

# THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

FEBRUARY 2023



*International Council of Community Churches*

Volume 73

*A Voice for Ecumenical Congregations and Christians Around the World*

Number 4

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## OMG

**Have we got a week planned for you!**

**The 73<sup>rd</sup> Annual Conference planning is underway**

*"All of you together are Christ's body, and each of you is a part of it."*  
I Corinthians 12:27

*We are family*

**July 18 – 21, 2023**

- ✓ We have a new format.\*
- ✓ We have world-class speakers and presenters.
- ✓ We have a beautiful hotel, wonderful meeting facilities, and great food.
- ✓ We have awesome workshops, mission opportunities & presentations, music, and fellowship chances.

We've been to the hotel that has been recently renovated and offers the roomy accommodations, fabulous breakfast buffet, and evening reception we've come to appreciate from Embassy Suites. That makes this a great family destination and possibility.

The Planning Committee has been diligently coordinating so many various facets of the conference. Worship, music, discussion groups, luncheon presentations, excursions, meals; the numerous details are endless, but so are the opportunities. There will be so many choices for you to pursue they will certainly satisfy whatever your individual interests may be.

You can experience powerful worship services, inspirational mission presentations, enlightening Bible Study discussions, moving musical presentations, encouraging workshops, entertaining fellowship offerings, tours of the Billy Graham museum/library not far from the hotel; the opportunities are

endless. Your participation will be limited only by your enthusiasm.

Note that the conference this year will start on Tuesday, allowing our clergy time to satisfy their Sunday obligations, and still have sufficient time for Ministerium activities before the conference. Registration for the conference is available now. You can book the hotel now! I would encourage you to save your spot soon ... and bring a friend. You don't want to miss this, and it will be an experience you'll want to share. Watch Christian Community newsletters for upcoming conference information and/or visit the ICCC website for the latest.

\*You will see another article explaining our exciting new format. This will give everyone the opportunity to pursue presentations that will focus on their individual interests.

**We'll see you in Charlotte!**

**Jerry Brown**  
*VP for Planning*





## Executive Director's Message

**Phil Tom**

### *Reinventing Church?*

Recently, I read an article titled "It just doesn't work." The world's best restaurant is shutting down as its owner calls the modern fine dining model "unsustainable." "Hit hard by the pandemic, restaurants have had to re-create themselves over the past few years by accepting takeout orders and reinventing their menus." [https://news.yahoo.com/just-doesn-t-world-best-190717289.html?soc\\_src=social-sh&soc\\_trk=ma](https://news.yahoo.com/just-doesn-t-world-best-190717289.html?soc_src=social-sh&soc_trk=ma)

The pandemic has impacted the business model of many industries. The former model no longer works, and different industries are adapting and reinventing themselves to survive, if not flourish. For example, New York City and other cities are working on how to readapt their downtown office buildings for other uses since many workers are not returning to the office.

Several articles indicate that many folks are not returning to worship in-person - <https://www.christianpost.com/news/church-attendance-still-short-of-pre-pandemic-levels-survey.html>. Pastors and congregational leaders are acknowledging that they must continue to maintain an online service along with its in-person service. Some congregations have become quite fluent and creative in developing their online service. For some congregations, their worship "attendance" has grown because of their online service, e.g., live-streaming, Facebook, and YouTube. In addition, their online worshippers come from a broader area, e.g., regionally and internationally. Yet, for many smaller membership congregations, maintaining the virtual service presents challenges due

to having members who cannot operate and maintain the technology.

Pastors and congregations are learning on the job how to sustain and integrate their in-person and online congregations. Questions raised are: Is online worship as effective as in-person worship? How do we encourage the participation of online worshippers? Are online worshippers pledging or just spectators? How do we develop community between our online and in-person worshippers? How do we define "membership" if the online worshipper lives in another state or never plans to attend in person? Finally, how do we engage online worshippers to be involved with the congregation's mission projects?

There are probably more questions than answers as the Church reinvents itself in this post-covid period. It will be some time before researchers provide clues to the questions raised in the previous paragraph. As the Church reinvents itself, new models of ministry will emerge.

I invite you to share what and how your congregation is doing to sustain and integrate your in-person and online congregations and any other creative ways you are serving your congregation and community. Please send your stories to me at [icccpt@sbcglobal.com](mailto:icccpt@sbcglobal.com) so that I can share your story with our ICCC family.

*Phil*

**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: P.O. Box 846, Longmont, CO 80502. 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."***

## ICCC FEBRUARY 2023

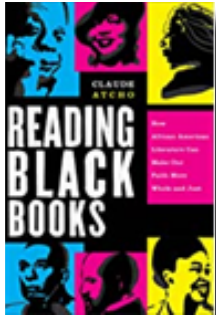


## Book REVIEW

By Rev. Kenneth N. Nelson

*The theme is "Getting wisdom is the wisest thing you can do!  
And whatever else you do, develop good judgment. - Pro 4:7 NLT.*

Welcome to the 2023 and the Black History Month book review. We pray you, your family, and your congregations have been blessed and will be encouraged in the coming year. This Black History Month let's focus on a bit of the old and some of the new wisdom from our shared faith experience.



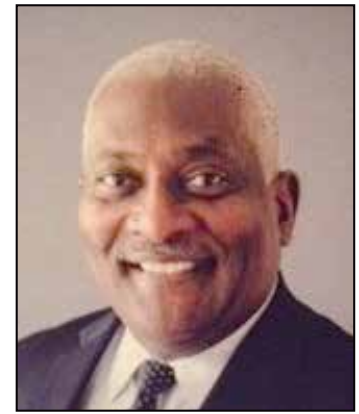
**Reading Black Books: How African American Literature Can Make Our Faith More Whole and Just** by Claude Atcho, Brazos Press, Paperback \$14.99 (208p) ISBN-13 : 978-1587435294

In *Reading Black Books*, Claude Atcho, a pastor and teacher, offers a compelling solution for Christian readers who love theology and black literature but never

seem to find a way for them to meet. Can you imagine having a theological and literary conversation with Ralph Ellison's *Invisible Man*, and the image of God, Richard Wright's *Native Son*, and *Sin*, or James Baldwin's *Go Tell It on the Mountain* and *God*? In these opening chapters, the reader begins to see, hear, and feel the dynamic relationship between theology and literature in our time.

