioned to Mrs. Carolyn Ford, former first lady of People's Community in Berea, OH that I was seeking membership in a national Christian organization. She strongly recommended the ICCC for consideration and promised to have the Reverend Ralph Shotwell to contact me. As best as I can recall, he called right away and warmly invited me to become a member of the ICCC. Shortly after these conversations our congregation voted to become a member. This decision solved a pressing matter that had been on my mind and heart for quite some period of time.



I was happy that this decision was behind us. Now, we could experience a strong sense of connectedness with God's people in our community, around the nation and beyond. Additionally, what made this connection so meaningful was the fact that I wanted to better market our church and its mission to the larger Berea community. As I recall, again and again, people in the community asked me in general conversations what denomination did our church hold membership. So, by now being a member of the ICCC, I could gladly answer and I felt very good that our connectedness was not by our having membership in an established denomination. So, in my view, this ecumenical non-denominational membership fitted well with COMMUNITY in our church's name and our mission.

Another reason I have gladly and strongly supported the ICCC for close to 40 years has been the unimaginable and blessed relationships. For so many years, we thoroughly enjoyed the annual conferences because of the many quality relationships we established. The outstanding locations throughout the nation helped to motivate my immediate family and many from our congregation to attend and fellowship with brothers and sisters in Christ. For example, from time to time Elaine and I enjoy remembering and sharing stories about the many fine people we've met at annual conference, and many of them we continue to keep in contact.

Lastly, I cherish the freedom we enjoy as members. As congregations and individual ICCC members we are not forced to do things many Christian groups require for membership. So, now as a retired pastor closing in on forty years as an active member with the ICCC, I find our freedom in the Council to be precious and valued. My prayer is that Almighty God will continue to strengthen and bless the ICCC as it fights like never before its way through some very difficult times. May the peace of Christ be with each of you!

"Honor the Lord with your wealth, with the first fruits of all your crops, then your barns will be filled to overflowing, and your vats will brim over with new wine."
Proverbs 3:9-10

2020 Annual Conference

What a Celebration it will be!

There's an old song that says, "You don't know what you've got til it's gone." We are finding out how true that is; I never realized what a privilege and gift we have to gather together to worship.

We are recording our weekly worship service, calling and emailing each other, and meeting with one another via Zoom. All the technology we have is providing excellent opportunities to get together electronically. But I am so looking forward to the opportunity to gather again with my faith family in person in our sanctuary.

The same is true with my ICCC family of faith. I look forward to meeting again with fellow Christians, old friends, every summer; but never as much as I am this summer.

We are still planning for our conference in Dublin, OH this July, at least until circumstances determine our current isolation policies must be extended. We must continue to plan for the conference assuming things will be back to normal (or whatever "normal" will be by then). If, in the next few weeks our quarantine situation is extended, we will, of course, be required to change our plans. But, at this point, we must continue to plan for our conference, praying for God's guidance and wisdom.

I, for one, can't wait! I am eagerly anticipating the blessed opportunity to not only gather together again, but also thank God for seeing us through this affliction (our prayers, as always, are with everyone who has been sick or lost friends or family). Will we see you there? I hope so, it won't be the same without you.

PS, the silver lining to this situation is the opportunity to get some really low air fares to Columbus. And the airlines are being very forgiving with their cancellation/re-scheduling policies. Just another reason to give thanks, and join us; this year more than ever.

2020 Annual Conference Workshops

We are excited to bring to you the following workshops at our 2020 Annual Conference in Dublin! We look forward to learn and to be inspired and fulfilled. More workshop information along with all Annual Conference information can be found on our website www.ICCCNOW.org.

“Evangelism in the Community Church focused on Building and Growing Relationships” led by Rev. Ken Nelson and Nick Brame



Rev. Ken Nelson



Nick Brame

This workshop will be a sharing opportunity that describes how one congregation approached service and evangelism to attract new members and new service opportunities by expanding a traditional church event. Workshop participants will be invited to share their like experiences.

“Seeing Christianity from the Outside” led by Pastor Bruce Jones



Just exactly what do people in today's culture think about Christians and Christianity? The Barna research group has found that many of those outside of Christianity, especially younger adults, think that Christians no longer represent what Jesus had in mind, and that Christianity in our society is not what it was meant to be. This workshop is designed to be a mirror for us to see ourselves and our faith more clearly. It may prove to be a wake-up call to today's church leaders as we accept the challenge of becoming the kind of Christ followers, friends, and neighbors who are full of grace, love, and compassion, in order that the church will be known more by what it is for than what it is against. The goal of the workshop is not only to see ourselves from the outside, but to do something about it, so that the face of Christianity in today's culture will be changed!

“Caring for Yourself When YOU are a Caregiver” led by Dr. Connee Fitch-Blanks



Millions of Americans take care of family members or friends as “informal caregivers.” These individuals simply consider the care they provide as what you do for someone you care about. This interactive session will explore roles, responsibilities, highs and lows of caring for yourself as you help those you love live with dignity.

