

# THE CHRISTIAN COMMUNITY

JUNE 2024



International Council of Community Churches

Volume 74

A Voice for Ecumenical Congregations and Christians Around the World

Number 8

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## No mo' FOMO:

Jerry Brown, VP for Conference Planning

Are you familiar with the acronym FOMO – “Fear of missing out”? Don’t suffer from the fear of missing out of this year’s conference. It’s not too late, you can still register and attend. Too many times we look back on life’s decisions and regret not having participated in, or taken advantage of a great opportunity. We regret missing what might have been a wonderful or possibly life-changing experience.

I am so excited about this conference, and I am so looking forward to all the prospects for Christian growth and personal enhancement. When I look at the list of presenters and speakers, I am truly overwhelmed at what we are offering this year. I cannot wait to be inspired and challenged by it all.

Dr Leah Schade was so well received at our conference a few years ago, we are grateful and honored to have her join us again. Her accolades as a preacher and educator reflect not only her academic talent, but also her Christian calling. I cannot wait to be inspired and challenged by her.

Beth Armstrong will be leading a few sessions on prayer. Having worked with her as our Interim Pastor here at Antioch Church this last year, she has been one of the best Biblical instructors I have met. I am so fortunate to be able to sit in on her Bible Study classes each week. In her book on prayer, she writes, “Prayer is the privilege we have to draw near to the heart of God – both speaking to and hearing from our Gracious Heavenly Father.” I cannot wait to be inspired and challenged by her.

Wendy Childress will be talking with us about suicide, following a webinar she presented a few months ago. Given that this is one of the leading causes of death for young people

and veterans, we need to address this tragic issue. What a great mission if only we could be God’s hands and voice bringing hope to the hopeless. I cannot wait to be inspired and challenged by her.

Father Joe will address some of the issues facing the LGBTQ community, and how we as Christians can, and should, respond. He will address the “spiritual poverty” of our time, and how we can live out the ideal that ALL people should be welcomed with honesty, love, and compassion. I cannot wait to be inspired and challenged by him.

Myrtis Brame and her committee for the Missions Event have put together a wonderful event for foster children in which everyone can participate. We can help provide compassion and practical help for kids when they desperately need it most. I cannot wait to be inspired and challenged by this opportunity.

And there are so many other opportunities for learning, growing, and fellowship. Plan on coming to KC well-rested; you don’t want to miss a minute of it. I’m looking forward to an amazing week of learning and growth. I cannot wait to be inspired and challenged by it all.



## International Council of Community Churches

### 74<sup>th</sup> Annual Conference

July 16 – 19, 2024

Kansas City, Missouri



### Priorities for Christian Living

Romans 12:9-14





## President's Message

**Abraham Wright**

### *Crunch Time!*

Crunch is a term often used in sports, but sometimes it abruptly intrudes into Christian discourse as well. For example, it is now crunch time for the International Council of Community Churches. Both the Executive Director and the Office Administrator will leave their post. The President moves to the Immediate Past President, and several of the Vice Presidents change guard, including the Secretary of both the Board of Directors and the Board of Trustees. A crucial vote is to determine whether the Council will maintain the minimum annual contribution requirement or change it to a voluntary annual contribution, while financial support is crucial to meet annual expenses, including the Annual Conference. Metaphorically, the multi-talented Rev. Phil Tom has already been missed. DeAnn Bath, who has been a staple for the Council for over two decades, has been recognized as almost irreplaceable. Crunch time for the Rev. Dr. Bruce Merton, a former Council President who will serve one year as the Interim Executive Director, focusing heavily on nurturing ICCC churches and regions through visitations, giving us some reprieve based on his ICCC experiences; however, the unavoidable challenges are developing a sustainable financial plan to enable the Council to thrive and imminently meet this year's conference required room and beverage costs, and reaching an agreement on a faithful annual contribution for the member churches.

The new proposed annual contribution does not designate a specific amount but does give suggested categories of giving. If a church does not make a contribution to the Council within a given year, that church will be inactive for three years. We pray that those who give now will give at the same level of giving,

and that those who have not given previously would now give as the church is blessed. If churches adopt this attitude, the Council will be blessed, and the first crunch will be defeated. Remember that giving is a commitment. Even Paul, who did not put major emphasis on money, agreed that finances are an essential part of ministry; and that those who do not contribute (work) do not enjoy the fellowship (eat: Thes 3:10). Paralleled with the spiritual gifts, the finances are part of the backbone of the Council, as it is with other institutions that require a budget; it is a necessary entity; otherwise the Council would be substandard, indicating that we are below not what we want, but negligent in what is required.

To further address the "spirit" of this crunch, the Board of Directors proposes that the Council develop a culture of stewardship. Yet, stewardship and discipleship go hand in hand. In fact, some churches regard discipleship as stewardship (loving, keeping, guarding and nourishing). So, stewardship begins at the home-base/church and is further nourished and enriched within the Council. It is a subcategory of discipleship. If we genuinely accept the call to discipleship, we simultaneously realize that finances are not optional, but a must. When we make our commitment to Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior stewardship is or shortly becomes a part of our commitment. When we join the Council, we thus *enrich* our spiritual-financial gifts. Again, stewardship begins at home and spreads elsewhere: to the spiritual denomination/communion to which the church belongs. So the Board of Directors proposes that a culture of stewardship be introduced to the Council with some specifics on how it should be done.

So, to crunch this issue that practically plagues us—because we are mature enough to have grown in grace—we should humble ourselves as Jesus did, especially as he made the decision to face the cross for us. We ought to seriously ask ourselves, "Do we not give because we do not have, or do we refuse to give because we consciously do not want to give?"