Atcho argues that "when we read Black literature's twentieth-century classics through a dual lens—the literary and the theological—we unearth the ways in which God's truth addresses Black experience and how Black experience, as shown in the literature of our great writers, can prod readers from all backgrounds toward sharper theological thinking and more faithful living" (p 1). Readers will find Atcho's approach an enthralling way to read our collective history.

Maybe this Black History Month you are very concerned about racism. Atcho shares his interest in racism through the lens of Nella Larsen's *Passing*. Drawing from the Norton Anthology of African American Literature, Atcho observes that "Out of all the fiction published during the Harlem Renaissance," *Passing* offers "arguably the most sophisticated attempt to question the very idea of race" (pp. 91-92). In 1929, *Passing* viewed many concerns that are relevant to us today. Atcho notes that *Passing* "questions race and racism by demonstrating that racism is a performative pull that draws all manner of peoples into its orbit and scripts, forcing us to consider the nature of race, the narrative of racial hierarchy, and the stories by which we live" (p. 92). This chapter offers another approach to dialogue and understanding of racism issues through faith and full justice orientation.



On the other hand, maybe you have questions about understanding our times through the power of a lament. Then welcome to the reading of W. E. B. Du Bois, 'The Litany of Atlanta.' Atcho "demonstrates, the answer, in part, includes a return to the Psalms" (p. 138). It seems that Atcho creates freshness for our souls by sharing his insights into both pieces of literature thus creating an unexpected blessing for readers.

Or maybe you seek a dialogue on the real meaning of justice today through the writing of Richard Wright's *The Man Who Lived Underground*. Atcho observes that "Wright's novel is the opposite of distraction—it is honest confrontation about injustice. This is freeing and necessary, for to imagine a more just world, one must reckon with the world as it is. *The Man Who Lived Underground* provides such a reckoning, peering at the world from the land of the rejected, the underground" (p. 145).

In a community that increasingly seems to be losing its attempts to gain hope, Atcho challenges readers with the writing of Margaret Walker. Atcho writes, "There's something deeply stirring about Margaret Walker's 'For My People' (1942). It is a poem that soars off the page and bounds across the imagination, evoking, with a marching drumlike cadence, both the plight and the resilience of Black American experience. Read aloud, it sings the harmonies of hope against the downbeat of pain" (p. 159).

*Reading Black Books* provides the reader with a great way to understand theology and literature. Atcho has chosen some of the most engaging Black writers of all time and then aligns their writing with key theological themes. The reading is compelling and worth the time to read and Atcho provides discussion questions to support deeper reflection and appropriate action for our times.

SHARE YOUR COMMENTS. Remember, please share your thoughts at [ICCCNOW@sbcglobal.net](mailto: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..*



## Ecumenews

Rev. Rock R. Fremont Jr., VP Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations



As I have previously mentioned in past Ecumenews articles, resources from the World Council of Churches 11th Assembly are available on the WCC website, and I encourage you to peruse them. After sharing the Unity Statement and the Call to Act Together in previous months, I would like to now share with you the Assembly's public statements, starting with *The Things that Make for Peace; Moving the World to Reconciliation and Unity*.

This statement calls for a renewed commitment to peace, following on the life and work of the WCC since the 10th Assembly in Busan, South Korea, was framed as a "*Pilgrimage of Justice and Peace: drawing on the 'Ecumenical Call to Just Peace'*" and the Busan Assembly's "*Statement on the Way of Just Peace*." Recognizing the need for "renewed dialogue within the ecumenical movement," the statement strongly affirms "the commitment of the WCC and its member churches to peace making through inter-religious dialogue and cooperation at all levels," and calls for a global ceasefire, among other actions and commitments.

This statement urges all states that have not already done so to sign and ratify the Treaty on the Prohibition of Nuclear Weapons, expresses strong support for a global preemptive ban on autonomous weapons systems ("Killer Robots" and drones), denounces the military industrial complex that profits from the economics of war and violence and the proliferation and export of weapons, and recognizes the right of conscientious objection. The latter insertion into the paper came about as a result of a comment by a peace church representative, made from the floor.

It acknowledges the crises of this time, saying, in part: "We meet in

a time of renewed and escalating global polarization, reconfiguration of governance and geopolitical alignments, division, confrontation, and militarization—as well as of continuing military occupations in situations such as the Occupied Palestinian Territories and Cyprus—with all the appalling risks that attend this context.... Grave concerns are being raised in the ecumenical fellowship about the instrumentalization of religious language, authority, and leadership to justify, support or "bless" armed aggression or any kind of violence and oppression, in sharp contrast to the Christian calling to be peacemakers and contradicting core ecumenical principles.

"We understand that making peace involves addressing racism, xenophobia, antisemitism, hate speech and other forms of hatred of the other (all of which have increased and intensified during these years, in large part encouraged by populist nationalist movements); crisis and competition for essential resources for life; economic injustice and inequality in the marketplace; interstate conflicts and re-emergence of war; and the raising of the specter of nuclear war. These threats to peace fundamentally violate the core tenets of the Christian faith."

Read the full text of *The Things that Make for Peace* at the following link: [www.oikoumene.org/resources/documents/the-things-that-make-for-peace-moving-the-world-to-reconciliation-and-unity](http://www.oikoumene.org/resources/documents/the-things-that-make-for-peace-moving-the-world-to-reconciliation-and-unity).



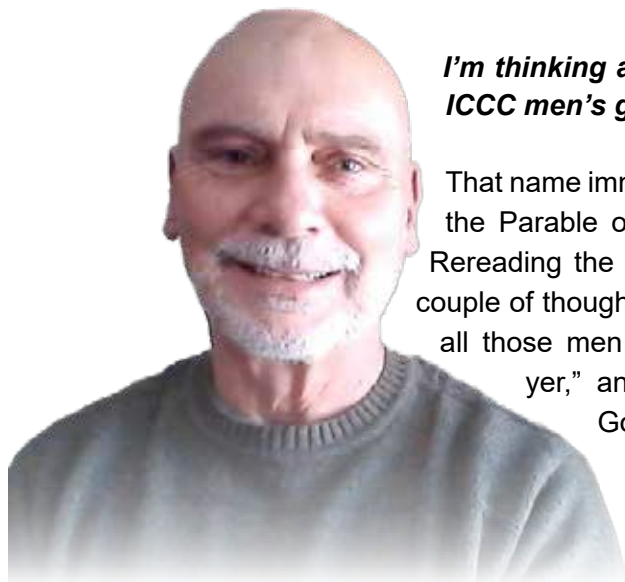
Since the beginning of the COVID-19 pandemic, our ICCC Ecumenical Committee has offered Ecumenical Morning Prayer at 11:00 am ET, 10:00 CT, 9:00 MT, and 8:00 PT Monday through Friday as a centering beginning to the day.