“We Need a Revival” led by Rev. Eloise Chrenshaw



What is revival? Revival is a sovereign work of God—in answer to sincere prayer—in which he: Grips his people with deep conviction, repentance, forgiveness, and deliverance from personal sins; Fills his people with the Holy Spirit and manifesting in them the fruit and graces of the Holy Spirit; Causes non-Christians to honestly seek Him; Ignites in His people, young and old a passion to bring the lost to Christ at home and around the world. Who is responsible for revival? God or Man? Do you work a revival up or do you pray a revival down? What are the conditions of a revival? Man prepares the way for revival after praying to a sovereign God the creator who knows what we need. Everything in creation is under God's control. He has chosen however, to give to his children the privilege of working together with Him to take the good news of His love and forgiveness in Christ to the world. Whatever God tells you to do he will give you the power and ability to do it.

If my people who are called by my name, will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways then will I hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and will heal their land. ~ 2 Chronicles 7:14

Fasting is the only discipline that meets all the conditions of 2 Chronicles 7:14. When one fasts he humbles himself; he has more time to pray, more time to seek God's face, and certainly he would turn from all human sin. One could read the Bible, pray, or witness for Christ without repenting of his sins. But one cannot enter a genuine fast with a pure heart and pure motives and not meet the conditions of this passage. We need a revival ICC. Fast and pray with me February 26, 2020 for the conference this year. ~ Eloise

“Family Wellness Workshop” led by Chaplain Wendy Childress



This workshop is for parents, grandparents, guardians, and children (8 and older). It is designed to provide skills necessary for healthy families. You will learn techniques to assist parents and children navigate their ever-growing and ever-changing relationships. We know that families have good times and bad times. This workshop will provide you with tools and skills to help you go through the hard times as well as the good times. The goal is to learn with your family and other families but also for you to have fun doing so.



PASTORAL SEARCH

Pastor

Sharing Joys With:

- **Rev. Julia Powe, ICCC Regional Trustee.** Julia recently celebrated her 70th birthday! Happy Birthday, Julia!
- **Greendale People's Church** (Worcester, MA), **Rev. Dr. Kevin Downer**, Interim Senior Pastor. The church celebrated its 125th anniversary on April 8th! They were not able to celebrate physically as a church, however they did celebrate virtually with a coffee hour to toast 125 extraordinary years of helping their community and spreading God's infinite love. They plan to create a photo collage of each raising their glass with Zoom. Congratulations!

Let Us Lift Up Prayers of Joy for:

- **ICCC VP for Informational Services and Outreach Mike Donahue** as he continues to struggle with health challenges.
- **ICCC WCF President Connee Fitch-Blanks** as she continues to recover from surgery.
- **ICCC Council Minister Emeritus Don Ashmall's** daughter Wendy and family as they all recover from the coronavirus.
- **Historic First Community Church in Nashville, TN** as they recover from tornado damage.

Norris Religious Fellowship www.norrisrf.org in Norris, TN is seeking a full time pastor. We are a suburban church located in East Tennessee. We are an interdenominational church and a member of the International Council of Community Churches (ICCC), that not only accepts and tolerates differences but encourages diverse groups of people to come together. Our minister must be ordained as a graduate from an accredited divinity school, have ministerial experience, and must be comfortable with a moderate-to-liberal theology. We seek an open-minded, non-judgmental spiritual leader, counselor and guide, with strong moral and religious commitments, demonstrated leadership skills, an ability to inspire and teach through engaging and relevant sermons, and a passion for counselling the ill and grieving.

Our pastor will be responsible for weekly worship services, providing pastoral care, and counseling for the congregation. Also, the pastor will have a leadership role in increasing and revitalizing both our membership and our religious education programs. Our pastor will be responsible for managing the staff of the church. For consideration, applicants must be willing to relocate to Norris, TN. Interested candidates should email nrfsearchcommittee@gmail.com to request a pastoral search profile for more information and an application.

Associate Pastor

The Church at Litchfield Park, a historic and dynamic independent community church located in a beautiful resort community west of Phoenix, is searching for an Associate Pastor to join our wonderful staff.

Preferred qualifications include having a theological degree from an accredited institution, being ordained in a recognized Christian denomination, and having a servant's heart, manifested in the pastoral gifts.

Specific areas of ministry will include small groups, fellowship, missions, visitation, counseling & support, some teaching, and occasional preaching.

CLP is a progressive church that "strives to love and serve ALL people through Christ".

Qualified candidates should e-mail a resume and cover letter to: personnel-chair@clp.church with Associate Pastor in the subject line. Visit the ICCC website www.icccnow.org/careers/ for the entire job description.

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.