To reiterate, we ought to give and work to help crunch these issues; for God will show us how to do it *if* we openly allow him to do so; the "we" includes all of us.

During the revisiting trip of the Holy Spirit, I pray that we might become more serious about the reenactment of His coming to reinvigorate us, to encourage us to love and to honor goodness, to work in love, and to give; to honor precocious things of the past, but realize that there is One God and One Church; and it is that One God and that One Church that we ought to serve by offering the best we have to support the Church's growth, and do nothing consciously that will tear it down. Let us shake the "dust" from under our feet and offer to God as often as possible our time, our gifts, and our finances.

Peace be with you until we meet in Kansas City, Missouri, either personally or by other means of supporting the Church of God, including the International Council of Community Churches.

*Abraham*

## ICCC JUNE 2024

2023-2024 Theme: Call to Fellowship (1 John 1:3 ESV)



## Book REVIEW

By Rev. Kenneth N. Nelson



In May, the Evangelical Christian Publishers Association (ECPA) announced the **15 winners** of the 2024 Christian Book Award program, including the Christian Book of the Year. Presented annually since 1978, the Christian Book Award program honors the “best of the year” in Christian literature.

ECPA stated that the Christian Book Award winners, named in 12 diverse categories from 65 finalists, truly reflect the breadth and depth of Christian literature. Notably, two books by LYSA TERKEURST won in two categories, and GRANGER SMITH's debut autobiography Triumphed in both the Biography & Memoir and New Author categories, showcasing the variety of voices and perspectives in our community.

“It’s always a joy to come together as a creative community to celebrate excellence in Christian publishing,” stated Jeff Crosby, ECPA president. “In their own distinctive ways, these books have made significant contributions in advancing Christian faith, practice, and understanding in a variety of genres. We extend our congratulations to each of the winning authors and publishers.”

The 2024 Christian Book Award winners:

**CHRISTIAN BOOK OF THE YEAR®:** *All My Knotted-Up Life: A Memoir*, Beth Moore, Tyndale Momentum, 9781496472670

**AUDIO:** *Good Boundaries and Goodbyes*, written and narrated by Lysa TerKeurst, produced by Gabe Wicks, HCCP Audio, book published by Thomas Nelson, B09XJ7LBMW

**BIBLES:** *NLT Student Life Application Study Bible*, Tyndale House Publishers, 9781496449597

**BIBLE REFERENCE WORKS:** *Revelation (Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament)*, Thomas R. Schreiner, Baker Academic/ Baker Publishing Group, 9781540960504

**BIBLE STUDY:** *Luke (A Beautiful Word Bible Study)*, Lisa Harper, Harper Christian Resources, 9780310141341

**BIOGRAPHY & MEMOIR:** *Like a River: Finding the Faith and Strength to Move Forward after Loss and Heartache*, Granger Smith, W Publishing, an imprint of Thomas Nelson, 9781400334360

**CHILDREN:** *When Worry Whispers*, Joyce Meyer; illustrated by Marcin Piwowski, Worthy Kids, a division of Hachette Book Group, Inc., 9781546012542

**CHRISTIAN LIVING – TIE:** *God Never Gives Up On You*, Max Lucado, Thomas Nelson, 9781400239535

*You Are a Theologian: An Invitation to Know and Love God Well*, Jen Wilkin and J.T. English, B&H Publishing Group, 9781087746425

**DEVOTION & GIFT:** *You're Going to Make It*, Lysa TerKeurst, Thomas Nelson, 9781400239085

**FAITH & CULTURE – TIE:** *Digital Liturgies: Rediscovering Christian Wisdom in an Online Age*, Samuel D. James, Crossway, 9781433587139

*Loving Disagreement: Fighting for Community Through the Fruit of the Spirit*, Kathy Khang and Matt Mikalatos, NavPress, 9781641586153

**MINISTRY RESOURCES:** *Knowing God's Truth*, Jon Nielson, Crossway, 9781433582882

**NEW AUTHOR:** *Like a River: Finding the Faith and Strength to Move Forward after Loss and Heartache*, Granger Smith, W Publishing, an imprint of Thomas Nelson, 9781400334360

**YOUNG PEOPLE'S LITERATURE:** *The Songs of a Warrior*, Katy Morgan, The Good Book Company, 9781784988173



**SHARE YOUR COMMENTS.** Please share your thoughts at [ICCCNOW@sbcglobal.net](mailto:ICCCNOW@sbcglobal.net) by the end of the month. Also, let us know if we can quote or paraphrase your comments. Thank you for your feedback and have a blessed month.



## *"And KNOW that I am God" ~ the United Methodist Church 2024 General Conference*



It was my privilege to represent the ICCC on Ecumenical Day, April 30, at The United Methodist Church 2024 General Conference held at the Charlotte Convention Center in Charlotte. The day began early with breakfast at the Convention Center for the sixteen ecumenical guests,

followed by worship at 8:00 a.m. As we processed in at the start of worship, I was paired alongside Rev. Bronwen Boswell (Stated Clerk of the General Assembly of the Presbyterian Church U.S.A.) and each of us were assigned a "shepherd" to guide us through the day's events. I was honored to learn that my shepherd was Bishop Patrick Streiff, United Methodist Bishop of Eastern and Central Europe, where he superintends the work of churches in fourteen European countries and two in North Africa. From Switzerland, he spoke fluent English and I found him to be an authentic and humble servant of the Lord who, whenever I addressed him as Bishop Streiff, would respond, "Bruce, call me Patrick." The preacher for opening worship was Dr. Jerry Pillay of the World Council of Churches, and I was pleased to discover that the choir was from my former church at Davidson, North Carolina, which I served 1988-1991. Following worship was a plenary session and then a luncheon for ecumenical and interreligious guests and the United Methodist Council of Bishops.