This 20-minute prayer service is based on ancient models of daily Christian prayer and includes psalms, a short reading, silence, and a Taizé chant.

Please join us via the following Zoom link:

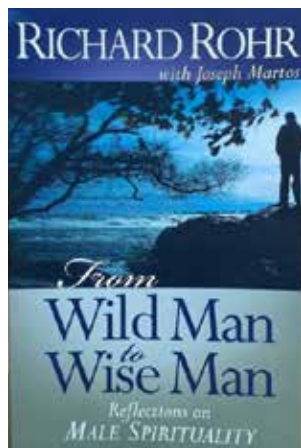
<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82876261449>

## Samaritan Men on the Move



***I'm thinking about the name of our ICCC men's group, the Samaritans.***

That name immediately brings to mind the Parable of the Good Samaritan. Rereading the story, I am struck by a couple of thoughts. The first is that I am all those men in the story: the "lawyer," an expert in the Law of God, or in my case, more of a student; "a man," an anonymous man to most people, who is sometimes the "neighbor" in need and sometimes the "neighbor" who helps; a "robber," at times, of the help/love my neighbors need; the "priest," in my capacity as an ordained pastor, or more inclusively, as a Christian representing Christ; a "Levite," in my daily anonymity as a "lay associate" of the Church; a "Samaritan," who has compassion and acts compassionately; and Jesus, the Christ, who is the compassion of God in me, that I am becoming. These are the faces that show themselves in this teaching and that I find in myself and you may see in yourself. They are the facades that we transition in and out of as we try to be true to our true self in Christ.



To become more the compassion of God, I need your help, good Samaritan, and we need each other's help. We are all wounded in various ways. And we all have the "wine" of Wisdom and the "oil" of Love to share, that can help heal those wounds. Let us share them and be with each other on this precarious road of life. A present opportunity to do so is the Zoom meetings of the Samaritan Men. We have just begun a study of Richard Rohr's book, From Wild Man to Wise Man, Reflections on Male Spirituality. We will continue to meet regularly on the 2nd and 4th

Tuesdays of the month. Whether you have the book or not, have read the chapters or not, you can benefit from the discussion and the rest of us from your thoughts on the subjects. Email me at [hzfam@hotmail.com](mailto:hzfam@hotmail.com) for the link to the Zoom meeting and watch for notice in your inbox.

Rev. John Hardman-Zimmerman  
ICCC Samaritan President

## Meet Our Leadership, One by One



**LINDA P. HOPKINS**  
ICCC Board  
of Trustees

I currently serve as the ICCC Central Zone, Region B Trustee. This has been a great learning experience with the help of those in this region and other trustees. I served on the Conference Program Committee for the past two years in Columbus, Ohio. Before becoming a Regional Trustee, I served as the President of the Ohio Chapter.

I am one of two remaining charter members at Second Community Church, Columbus, Ohio. Our pastor is Rev. Brian Holland. We just celebrated 61 years of serving the Lord and the west-side community. I have been an usher for all of the 61 years! I serve on the Board of Education at church and assist with the church sound system on Sunday mornings.

Although I have been retired from my "everyday job" for 20 years, my two adult children insist on keeping me busy!

I enjoy meeting conference attendees and hope to see you at the 2023 Conference in Charlotte, North Carolina.

Blessings for the New Year!

*Linda P.  
Hopkins*

### Sharing Concerns with

- **John and Susan Hardman-Zimmerman, ICCC Samaritan President** (John) and family. John's Mom, **Lola "Lou" Zimmerman** passed away November 26, 2022 in Hospice Care.
- The family of **Janny Brizius, Gahanna Community Church**. Janny passed away on December 6, 2022, in Hospice Care with family by her side. Both Janny and her late husband, David, were the founding directors of CAMP, a youth camping program for Gahanna Community Church, OH, that still runs today. " 'It only takes a spark to get a fire going.' Janny and Boonie (David) were indeed that special spark. They showed God's love and passed it on." ~ Mike Mahan, Gahanna Community Church.
- **Rev. Dr. Wendy Childress, ICCC VP for Regional Relationships**, who recently lost 2 family members. Her Aunt, **Mrs. Cordelia Huffman** passed away on 12/10/2022, and her Niece, **Sharon Moon**, who passed away December 23, 2022.
- **Saundra Nelson, ICCC Regional Trustee**. Her brother-in-law is battling cancer. Saundra also has COVID.
- **Louis Joy**, who continues to recover from eye surgery, one eye at a time, and prepares to move.
- **Rev. Bob & Mrs. Sue Fread, ICCC VP for Outreach and Informational Services (Bob)**. Bob's dad, **Robert Roy Fread**, passed away January 8, 2023. Sue's Dad, **Joe Alexander**, passed on January 11, 2023.
- **Rev. Julia Powe**, as she is experiencing a great deal of pain as she continues rehab.
- **Carolyn Nichols, People's Community Church** Detroit, suffered a fall during the holidays and is recovering from multiple fractures in her legs and toes.
- **Mrs. Cindy Friedberg** and family on the passing of her husband **Tom Friedberg** on January 12th from COVID. Tom served with distinction as the ICCC's Endowment Fund Trustees Chair from 2018-2023 and was a member of the Council's Hunger Relief Mission Committee. Tom was a member of People's Community Church in Berea, OH. He was extremely capable and worked faithfully and diligently for the betterment of the Council. Sympathy cards can be mailed to Cindy at 7 Lincolndale Ct., Medford NH 08055-3828. Gifts in Tom's memory can be made to the ICCC Endowment Fund, c/o DeAnn Bath, PO Box 846, Longmont, CO 80502
- **Rev. Stephen York, ICCC Personnel Committee**, is in the hospital and asks for prayers. "Asking for prayers for my health and that I would fervently and without weakening be so close to God that I can hear and see the path that God wants me on." ~ Stephen. Stephen is in physical therapy rehab, where he intends to get stronger.
- **Rev. Carl Davis, Sr., AL**, who is having a heart procedure done early February.