International Council of Community Churches
ICCC Registration Form 2020 Annual Conference: July 20-23
"A Purpose and A Promise"
Dublin, Ohio

Name (as you would like it on badge) _____

Street Address _____

City, State, Zip _____

Telephone (_____) _____ E-mail Address: _____

Emergency Contact Name _____ Phone _____

Church (member of) _____

Gender: ☐ Male ☐ Female

First Conference: Yes ☐ No ☐

Status: ☐ Clergy ☐ Laity



FOR THE ELEMENTARY AND YOUTH PROGRAMS ONLY!



■ Age (on 7-1-2020) _____ Grade completed by (7-1-2020) _____

■ 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* with Kid's Meal** (Ages 1-5)	\$ 35.00	\$
Elementary* with Kid's Meal** (entering kindergarten - entering 6th grade)	\$ 60.00	\$
**Add-on ONLY if Adult meal is preferred for Child/Elementary regis.	\$ 25.00	\$
Youth (completed 6th grade - entering 12th grade)	\$145.00	\$
Young Adult (completed 12th grade - age 23)	\$170.00	\$
Adult Register by June 1, 2020 - Early Bird Special \$195.00	\$230.00	\$
Daily Registrants Circle Day(s) M T W Th meals not included	\$ 35.00/day	\$
CC	TOTAL ENCLOSED	\$

A Banquet ticket is included in your registration fee. This meal includes: Garden Salad, Grilled Bone In Pork Chop with Bourbon BBQ, Herb Roasted Yukon Potatoes, Blue Lake Beans, Strawberry Shortcake, Coffee, Hot Tea and Iced Tea. Fish Option: Grilled Fresh Salmon with Citrus Butter. *Kids Meal Option: Cheeseburger, French Fries, Lemonade and Cookie. Meals are subject to change.

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

Pork Chop (Default Option)

Fish Option

Kid's Meal Option

****Child & Elementary registrations include the Kid's Meal option. If the adult meal is preferred, please add \$25.00 to your total enclosed.**

Please return this form with payment to: ICCC, 21116 Washington Parkway, Frankfort, Illinois 60423

☐ Check or Money Order made payable to ICCC ☐ VISA ☐ MASTERCARD ☐ AMERICAN EXPRESS ☐ DISCOVER

Acct. #: _____ - _____ Exp. Date: _____ CVV: _____

Print name as it appears on card: _____ Signature _____

One form per person. **Early Bird registration must be received in the office by June 1st.** Registrations after June 20th will be accepted at Conference only.

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

ANNUAL CONFERENCE SESSIONS WILL BE VIDEOTAPED or placed on Social Media. I agree the ICCC may use my image, name, voice and story in any medium or format, throughout the world forever, free-of-charge, and for any reasonable purpose in furtherance of its mission.

2020 Conference Meal Programs

The **2020 Annual Conference** offers 2 optional meal program opportunities: the Fellowship Luncheon and the Prayer Luncheon hosted by the Women's Christian Fellowship. The Conference Banquet Dinner is included in your registration fee** (Additional quantities can be reserved for a fee). You can visit our website **ICCCNOW.org** to see a brief description of the meal program, or watch for details in upcoming issues of the Christian Community.

Monday, July 20, 2020 at 12:00pm is the **Fellowship Luncheon**. Macaroni Salad, Cole Slaw, Grilled Hamburgers, Hot Dogs, Baked Beans, Kettle Chips, Sliced Cheeses, Lettuce, Tomato, Onion, Pickles and Watermelon. Includes Coffee, Hot Tea and Iced Tea. Vegetarian Option: Veggie Burger.

Wednesday, July 22, 2020 at 12:30pm is the **Prayer Luncheon**. This meal includes House-made Chicken Salad served with Lettuce and Tomato on a Croissant, Pasta Salad, Kettle Chips and Rustic Italian Cream Cake. Includes Coffee, Hot Tea or Iced Tea Vegetarian Option: Spinach Tortilla Stuffed with Roasted Peppers, Onions, Zucchini, Squash and Sliced Mushrooms.

Thursday, July 23, 2020 at 6:00 p.m. is the **Conference Banquet***. This meal includes: Garden Salad, Grilled Bone-In Pork Chop with Bourbon BBQ, Herb Roasted Yukon Potatoes, Blue Lake Beans, Strawberry Shortcake, Coffee, Hot Tea and Iced Tea. Fish Option: Grilled Fresh Salmon with Citrus Butter *Kid's Meal Option: Cheeseburger, French Fries, Lemonade and Cookie.

Subject to change.

2020 MEAL RESERVATION FORM

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

Name: _____

Please reserve _____ places at \$34.00 each for **Monday's Fellowship Luncheon**

☐ Check for Vegetarian Option

Please reserve _____ places at \$26.00 each for **Wednesday's Prayer Luncheon**

☐ Check for Vegetarian Option

*Please reserve add'l. _____ places at \$50.00 each for **Thursday's Banquet Dinner**

☐ Pork Chop

☐ Fish

*Please reserve add'l. _____ places at \$20.00 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: _____ CVV: _____

Print name as it appears on card: _____

Signature: _____

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.**