The most significant change of the 2024 General Conference occurred the following day when the Conference voted to remove, by an affirmative vote of 93%, the discriminatory language against LGBTQ+ persons from the *Book of Discipline*. The Conference affirmed that its desire is to be a people who share a core belief in Jesus as Lord and Savior, a desire to live together in fellowship, and an additional desire to grow in love with God and our neighbors. In addition to the thousand official delegates from around the world, there were nearly as many observers plus members of the media, and over a thousand volunteers from churches across Western North Carolina to help host the two-week event in Charlotte. It led me to feel a sense of pride and appreciation for our own International Council of Community Churches as I was able to experience the beauty of an international body in all its diversity (1 Corinthians 12).

Respectfully, Bruce Jones

Imagine Church of the Carolinas - Representing the International Council of Community Churches



(L-R) Bronwen Boswell, Presbyterian Church (U.S.A.) and Bishop Patrick Streiff, The United Methodist Church in Europe; and setting for the bar of the conference, in the Charlotte Convention Center

## *Volunteers Needed*

*We are looking for volunteers!*

Are you able to help with registration?

Hours for Registration are:

Monday 7/15

6:00pm-9:00pm

Tuesday 7/16

8:00am-9:00am

Are you driving to conference? Or renting a car? Are you able to drive yourself and others to the Supper Club event?

Please contact DeAnn at the Council office if you are available: [icccdc@sbcglobal.net](mailto:icccdc@sbcglobal.net) or 815-464-5690

Thank you!!



## *Annual Conference Checklist*

*Have you done the following yet?*

- ☐ Sent in your registration form and fee?
- ☐ Called the Embassy Suites Hotel and made your reservations? 800-445-8667  
Deadline **June 24th**.
- ☐ Made your meal reservations (optional) with the Council office?
- ☐ Signed up for the Supper Club (optional)?
- ☐ Contacted the office about volunteering at conference?
- ☐ Sent in or talked to your church about sending their Voting Delegate form or an extra contribution to offset their loss of presence at conference?

*If you need more information, contact the Council office.*

## Comfort Cases Founder Rob Scheer to Speak at the Missions Luncheon

Submitted by Myrtis Brame



Your ICCC Missions Committee is proud to announce that Rob Scheer is traveling from the Washington, DC area specifically to tell us the extraordinary story of how Comfort Cases have lessened the anxiety of more than 200,000 children nationwide entering the foster care system.

You won't want to miss hearing Rob who is a highly acclaimed and captivating public speaker. He is a former foster care youth who is leading a truly inspirational life. He has dedicated his life to easing the transition of youth ranging from infants to teenagers who must enter foster care to leave unhealthy and/or unsafe home environments.



Rob will be accompanied by two speakers from the Missouri Department of Social Services, Rebekkah Woods, Children's Service Supervisor and Natalie Bolles, Social Services Specialist III. They will briefly explain how Comfort Cases are used to aid children in the Greater Kansas City foster care system.

Immediately following the Missions Luncheon, we will have an opportunity to pack 200 Comfort Cases at our host hotel. These will be destined for children whose lives are suddenly altered as they are removed from unsafe homes to enter Kansas City, MO's foster care system.

**WE NEED VOLUNTERS.** Please prayerfully consider joining other conference attendees in doing the light work necessary to help stuff comfort and personal care items into Comfort Cases backpacks.

Your Missions Committee has worked hard to create an unforgettable program for the Missions Luncheon, so please sign up for it when you register—or contact DeAnn to reserve your seat(s) and help them learn to make good choices.

And there are so many other opportunities for learning, growing, and fellowship. Plan on coming to KC well-rested; you don't want to miss a minute of it. I'm looking forward to an amazing week of learning and growth. I cannot wait to be inspired and challenged by it all.



### Sharing Joys with:

- **Bishop Willard Dionne and Bishop Serge Theriault, Christian Catholic Rite of Community Churches, Canada** as they celebrated the Silver Jubilee of Priesthood for Bishop Dionne. You can watch at <https://youtu.be/q7DtD577Dgc>.
- **Army Chaplain Ken Lewis.** After 28 years in the military, he will retire as a Colonel on July 1st. Congratulations!
- **Park Road Community Church** as the church celebrates its 93rd anniversary on Sunday June 2nd. They will be honoring our **ICCC President Abraham Wright**, who has done great works for their church and community.
- **WELCOME to Grace Christian Church** in Vilas, NC, who has become the latest ICCC church member! Visit [www.gracechristianchurchinc.org](http://www.gracechristianchurchinc.org) to check them out.

### Sharing Concerns with:

- **Rev. Dr. Tim Meadows, Protestant Community Church, NJ** who is recovering from surgery.
- **Rev. Michael Donahue, ICCC VP for Membership Services** and his family. Mike's father, **Ken Donahue**, passed away April 26th.
- The family of **Jimmy Poole**, who passed away May 19th. Jimmy was a longtime member of **Tennessee Valley Community Church** and a strong supporter of the ICCC.



The ICCC AGAPE team is preparing to host the **Annual Conference Fellowship Luncheon**.

If you would like to help plan and/or execute this event, please contact either Sandra Nelson ([djsjforever@sbcglobal.net](mailto:djsjforever@sbcglobal.net)) or Winnie West ([winniewest@ameritech.net](mailto:winniewest@ameritech.net)).