### **A special note from Pastor RC Fleeman, Peace Community Church dated 12/6/2022:**

"Dear ICCC Members,

Before too much time passes, and it seems to be passing quickly, I must tell you how grateful I am to the ICCC Family for reaching out to our church family following Hurricane Ian. We are grateful for your prayers and support.

Besides your prayers on our behalf, the recent financial gift we received through the ICCC is tremendous. I believe that it will enable us to replace every item we lost in Hurricane Ian's storm surge, including office furniture."

Because the devastation was so widespread, clean-up and recovery took a while. Their goal was to be back in their church home by Christmas 2022.


**PEOPLE'S COMMUNITY CHURCH**

*People's Community Church 30th Year Anniversary Celebration*

Date: Saturday, March 18, 2023, 6 p.m. - 10 p.m.

Theme: "Pressing on towards the goal" (Philippians 3:12-14)

Keynote Speaker: Reverend Dr. William H. Myers, Pastor, New Mount Zion Baptist Church

Event Address: The Aviator Event Center, 20900 Brookpark Road, Cleveland, Ohio 44135

Tickets: \$45 for adults (ages 13 and up), \$20 for children (ages 6-12)

Registration by Wednesday, February 15, 2023, is preferred. The deadline for registration and payment is Sunday, March 5, 2023.

• Contact People's Community Church for more information and tickets at 440-234-0609 or [peo.admin\\_assist@shcglobal.net](mailto:peo.admin_assist@shcglobal.net).



## 2022 ICCC Local Church Mission Grants

For the second year the ICCC offered Local Church Mission Grants to our member churches which are engaged in important ministries of service to their communities. In 2022, we offered three mission grants:

### 1st Recipient Second Community Church Columbus, OH



Our first recipient was Second Community Church in Columbus, Ohio, for their meal and pantry program. The pandemic resulted in the closure of various community resources addressing food insecurity and needs of the homeless. As a result Second Community through their Board of Christian Education began in June, 2022, to partner with Hoge Memorial Presbyterian Church to address these needs in their community. Second Community provides essential items for a weekly hot meal and non-food items such as hygienic products, blankets, and over-the-counter medications for a pantry serving the homeless and families in need.

### 2nd Recipient People's Community Church Detroit, MI



Our second mission grant recipient was People's Community Church in Detroit, Michigan, and their Monday Feeding Program. For more than eleven years this program has been providing a hot, nutritious lunch every Monday for 60 to 80 families. The program closed during the pandemic, but re-opened with a bag lunch in October, 2021. In October, 2022, hot meals were resumed.

Our third and final recipient was Church of the Loving Shepherd in West Chester, Pennsylvania and their Food Ministry. The church has offered this ministry for over 20 years and they annually serve up to 47 West Chester area families. Their ministry fills a void as they are the only food pantry in the county that delivers food in support of those with transportation and mobility issues. This ministry is supported by over 30 volunteers who contribute over 70 volunteer hours each month.

We congratulate these three churches on their 2022 grants. All ICCC churches are eligible to apply for Local Church Mission grants. The grant program for 2023 will be announced in early summer prior to the 2023 Annual Conference in Charlotte.

## ICCC Lenten Devotional for 2023

As your church plans for Lent or your pre-Easter period this year, the ICCC is again offering a Lenten daily devotional book.

The 2023 booklet is titled *"Our Journey"* and focuses on the spiritual journey that is the Christian life.

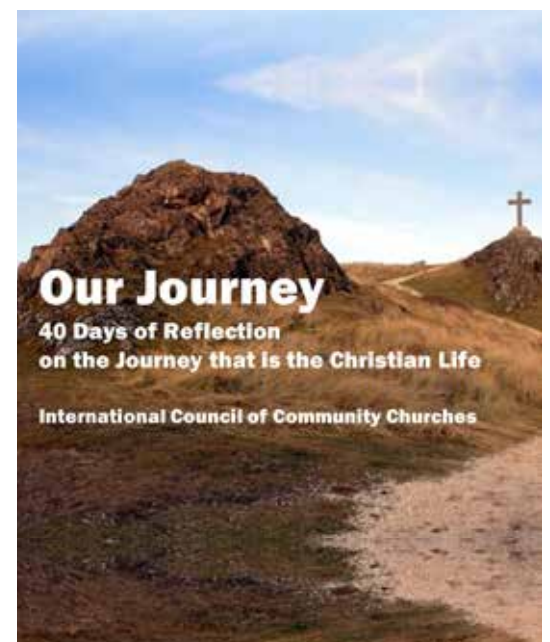
Similar to last year the devotions follow Scriptures in the Revised Common Lectionary but is usable by churches which do not use the lectionary.

The booklet also includes a daily prayer list of ICCC churches and information on ICCC missions. The booklet will again be released electronically so that churches have the option to send devotions by email or post to websites or print paper copies for their members.

*"Our Journey"* is scheduled to be released on Friday, February 3 in time for the start of Lent on February 22.

We hope you church will consider using this ICCC resource this year.

[www.icccnow.org/council-other-agency-resources](http://www.icccnow.org/council-other-agency-resources)



## Nomination Recommendations are needed

The Nomination Committee is seeking to fill the following positions. Please consider nominations for the following:

### Board of Directors - Class of 2026:

VP for Financial Development

\*VP for Membership Services

\*VP for Ecumenical and Interfaith Relations

\*VP for Informational Services and Outreach

### Board of Trustees - Class of 2026

Eastern Zone, Region A states include:  
MA, CT, NJ, NY City and Long Island, NY

Eastern Zone, Region B states include:  
VA, DE, Washington DC, MD

\*Central Zone, Region A states include:  
IL, IA, IN, WI, MN, MO, OK

Central Zone, Region C states include:  
TN, KY, LA, AR, AL

For a description of each title, please visit  
<https://www.icccnow.org/constitution-bylaws/>

### Your nominations may be submitted to

Carolyn Nichols: [cs83nick@aol.com](mailto:cs83nick@aol.com)  
and Phil Tom: [icccpt@sbcglobal.net](mailto:icccpt@sbcglobal.net)






We welcome your nominations.

\* The current leadership for this position is eligible for re-election.



## Conference Youth Scholarship

If you know a teen who would like to attend the conference in Charlotte, but needs some financial assistance, we have a plan. We have scholarship assistance available to pay for the registration fee of a Youth attendee. To apply for the scholarship, the following procedure will be used:

- 1 The scholarship is open to any **Youth attendee** (entering grade 7 through 12) and covers the regular registration fee and Fellowship Luncheon. 
- 2 Pastors from any member church may submit their **confidential nomination** for the award with a letter of recommendation introducing the candidate and explaining why they would like this person to receive the scholarship. 
- 3 The submissions will be reviewed and presented to the ICCC Board of Directors for **approval**. 
- 4 Nominations must be submitted for review no later than **April 30**, 2023. They should be sent to the Council Office at PO Box 846, Longmont, CO 80502, attn: Youth Scholarship. Or email to [ICCCNOW@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ICCCNOW@sbcglobal.net). 
- 5 The ICCC President will communicate the board's decision to the recommending pastor to notify the recipient. The decision will also be announced in the June issue of the Christian Community. The **winning recipient** would be notified soon after the April 30th deadline. 

**APPLY TODAY!**

## 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.

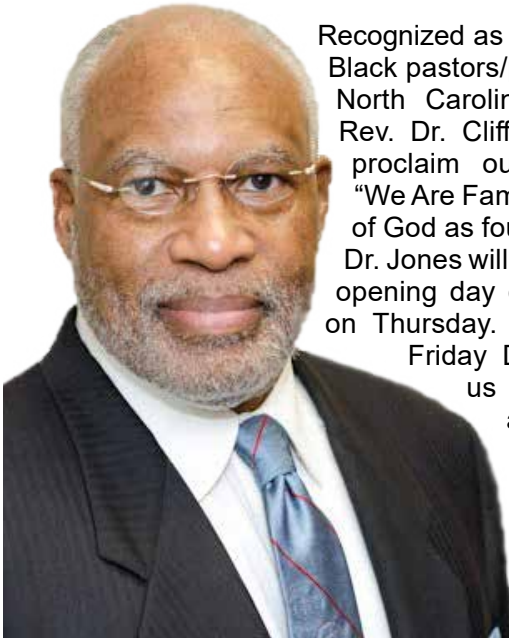
General conference sponsorship ...\$1000	Fellowship luncheon.....\$1500
Bible Study & Keynote Speaker – multiple plenary sessions .....\$2500	Clergy continuing education event.....\$3000
Prayer Room .....\$1500	All-Conference Banquet .....\$2000
Full Day Sponsorship .....\$5000	

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 or visit our website: <https://www.icccnow.org/sponsorship/>



# *We are family*

*The Word Proclaimed by Rev. Dr. Clifford A. Jones*



Recognized as one of the outstanding Black pastors/preachers in Charlotte, North Carolina and America, The Rev. Dr. Clifford A. Jones, Sr. will proclaim our conference theme, "We Are Family," rooted in the Word of God as found in I Corinthians 12. Dr. Jones will deliver sermons on the opening day of the conference and on Thursday. On Wednesday and Friday Dr. Jones will be with us for a one hour "Q, A and Comment" session. The "Q, A and Comment" time will allow conferees to enter into extended discussion and interchange with Dr. Jones.

Dr. Jones has been the Senior Pastor of Friendship Missionary Baptist Church in Charlotte for 40 years. Born in Philadelphia and reared in New Jersey, Dr. Jones received his Bachelor of Science degree from Maryland State College; the Master of Divinity and Master of Theology degrees from Southeastern Baptist Theological Seminary; and the Doctor of Ministry degree from the Boston School of Theology. As part of his outstanding ministry, he has done further study at Regents Park College in Oxford, England and the Baptist Theological Seminary in Ruschlikon, Switzerland.

In addition to his outstanding ability to explain and deliver God's Word, Dr. Jones has a great and compelling compassion for the needs of others, locally and globally. Dr. Jones led a delegation to form a solid and working partnership with the Winterveldt School in Mabopane, South Africa. The partnership led to the purchase and building of a fully equipped Christian education center for grades K – 12. In addition, a farm was purchased, three greenhouses were built to provide vegetables for sale, and a brick making machine was acquired so that homes and business buildings could be built while also providing a means for economic interdependence.

In response to children and families struggling with severe poverty, Dr. Jones has organized and led numerous medical and religious mission teams to provide needed health-care, medical supplies and educational training in Jamaica, Africa and Guyana, South America.

In addition to his many global interests and concerns, Dr. Jones is a dedicated supporter of senior citizen programs. His leadership led Friendship Church to open the first satellite center for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Senior Centers, offering exercise and other classes for seniors living in the area where the church is located. He serves on the Board of Directors for the Charlotte-Mecklenburg Housing Partnership, Inc.

Dr. Jones holds or has held many leadership positions including being a trustee for Morris College and Hood Theological Seminary, Vice President of the Baptist World Alliance and President of the General Baptist State Convention of North Carolina, Inc.

The Friendship Missionary Baptist Church has been blessed by God and the exercise of Dr. Jones' gifts and talents with a 115 acre campus. In addition to the church and its facilities, this land is being developed to provide intergenerational daycare, assisted living for seniors, an Alzheimer's center, a hospice house, single family dwellings, offices, a park shelter and amphitheater.

Among the many, many awards and recognitions he has received are "Senior Father of the Year", "Black Fathers Rock," "The Nelson Mandela Award" from the National Baptist Convention in the USA, keynote for the 2007 National Political Black Caucus Prayer Breakfast, the Duke Divinity School – Gardner C. Taylor Lecturer, and the "Beautiful Are the Feet Award," at the Samuel DeWitt Proctor Conference.

Published works include "The Star book of Stewardship," "Becoming and Practicing What It Means to Be a Christian," "Consuming Passion: Christianity and the Consumer Culture," and "From Proclamation to Practice: A Unique African American Approach to Stewardship."

Dr. Jones is married to the former Carolyn Brenda Reynolds. They are the proud parents of Mrs. E. Renee Darity, Rev. Michelle A. Jones, Pastor Anthony Jones, Jr. (Courtney) and Miss Alexa Mariah Fortune Jones. Dr. and Mrs. Jones have one adored granddaughter, Miss Michelle A. Jones (Jr.).

Our conference, in general, and you, specifically, will be richly blessed as we listen to and absorb the proclamation and insights that Dr. Jones will bring to us.