## ICCC Resource About Raising Funds for your Congregation

Did you know that ICCC has a resource that provides ideas on raising funds for your congregation/center/community? It's titled **Fundraising 101**, and

you can download it from our ICCC webpage at <https://www.icccnow.org/council-other-agency-resources/>.





# The ICCC Welcomes Back THE REV. DR. LEAH D. SCHADE

## as the 2024 Annual Conference Bible Study Leader and Keynote Speaker!

The Rev. Dr. Leah D. Schade is the Associate Professor of Preaching and Worship at Lexington Theological Seminary in Kentucky. An ordained Lutheran minister (ELCA) for more than twenty years, Leah earned both her MDiv and PhD degrees from the Lutheran Theological Seminary at Philadelphia (now United Lutheran Seminary). She has pastored congregations in suburban, urban, and rural contexts. Her book, [\*Preaching in the Purple Zone: Ministry in the Red-Blue Divide\*](#) (Rowman & Littlefield, 2019), explores how clergy and congregations can address controversial social issues using nonpartisan, biblically-centered approaches and deliberative dialogue. She is also the author of [\*Creation-Crisis Preaching: Ecology, Theology, and the Pulpit\*](#) (Chalice Press, 2015), as well as *For the Beauty of the Earth*, a Creation-centered Lenten devotional (Chalice Press, 2019). She is co-editor and author with Margaret Bullitt-Jonas of [\*Rooted and Rising: Voices of Courage in a Time of Climate Crisis\*](#) (Rowman & Littlefield, 2019), and co-author with Jerry Sumney of [\*Apocalypse When?: A Guide to Interpreting and Preaching Apocalyptic Texts\*](#). She is also the [EcoPreacher](#) blogger for Patheos.



Dr. Schade is serving as President of the Academy of Homiletics in 2024. She has been a featured speaker for the Festival of Homiletics, leads workshops and retreats, and keynotes events throughout the country. She is the director of a Wabash grant exploring the use of deliberative dialogue in congregations and theological education and is part of a research exchange with the Kettering Foundation studying the role of religious organizations in democratic community building. Dr. Schade is also conducting a longitudinal research study about ministry, preaching, and social issues that has surveyed nearly 3,000 clergy and 1,000 laity since 2017.

We are excited to have Dr. Schade lead us once again! Register for the 2024 ICCC Annual Conference in Kansas City today at [www.ICCCNOW.org](http://www.ICCCNOW.org)!



## ICCC Annual Conference Workshops



**Seminar title: "Who am I, or rather who are WE to Judge"  
an introspective of ministry to the LGBTQ Community and beyond!  
Led by Rev. Dr. Joseph Ciccone**

Interviewing Pope Francis in July, Italian journalist Andrea Tornielli asked the pope how he might act as a confessor to a gay person in light of his now famous remarks in a press conference in 2013, when he asked: "Who am I to judge?"

Francis' reply appears in a new book *The Name of God is Mercy* to be released soon will be used. It will be used in this workshop.

"On that occasion I said this: If a person is gay and seeks out the Lord and is willing, who am I to judge that person?" the pope says. "I was paraphrasing by heart the Catechism of the Catholic Church where it says that these people should be treated with delicacy and not be marginalized."

This workshop will explore the communities we leave out and reasons the church has weaponized Sacred Scripture against so many. We will talk about morality vs. love, hate vs. tolerance, wounds vs healing and how all faith communities can deal with the spiritual poverty of our time and truly live that idea that "ALL" people are truly welcome with honesty and compassion.

Rev. Dr. Joseph Ciccone is a Priest in the Order of Franciscan Servants, a Progressive Catholic Church and a graduate of Union Theological Seminary in the City of New York. Fr. Joe is the Pastor of Saint Joseph Mission Church in Cliffside Park/Union City NJ, bringing the Gospel to those in the margins and to people in need wherever they may be. Fr Joe completed 9 years of CPE (Chaplain Program) at the Jewish Theological Seminary in NYC and is a member of the National Spiritual Care Association. Fr Joe is also the Police Chaplain for the NJ Fraternal Order of Police Lodge 46. Fr Joe retired after 20 years of service in Law Enforcement in the NJ/NYC Metropolitan area. Fr Joe is married and has been with his partner Darroll, a public-school teacher for the past 28 years. Both truly know the sharp and cutting edge of discrimination and intolerance and now dedicate their lives to making the world a kinder and better place. You have seen, met and talked with Fr. Joe and Darroll at annual conference many times and he is excited to have you attend his workshop.



### **WORSHIP TRACK WORKSHOPS - SCRIPTURE IN VERSE:**

You are invited to celebrate, learn and interpret our conference Scripture, Romans 12:9-13, through the verse(s) of selected hymns and songs. Join with others as we lift our voices and make a "joyful noise to the Lord."  
Rev. Dr. Bruce Merton leads the worship track.

**I BELIEVE IN...** Many Christians say/recite the Apostles' Creed each Sunday in worship. The Creed, if not recited each Sunday, is almost universally recognized by Christians around the globe. It is a PERSONAL statement of faith! Join fellow Conferees as we look at each "faith statement" of the Apostle's Creed and share what we mean and understand as we make the UNIQUELY personal declaration: "I believe in..." (This will be a two-part workshop/session.)

**PRAYER THAT CHANGES YOU AND YOUR CHURCH.** Our conference Scripture issues the imperative, "Persevere in prayer." Prayer is and has been an integral part of the faith experience, both personally and corporately. It is obvious that the early church found prayer effectual and powerful. Prayer changed persons and the church! Join others as we discover/rediscovers the elements that make for prayer that is life changing and enhancing for you and your church. (This will be a two-part workshop session on the Worship Track.)

**PSALMS: THE PRAYER BOOK OF THE BIBLE.** Using Dietrich Bonhoeffer's book, *Psalms: the Prayer Book of the Bible*, we will explore how the Psalms can form a foundation for personal and corporate prayer. The themes and expressions of the Psalms are as fresh and relevant today as they were when written. In addition to considering Bonhoeffer's insights, participants will be asked to share their favorite Psalm prayer and share their reason for its choice. If possible, participants should read Bonhoeffer's little book on prayer before coming to the sessions. It will be helpful, but not a necessity! (This will be a two-part workshop on the Worship Track.)

**JUST ADDED: WORSHIP AS SPIRITUAL DISCIPLINE**



## *ICCC Annual Conference Workshops*



### **Faith, Hope, Life, and Suicide: Creating Hope through Action** *Led by Rev. Dr. Wendy Childress*

What is Suicide? Where does Faith or Hope fit with Suicide? Do those who consider suicide have Faith? These are some of the questions you may have. The goal of this workshop is to answer these questions by providing you with a sound understanding of suicide and suicide ideations, indicators, how to assist in intervention, and understanding the difference between intervention and prevention. This workshop may not change your personal position on this very sensitive and pressing issue but, you will leave enlightened; with a basic understanding of Suicide Intervention; and with a few skills and resources to help family, friends, or others that you encounter who may have suicidal thoughts.



### **What's Prayer Got To Do With It?** *Led by Rev. Beth Armstrong*

We often hear things like this: "Our thoughts and prayers are with you." Thoughts? Maybe. Prayers? Maybe not. When it gets right down to it, prayer is one of the most complex, yet simple privileges we have. It's overstated, but underused. In this session, Beth Armstrong will take a look at what prayer is and what it is not. She'll invite you and challenge you to deepen your journey in the way you pray.



### **What's In It For Me?** *Led by Rev. Beth Armstrong*

If you're a Christian, if you're involved in any kind of ministry, you're constantly being asked to pray for all kinds of people in all kinds of situations. And that's an honor and privilege! But what about praying for ourselves? Is that ok? Isn't that a little self-centered? In this session, Beth Armstrong will walk us through those questions and give us some insight into why or what we might pray for ourselves.

Rev. Beth Armstrong is a gifted Bible teacher and speaker who has been involved in some form of ministry for over 30 years. From youth ministry to older adult ministry, she has a passion for the Word of God to be taught and infused into all of God's people. She's a graduate of Oklahoma State University. Her vocational career includes high school teacher and coach, retreat and banquet speaker, as well as an activity director at a senior living community. Prayer became real to her as a college student and as a young mom raising two boys. She's a firm believer in the power of prayer, but more importantly a firm believer in the God to whom we pray. She's the author of the book *What's Prayer Got To Do With It?*. She is delighted to be sharing more about this wonderful and mysterious thing we call prayer at our conference this week. Beth has been married to her husband Matt for 33 years. They have two sons and one daughter-in-law. Beth is currently serving as Interim Pastor at Antioch Community Church here in Kansas City, Missouri.



## *ICCC Annual Conference Workshops*



### **Waves of Health** ***Led by Ms. Angela Della Ventura***

Waves of Health is a nonprofit, medical outreach organization of doctors, medical people, techs, translators and others who travel, every six months, to remote, severely underserved areas of the Dominican Republic to provide medical attention, health care and medication to people there.

Founded in 2007, Waves of Health has 2 missions:

- To support the primary health care needs of underserved communities in the developing world.
- To educate others about medical challenges in the developing world.



### **Build Bridges and Partnerships** ***Led by Rev. Rock Fremont Jr.***

Join us for Build Bridges and Partnerships as we embark on a journey to explore the power of unity and collaboration in serving our communities. In this workshop, we will dreamcast and brainstorm innovative ways to establish and nurture local ecumenical partnerships aimed at creating a more impactful and sustainable approach to community stewardship.

Through interactive discussions and practical examples, participants will:

- Learn the importance of building bridges across denominations and faith traditions to address common community challenges.
- Explore successful case studies of ecumenical partnerships from around the world, drawing inspiration for local initiatives.
- Engage in creative brainstorming sessions to identify potential areas of collaboration within our own communities.
- Develop practical strategies for initiating and sustaining ecumenical partnerships, including communication, and resource-sharing.
- Reflect on the spiritual and theological foundations of collaborative ministry and stewardship.

Whether you are a clergy member, community leader, or passionate individual looking to make a difference, this workshop will provide valuable insights and tools to empower you in building bridges and partnerships for the greater good. Together, let's envision a future where our collective efforts transform lives and bring hope to those in need.



### **ICCC Local Church Mission Grants** ***Led by Rev. Bob Fread***

Is your church sponsoring a mission project to serve your local community? Learn how your church can get a grant from the ICCC for this mission. Information will be shared on our ICCC Mission Grant program and we will hear how two ICCC churches: Second Community in Ohio and Peace Community Church in Florida used grants they received from the ICCC in 2023.

## ICCC Annual Conference Workshops



### **Church World Service** ***Led by Rev. Tiffany DeTienne, CWS Staff***

Church World Service (CWS) is a Mission partner of the ICCC. The ICCC uses CWS as its primary mission agency for disaster relief, aid for humanitarian crises, and assistance for refugees and migrants. The CWS mission is to eradicate hunger and poverty and witness to justice and peace. This workshop will feature Rev. Tiffany DeTienne, CWS staffer member from Kansas City, who will give us an update on CWS's current work around the US and the world.