# CHOOSING THE RIGHT “*TRACK*” FOR A GREAT CONFERENCE EXPERIENCE

*Reported by Dr. Bruce Merton*

Last year my wife, Jill, and I were joined by four other members of our church family on a trip to Switzerland. It was an excellent experience and thoroughly enjoyed by all that went. During the trip I was reminded of the fact that while all of us had a great time in the same place, during the same time frame, and sharing some of the same experiences, the trip was really unique for each of us!

This was driven home by our trip from Zermatt to St. Moritz. We gathered at the Zermatt train station where we observed four different trains. We were boarding the Glacier Express for an 8 hour trip to St. Moritz. I was surprised to learn that the other three trains were also going to St. Moritz, but they were taking different tracks to get to the same destination.

The uniqueness of our trip for each person was in the fact that we were each afforded many opportunities to do things and have experiences that were geared to our own interests, inclinations and tastes. We all went to the common destination of Switzerland, but we each traveled a different “TRACK” and that contributed to our individual and shared joy.

This is being written to introduce all conference attendees to the fact that our conference structure is receiving significant change this year and for the future. Like the Switzerland adventure previously mentioned, we will all share a common conference experience. The conference will be held for all at the Embassy Suites Hotel on Tryon Street in Charlotte, North Carolina. We will all experience conference during a common time frame – Tuesday, July 18 to Friday, July 21. We will all share in the worship services of Tuesday and Thursday. We will all experience the Bible Studies, but each person present will get to put their own unique stamp on the conference experience by following an interest oriented TRACK that will allow you to mold and shape your conference experience based on your interests, inclinations and tastes. Conferees will be able to choose a TRACK that will enable them to focus on FELLOWSHIP, WORSHIP, MIS- SION or EDUCATION.



Each conferee will be asked to choose a TRACK focused on your primary interest to be followed during the conference. PLEASE NOTE: You are welcome to attend offerings in other tracks based on appeal, interest or need.

If you particularly enjoy the FELLOWSHIP experience of conference, you will choose that TRACK and, in addition to the commonly shared worship, Bible study and meals, you will partake in fellowship building activities and workshops.

If you come to conference with a particular interest in EDUCATION, you will choose the EDUCATION TRACK and find yourself immersed in activities like a book study and discussion, conversation with the Bible study leader, and workshops that educate you on a variety of topics.

Do you come to conference with mission on your mind and heart? You will enjoy and enhance your conference experience by following the MIS- SION TRACK. This TRACK will allow you to experience “hands on” mission opportunities along with workshops and presentations from and about our ICCC mission partner.

Is the experience of worship a driving force for your conference attendance? Follow the WORSHIP TRACK for experiences such as “Keynote Conversations” with our worship preacher, Dr. Clifford Jones; worship through music and workshops about improving, planning and doing worship in your church setting.

The new structure is a product of a mandate from the Board of Directors to “Reform, Reframe and Re-Vision” the conference experience. The structure is evolving and, as with everything new and different, there will be “growing pains,” imperfections, needs for “tweaking” and ongoing revisions. Please be patient as the new structure takes its shape and form. Your constructive criticisms and suggestions will be welcomed, considered, and, if appropriate, implemented.

**Let’s gather together in Charlotte for a great conference that will show “We Are Family” even though we experience family from our own unique perspective and spirit. Register now and choose the TRACK that is best for you!**

# The SAME Yet Different CHURCHES



There is an age-old arguable saying by Jean-Baptiste Alphonse Karr that the more things change, the more they appear to be the same. The implication is that although things may appear to be new on the surface, the fundamental nature or core does not change. So, let's look at the purpose of ICCC Annual Conference: To provide a well-planned gathering of the ICCC family in a congenial relationship wherein church delegations, members and friends of ICCC congregations at large, and presenters deliver some of the most effective educational and inspirational sermons, Bible Studies, meaningful workshops and variety of music, and genuine fellowship that motivate conferees to take what they receive and go back to their individual congregations and renew themselves in a variety of ways. The 2023 Annual Conference proposes to do just that, but in a different format: use of the track system where in conferees can choose their own focus: Worship, Education, Fellowship, and Mission. But equally important, the 2023 Planning Committee, in consultation with SOAR, has made an intentional effort to make the content just as existing.

With the Conference held TUESDAY through FRIDAY, conferees will hear two dynamic sermons by nationally-known Dr. Clifford Jones, senior pastor, Friendship Baptist Church, Charlotte, NC, and two one-hour follow-up sessions; members of one of his widely-know musical groups

also will appear. The Bible Study presenter, a renowned scholar soon to be announced, will follow a similar format. The dynamic music department of Imagine Church of the Carolinas, under the leadership of Rev. Bruce Jones, will render music Tuesday evening, together with a special guest. The comparable Roberta Smith, the Conference Music Director, will also direct the Conference Choir.

There are four special mission projects (some onsite and some within the Charlotte proper) and mission education by special presenters. Fellowship, which partly overlaps with Education, will include movies and discussions, trips to the Billy Graham Library,



one or two relevant book studies, a luncheon and a prayer breakfast, the Banquet, and the Supper Club. And yes, there are times designated for the Ministerium, the Women's Christian Fellowship (WCF), and the Samaritans to meet. There also are a Youth and a Children's program. Committees and Zones (and areas within zones) will have times to meet if necessary.

On hand to greet us will be the Mayor of Charlotte (or designee), and judicatory representatives from at least two of the major Christian denominations. The host church is Imagine Church of the Carolinas. The Community Church of Lake Wylie also will be present.

The hotel is conveniently located one block off Interstate 77. The airport is 12-15 minutes away. There is a free hotel shuttle; however, you must remember to call the special number at the hotel for pickup. There also is an Enterprise Rent-a-Car one block from the hotel.

Several eating places are within a mile; and the hotel shuttle service is available for use within a 3 mile radius. Breakfast (more than you can eat or drink) and a complementary evening social hour are included in the hotel cost.

So, we need you to begin now, if you have not already done so, to plan to attend this historic conference. If you are faithful to the heart of ICCC: reconciliation of the body of Christ, then say within yourself, as we graciously say to you, that for the ICCC family, all forms of transportation July 18-21, 2023 lead to Charlotte, North Carolina.

*Abraham Wright*

Abraham Wright, ICCC President



# 73rd Annual Conference

## July 18-21, 2023 – Charlotte, NC

### Hotel Information

The 2023 Annual Conference will be held at the Embassy Suites Hotel, 4800 S. Tryon St., Charlotte, NC 28217. Phone: 704-527-8400. When you stay at this Embassy Suites Hotel, you will be near the airport, within a 5-minute drive of the Billy Graham Library and Renaissance Park.