### **Future of the ICCC: A New Day, A New Vision** ***Led by Rev. Bob Fread***

In 2025 the ICCC will turn 75. In the last year the Board of Directors has dealt with many important issues affecting our future such as finances, conference, staffing and office. As part of moving into our future the ICCC is implementing a new Stewardship program to improve communication between the Council and our churches, enhance knowledge of the ICCC's ministry and missions, and strengthen the relationship of our churches with the ICCC by focusing on being a resource and for our churches. As the ICCC turns 75, it's time for a new day and a new vision for us!



### **KeyLay Leaders and Regional Trustees – Information and Resources** ***Led by Rev. Bob Fread***

Key Lay Leaders and Regional Trustees are essential persons in maintaining the relationship between the ICCC and its member churches. We will look at the responsibilities of both Key Lay Persons and Regional Trustees, what information is available to assist them, how information is communicated and offer a time for trustees to network with the key laity in their region.



### **Ecumenical Report** ***Led by Rev. Rock Fremont***

The Ecumenical & Interfaith Relations Committee of the ICCC invites you to a special report at this year's conference. This session will provide valuable insights from our latest Ecumenical & Interfaith Relations report, focusing on fostering unity and understanding.

- **Insightful Presentations:** Gain a deeper understanding of the current ecumenical and interfaith relations within our denomination and beyond. Learn about our challenges and opportunities in building bridges with other faith traditions.
- **Interactive Discussions:** Participate in dynamic discussions exploring practical strategies for enhancing cooperation and dialogue between religious communities. Share your experiences and learn from others who are passionate about interfaith engagement.
- **Action-Oriented Focus:** Discover actionable steps your congregation can take to promote ecumenical and interfaith understanding. From joint service projects to shared worship experiences, find out how to make a tangible impact in fostering unity.

Our time together will be an excellent opportunity for anyone interested in deepening their understanding of the Council's ecumenical activities and learning about future collaborations and dialogues. Whether you're an Ecumenical & Interfaith Relations Committee member or new to the conversation, your presence and input are invaluable.



# *St. Monica Music Department stresses “Outreach”*

*Submitted by St. Monica Music Ministry*



We've experienced that in order to have an effective “Out-Reach” you must first “Reach Out”. Our Minister of Music, Melvin Kerr (of 46 years) encourages us to “GO OUT” and take the Gospel throughout the world.

We have relationships with churches, pastors, and gospel singers locally and internationally. We are regularly invited to sing at anniversary celebrations, weddings, conventions, community celebrations and many, many more Ministry events.

With the influence of Pastor Harry Fooockle we were the featured choir at the MLK mass celebrations. Members of the choir appeared in the movie “*Three Blind Saints*.” Our Minister of Music arranged the trailer song for the movie. The church and choir were chosen by Kansas City weekly magazine “Pitch” as the “Best Worship Style” in Kansas City. We sang back up with the fabulous Barry Manilow at Starlight Theater. We have also sung the National Anthem at the opening of the K.C. Royals game.

As a result of having attended the Joyce Meyer Women's Conference, we decided to organize and host our own “Phenomenal Women's Conference” which featured a 100 voice women's choir, a great panel interaction and outstanding speakers. Our Ministry directed Gospel Dinner-Plays and utilized cast members from other local churches. The Music



Ministry **FUN**-raises our travel expenses, robe purchases/cleaning, music instrumental maintenance and purchases of instruments and other projects. Our choir travels extensively. To diversify our Outreach Ministry, we developed a Travel Ministry. We arranged hotel accommodations, tour bus transportation, admission tickets to popular attractions; all at a “LEAST OF THEM” pricing. We attract lots of seniors. Travel trips included: Oldenburg IN., Chicago, Detroit, Windsor Ontario Canada, a cruise to the Bahamas, Cozumel Mexico, St. Thomas Virgin Islands, Rome Italy and too many more to mention.

We collaborate with local churches and choirs to worship one God. Our Ministry requests for the next few months include; the Wyandotte County Ethnic Fair, your ICCC Annual Conference, “BEHOLD” (an Evangelical event to be held at the Liberty Memorial) that promises to attract up to 5,000.

**ICCC**, we are **delighted** to be **invited** to this conference. We pray for success and safe travels for everyone. Saint Monica Catholic Church is located at 1616 Paseo, Kansas City, Mo 64108.

St Monica Music Ministry Youtube video  
<https://youtu.be/PsJoYoBWqi8?si=GcrZCe65FITm6m4s>

# 74th Annual Conference

## July 16-19, 2024 – Kansas City, MO

### Hotel Information

The 2024 Annual Conference will be held at the Embassy Suites Kansas City-International Airport Hotel, 7640 NW Tiffany Springs Pkwy, Kansas City, MO 64153. Phone: 816-891-7788. When you stay at this Embassy Suites Hotel, you will be 10 minutes from the Kansas City Airport via a free shuttle service and two miles from shopping and entertainment at Zona Rosa. The Union Station and downtown Kansas City are half an hour away.



Make yourself at home in a guestroom with features such as a mini refrigerator, Embassy Essentials Bedding, a microwave and a seating area with a sofa sleeper. Private bathrooms feature complimentary toiletries and hair dryers. WiFi is available for a daily fee. Take advantage of recreation opportunities including an indoor salt water pool and a fitness center. There is also a business center and digital check-in. Pet-friendly, ADA accessible and connecting rooms are all available, but limited, so register early. Guests can catch a ride on the complimentary shuttle, which operates within a 2mi. radius. Wake up each morning to a complimentary made-to-order breakfast and unwind at the hotel's evening reception with drinks and snacks.

### Hotel Dining

**Fountain Court Bar & Grill:** Sandwiches, salads, grilled fare and an assortment of appetizers & desserts that will fill any appetite. Or, if you are ready to wrap up the day, enjoy your favorite beverage and the game of the night. Their menu of bar favorites will not leave you hungry. Open Monday-Sunday 5:00pm-11:00pm

**Room Service** is also available, along with eating options within walking distance of the hotel or within the 2mi free shuttle radius.

### Hotel Reservations

Call the Embassy Suites to reserve your room at 800-445-8667. Inform the reservations clerk that you are attending the ICCC 2024 Annual Conference to get the special rate of \$139.00\* + tax per night.

To register online, visit the ICCC Website for the hotel link. [www.icccnow.org/hotel-information/](http://www.icccnow.org/hotel-information/)

**The cut-off date for hotel reservations is June 24, 2024.** After this date, normal hotel rates will be in effect and space may no longer be available. **\*Please note:** the special rate of \$139 + 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 by the hotel.

Check-in: 4:00pm

Check-Out: 11:00am

Visit <https://www.hilton.com/en/hotels/mkcpdes-embassy-suites-kansas-city-international-airport/hotel-info/> for hotel information.

### Transportation To and From the Hotel

Kansas City International Airport (MCI) is 10 minutes away from the Embassy Suites via a free hotel shuttle. Attendees should call the hotel directly (816-891-7788) when you have your bags from baggage claim for instruction.

**Parking:** Self-parking is complimentary for our group.





*International Council of Community Churches*  
**ICCC Registration Form – 2023 Annual Conference: July 16-19**  
**“Priorities for Christian Living” – Kansas City, MO**

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 7-1-2024) \_\_\_\_\_ Grade completed by (7-1-2024) \_\_\_\_\_

■ 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 <b>ONLY</b> if Adult meal is preferred for Banquet Child/Elementary regis.	\$ 30.00	\$
Youth (completed 6th grade - entering 12th grade)	\$ 145.00	\$
Young Adult (completed 12th grade - age 23)	\$ 170.00	\$
Adult	\$ 230.00	\$
Daily Registrants Circle Day(s) T W Th F (meals not included)	\$ 75.00/day	\$
CC	<b>TOTAL ENCLOSED</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: Mixed Green Salad with Sliced Cucumbers, Cherry Tomatoes, Julienne Carrots, and Croutons with choice of Ranch or Balsamic Dressing, Roasted Bourbon Street Chicken Breast topped with Chopped Bacon, Cheddar Cheese and Bourbon Cream Sauce, Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Seasonal Vegetable, Assorted Breads & Butter, Chef's Choice Dessert, Decaffeinated Coffee, Assorted Hot Herbal Teas, Ice Water and Iced Tea. Fish Option: Honey Grilled Salmon with Lemon Herb Sauce and Wild Rice Pilaf. *Kid's Meal Option*: Chicken Tenders, French Fries, Cup of Fruit. Meals are subject to change.

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

**Bourbon Street Chicken** (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 May 1st.** Registrations after June 30, 2024 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.

## 2024 Conference Meal Programs

The **2024 Annual Conference** offers 3 optional meal program opportunities: the **Fellowship Luncheon** hosted by the Agape Team, the **Mission Luncheon** and the **Prayer Luncheon** hosted by the Samaritan Men's Group. 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 16, 2024** at 12:00pm is the *Fellowship Luncheon*: This meal includes Roasted Turkey BLT Sandwich with Smoked Gouda, Sliced Bacon, Tomatoes, Lettuce and Herb Mayo on Whole-Grain Bread, Chips, Pasta Salad and Assorted Beverages. Vegetarian Option: Southwest Quinoa Wrap that includes Tri-Colored Quinoa, Roasted Corn, Black Beans, Peppers, Avocado with Chipotle Dressing in an Herb Tortilla. *Kid's Meal Option*: Plain Burger, French Fries, Cup of Fruit.

**Wednesday, July 17, 2024** at 12:00pm is the *Prayer Luncheon*. This meal includes Caesar Salad, Kansas City Strip Steak Rubbed and Grilled to medium temperature with Butter, Sautéed Onions and Red Wine Demi-Glaze, Buttery Mashed Potatoes, Seasonal Vegetable, Assorted Breads, Chef's Choice Dessert, Ice Water and Iced Tea. Vegetarian Option: Cheese Tortellini with Creamy Pesto Sauce.

**Thursday, July 18, 2024** at 12:00pm is the *Mission Luncheon*. This meal includes Mixed Green Salad with Sliced Cucumbers, Cherry Tomatoes, Julienne Carrots, and Croutons, Pan-Seared Chicken with Marsala Sauce, Butter Herb Rice, Seasonal Vegetable, Assorted Breads, Chef's Choice Dessert, Ice Water and Iced Tea. *Vegetarian Option*: Grilled Salmon Filet with Lemon Dill Cream Sauce and Rice Pilaf.

**Friday, July 19, 2024** at 6:00 p.m. is the *Conference Banquet\**. This meal includes: Mixed Green Salad, Roasted Bourbon Street Chicken Breast topped with Chopped Bacon, Cheddar Cheese and Bourbon Cream Sauce, Garlic Mashed Potatoes, Seasonal Vegetable, Assorted Breads & Butter, Chef's Choice Dessert, Decaffeinated Coffee, Assorted Hot Herbal Teas, Ice Water and Iced Tea. *Fish Option*: Honey Grilled Salmon with Lemon Herb Sauce and Wild Rice Pilaf. *Kid's Meal Option*: Chicken Tenders, French Fries, Cup of Fruit.