Make yourself at home in a guestroom featuring refrigerators and LCD televisions. Your bed comes with down comforters and all rooms are furnished with a double bed sofa. Satellite programming and MP3 docking stations are provided for your entertainment, with wired and wireless internet access available for a surcharge. Private bathrooms with showers feature complimentary toiletries and hair dryers. Take advantage of recreation opportunities including an indoor pool and a fitness center. There is also a 24-hour business center and express check-out. Guests can catch a ride on the complimentary shuttle, which operates within a 3mi. radius. Roundtrip airport shuttle is complimentary and available 24 hours. Wake up each morning to a complimentary on-the-go or made-to-order breakfast and unwind at the hotel's evening reception with drinks and snacks.



### Hotel Dining

**E'terie Bar & Grill:** E'Terie is the casual, lounge-centric hub of Embassy Suites. Located in the open-air atrium, it features a lively and comfortable dining experience. At E'terie, they offer the comforting consistency of familiar selections, contemporary cuisine and regional favorites. Open Monday-Friday, 5:30pm-10:00pm

Room Service is also available, along with eating options within walking distance of the hotel or within the 3mi free shuttle radius.

### Hotel Reservations

To attend, call the Embassy Suites to reserve your room at 800-445-8667. Inform the reservations clerk that you are attending the ICCC 2023 Annual Conference (Group Code ICC) to get the special rate of \$129.00\* + tax per night.

To register online, visit <https://www.hilton.com/en/attend-my-event/iccc-2023-conference/>

**The cut-off date for hotel reservations is June 24, 2023.** After this date, normal hotel rates will be in effect and space may no longer be available. For those attendees that book a room for the conference, our room rate will be offered for the 3 days before and after our event, so you can visit Charlotte longer. **\*Please note: the special rate of \$129 + tax for a standard suite is negotiated only for conferees. Those utilizing this special rate are expected to register for the conference. An additional \$10.00 will be added to the room rate per adult above double occupancy. Thank you for your cooperation.**

Check-in: 4:00pm

Check-Out: 11:00am

Visit [www.hilton.com/en/hotels/clttyes-embassy-suites-charlotte/](http://www.hilton.com/en/hotels/clttyes-embassy-suites-charlotte/) for all hotel information.

### Transportation To and From the Hotel

Charlotte Douglas International Airport is 10 minutes away from the Embassy Suites via a free shuttle. Attendees should call the hotel directly (704-527-8400) when you have your bags from baggage claim. Pick up area is Zone 1 of the bus, shuttle, taxi lane.

Parking: Self-parking is complimentary for our group.



*International Council of Community Churches*  
**ICCC Registration Form – 2023 Annual Conference: July 18-21**  
*"We are family" - Charlotte, NC*

Name (as you would like it on badge) \_\_\_\_\_

Full Address \_\_\_\_\_

Telephone (\_\_\_\_\_) \_\_\_\_\_ E-mail Address: \_\_\_\_\_

Emergency Contact Name \_\_\_\_\_ Phone \_\_\_\_\_

Church (member of) \_\_\_\_\_

First Conference: Yes ☐ No ☐

Status: ☐ Clergy ☐ Laity



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



■ Age (on 7-1-2023) \_\_\_\_\_ Grade completed by (7-1-2023) \_\_\_\_\_

■ 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

<b>Infants</b> (not occupying chair at banquet)	\$ 0.00	\$
<b>Child* with Kid's Meal**</b> (Ages 1-5)	\$ 35.00	\$
<b>Elementary* with Kid's Meal**</b> (entering kindergarten - entering 6th grade)	\$ 60.00	\$
<b>**Add-on ONLY if Adult meal is preferred for Banquet Child/Elementary regis.</b>	\$ 30.00	\$
<b>Youth</b> (completed 6th grade - entering 12th grade)	\$ 145.00	\$
<b>Young Adult</b> (completed 12th grade - age 23)	\$ 170.00	\$
<b>Adult</b> <b>Register by June 1, 2023 - Early Bird Special \$195.00</b>	\$ 230.00	\$
<b>Daily Registrants</b> Circle Day(s) <b>T W Th F</b> (meals not included)	\$ 75.00/day	\$
<b>CC</b>	<b>TOTAL ENCLOSED</b>	<b>\$</b>

Which TRACK are you most interested to follow (circle one):

WORSHIP

FELLOWSHIP

MISSION

EDUCATION

BUSINESS

**A Banquet ticket** is included in your registration fee. This meal includes: Caesar Salad, Chicken Artichoke Piccata, Red Bliss Potatoes, Seasonal Vegetable, White Wine Lemon Sauce, Artisanal Rolls & Butter, Chef's Choice Dessert, Coffee, Hot Herbal Tea and Iced Tea. *Fish Option:* Southern Spiced Sautéed Shrimp & Grits with Tomato Glaze. *Kid's Meal Option:* Chicken Tenders, Fries, Lemonade and a Cookie. Meals are subject to change.

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

**Chicken Piccata** (Default Option)

**Fish Option**

**Kid's Meal Option**

**\*\*Child & Elementary registrations include the Kid's Meal option. If the adult meal for Child/Elementary is preferred, please add \$30.00 to your total enclosed.**

Please return this form with payment to: ICCC, PO Box 846, Longmont, CO 80502

☐ Check or Money Order made payable to ICCC ☐ VISA ☐ MASTERCARD ☐ AMEX ☐ 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 30, 2023 will be accepted at Conference only.

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

**ANNUAL CONFERENCE SESSIONS MAY BE VIDEOTAPED for advertising or Social Media.** By registering for conference, you agree the ICCC may use your 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.

## 2023 Conference Meal Programs

The **2023 Annual Conference** offers 3 optional meal program opportunities: the **Fellowship Luncheon**, the **Mission 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 an additional cost). 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.

**Tuesday, July 18, 2023 at 12:00pm** is the **Fellowship Luncheon**. This meal includes Baby Green Salad, Roasted Vegetable Ravioli, Herb Shallot Burr Blanc, Artisanal Rolls, Creamy Butter, Chef's Choice Dessert, Coffee and Iced Tea.

**Kid's Meal Option:** Chicken Tenders, Fries, Lemonade and a Cookie.

**Wednesday, July 19, 2023 at 12:00pm** is the **Mission Luncheon**. This meal includes Baby Green Salad, Bourbon Brown Sugar Meatloaf, Roasted Red Bliss Potatoes, Seasonal Vegetables, Artisanal Rolls, Creamy Butter, Chef's Choice Dessert, Coffee and Iced Tea. **Vegetarian Option:** Roasted Vegetable Wrap and Carolina Cole Slaw.

**Thursday, July 20, 2023 at 12:00pm** is the **Prayer Luncheon**. This meal includes Baby Green Salad, Baked Macaroni & Cheese with Chicken, Seasonal Vegetables, Artisanal Rolls, Creamy Butter, Chef's Choice Dessert, Coffee and Iced Tea.

**Vegetarian Option:** Broccoli Alfredo

**Friday, July 21, 2023 at 6:00 p.m.** is the **Conference Banquet\***. This meal includes: Caesar Salad, Chicken Artichoke Piccata, Red Bliss Potatoes, Seasonal Vegetable, White Wine Lemon Sauce, Artisanal Rolls & Butter, Chef's Choice Dessert, Coffee, Hot Herbal Tea and Iced Tea.

**Fish Option:** Southern Spiced Sautéed Shrimp & Grits with Tomato Glaze.

**Kid's Meal Option:** Chicken Tenders, Fries, Lemonade and a Cookie.

All meals are subject to change.

### 2023 MEAL RESERVATION FORM

Mail this form & payment to: ICCC, PO Box 846, Longmont, CO 80502

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ places at \$28.00 each for **Tuesdays Fellowship Luncheon**

☐ Check for Kid's Meal Option \$15.00

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ places at \$32.00 each for **Wednesday's Mission Luncheon**

☐ Check for Vegetarian Option

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ places at \$32.00 each for **Thursday's Prayer Luncheon**

☐ Check for Vegetarian Option

\*Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ add'l places at \$54.00 each for **Friday's Banquet Dinner**

☐ Chicken

☐ Fish

\*Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ add'l places at \$27.00 each for children under 12yrs.

☐ Kid's Meal

**\*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 30th.** There will only be a VERY LIMITED supply of tickets available at Conference registration, so please purchase your tickets before the deadline. After June 30, 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. Kids 12 yrs & under will automatically receive the kid's meal at the Conference Banquet, unless an Adult Meal upgrade is purchased.**





## *Full-Time Minister*

**Pembroke Township, IL- Minister/Pastor- St. Anne Woods Chapel Community Church-Non-Denominational. St. Anne Woods Chapel Community Church is prayerfully seeking a full time Minister who is called by God, ordained, and dedicated to the ministry of Jesus Christ.**

### **Status and qualifications will include:**

- Must hold a degree from an accredited seminar or Bible college.
- Must be an ordained and/or licensed minister.
- Must have a minimum of 3-6 years of experience as a minister or minister assistance.
- Must have great leadership skills, ability to reach out to the youth, and open to growing the ministry.

### **Duties:**

- Coordinating with the church secretary to prepare a weekly bulletin.
- Conducting weekly adult bible study.
- Preaching the weekly sermon on Sunday mornings.
- Teaching weekly Sunday School class
- Administering the Sacraments of communion and baptism.
- Officiating at all weddings, funerals, and other ceremonial occasions as needed.
- Participating in community events.
- Works with the deacons and board regarding the future of the church.

**If interested in the position, please submit the following information listed below to [stannewoodschapelc@gmail.com](mailto:stannewoodschapelc@gmail.com). Please submit documents in a PDF format only.**

- Cover letter that includes salary expectations, a little information about yourself, and why you believe that God is calling you to apply for this position.
- Resume
- Copy of Ministerial License and/or Certificate of Ordination.
- Degree from seminar or bible college
- Three references which would include one personal reference and two professional (minister/pastor) letters of preference.

## *Associate Pastor*

Community Church at Tellico Village is seeking an ASSOCIATE PASTOR to join our pastoral team.

CCTV, is a 1000 member interdenominational church located SW of Knoxville, TN in a beautiful planned community on Tellico Lake.

The ideal candidate possesses a deep personal faith in Jesus Christ and demonstrates a true desire to shape their ministry by the Great Commandment. S/he values Christian unity and ecumenical cooperation. S/he is a mature "people-person" with generalist skills and a passion for developing fellowship and spiritual growth ministries.

Ministers of all denominations may apply (M. Div. required).

If interested, visit us at  
[www.tellicochurch.com](http://www.tellicochurch.com)  
and email your resume to  
[search@tellicochurch.org](mailto:search@tellicochurch.org)

Otherwise mail to  
CCTV Search Team  
130 Chota Center  
Loudon, TN 37774

## *Full-Time Minister*

According to a recent survey, a rare combination of high energy, high satisfaction, flexibility, and strong support for mission set our small church apart from most others. New Covenant Community Church, in Akron, Ohio, a long-time ICCC member, is seeking a full-time minister to replace its present minister who is retiring in February, 2023. For more information, please contact Susie Stevenor, PNC Clerk, at [pncnccc@gmail.com](mailto:pncnccc@gmail.com).

## *Senior Minister*

Join us in turning the tide from surviving to thriving in 2021 and beyond. The historic Community Church of East Williston is a Mainline, Interdenominational Protestant Church serving the needs of persons from all backgrounds. We have a faithful, hardworking congregational core and seek a Senior Minister who, through Christian love and action, will help us turn those with occasional attendance into persons with faithful commitment.

The position requires an experienced, ordained Protestant minister with youthful enthusiasm to reestablish CCEW as the "Light in the Community." We offer a competitive salary and a beautiful manse in a verdant suburb with a highly ranked school district (top 10% in NY), only 25 minutes from Manhattan via railroad.

The Pastoral Search Committee is accepting packages containing (but not limited to) your resume, your calling (share your call to ministry), style of ministry (share your beliefs) and samples of your sermons on a website, blog or Facebook.

To view their ideal candidate thoughts, visit the ICCC website for the full ad.

<https://www.iccnw.org/careers/>

Please email your response to:  
[maryellen@ccew.org](mailto:maryellen@ccew.org),

or mail a hard copy to:  
**Community Church of East Williston**  
Pastoral Search Committee  
Mary Ellen Williams, Chairperson  
45 East Williston Avenue  
East Williston, NY 11596