**PLEASE NOTE** previous materials regarding the meals had the days of Prayer Luncheon and the Mission Luncheon reversed. The sequence was switched for 2024. The Prayer Luncheon will be held on Wednesday, July 17, 2024 and the Mission Luncheon, Thursday, July 18, 2024. The food choices and cost remain the same. We apologize for the confusion.

### 2024 MEAL RESERVATION FORM

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

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

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ places at \$30.00 each for *Tuesdays Fellowship Luncheon*

☐ Check for Vegetarian Option

☐ Check for Kid's Meal Option \$25.00

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ places at \$40.00 each for *Wednesday's Prayer Luncheon*

☐ Check for Vegetarian Option at \$30.00 each

Please reserve \_\_\_\_\_ places at \$37.00 each for *Thursday's Mission 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.**





**Wednesday, July 17, 2024 • 5:15-6:30 approx.**

Looking for BBQ restaurants that have a local following in Kansas City? Well, we found one! Smokehouse Barbecue is Kansas City's best and favorite bbq providing highest quality along with unparalleled service. They offer only the best hickory smoked brisket and succulent ribs, famous pulled pork and the best baked beans in the world, as well as savory seasonings, delicious sauces and rubs (all according to their website). Visit [www.smokehousebbq.com](http://www.smokehousebbq.com) for more information.

## **All-You-Can-Eat Buffet Meal Includes:**

**Hickory Smoked Pit Beans  
Homemade Creamy Coleslaw  
Cheesy Corn  
Beef Brisket  
Pulled Pork  
Dinner Rolls  
Barbecue Sauce  
Soft Drinks**

**\$33.00 per person**

Each meal includes the cost of the buffet, tax & gratuity.  
Alcoholic beverages are available, billed separately, individually.

**Submit payment to the Council Office by June 30, 2024. Limited to 40 people. Register soon!**

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

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

Print name(s) as it appears on card: \_\_\_\_\_

Account Number on Card: \_\_\_\_\_ Exp.Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_ C V V: \_\_\_\_\_

**ICCC, PO Box 846, Longmont, CO 80502**

**815-464-5690**

**ICCCNOW@sbcglobal.net**

**Smokehouse Barbecue is three miles from the hotel at 8451 NW Prairie View Rd., Kansas City, MO.**

**If you are driving to conference and are willing to carpool to the Supper Club,  
please let the Council Office know.**



## *Pastor*

Antioch Community Church, 4805 Northeast Antioch Road Kansas City, MO 64119, is seeking a pastor to communicate God's Word, minister to spiritual needs and provide visionary as well as biblical leadership to its congregation.

We are a small, friendly, and inter-denominational church located in Kansas City, MO. ACC is aligned with the International Council of Community Churches (ICCC), an international, intercultural, interracial fellowship of churches and ministry centers which seeks Christian unity in local, national and world relations. We are eager to grow our church family as we continue to serve and lead in the church outreach and mission ministries.

We offer identical worship services on Saturday evening and Sunday morning, Bible Study groups and participation opportunities in numerous committee endeavors.

### Partial responsibilities include:

- Provide leadership in the accomplishment of the church's mission
- Plan and lead the people in worship
- Facilitate the contact/visitation of hospitalized, shut-ins, nursing and home visitation or grieving church members
- Support inter-denominational mission work
- Teach Bible Study classes
- Officiate at special occasions in the lives of the congregation such as weddings, baptisms and funerals

### Qualifications:

- Strong faith and commitment to the call of serving the Lord as a pulpit minister and evangelist
- Bachelor's or Master's degree in Theology, Divinity or related field
- Experience writing and delivering sermons
- Oral presentation skills
- Strong biblical and application knowledge of the Bible
- A demonstrated ability to lead Bible Studies
- Interpersonal skills to promote leadership through cooperation.

\*Applicants without a degree who have demonstrated successful ministry experience will be considered.

Compensation to be determined by assignment responsibilities.

Candidates interested in this opportunity are to email Antioch Community Church ([office@accck.org](mailto:office@accck.org)) to request an application packet.

Thank you for your interest in Antioch Community Church.

The Mission of the Antioch Community Church is to proclaim the good news of abundant life in Christ through meaningful worship; to provide lifelong spiritual nurture; and to be an agent of justice and mercy to any who suffer in body or spirit.

## *Interim Pastor*

The Protestant Community Church (also known as the Cathedral of the Woods) of Medford Lakes, NJ is seeking to fill the position of Interim Pastor. This will be a position beginning January 1 of 2025 and continue for the next 8-12 months. The Protestant Community Church (PCC) is located in a bucolic setting fewer than 20 miles east of Philadelphia. PCC is an interdenominational and congregationally governed church with an average attendance of 90-120 between two services at 8 o'clock and 10 o'clock.

The interim pastor is responsible for providing leadership and administrative oversight of the church's ministries, including worship, music, preaching, teaching, mission service, stewardship, and fellowship. This Individual will work with the church staff to provide opportunities for members to engage in worship, discipleship, and mission. This individual will use their developed interim-specialist skills to assess the congregation's current and long-term needs and provide counsel and leadership to the church. The Interim Pastor will help to prepare the congregation for a new pastoral leadership.

The Interim Pastor is accountable to the PCC congregation and its Board of Trustees. The applicant must hold a degree from an accredited or recognized Seminary or Bible College, be Ordained or Licensed Minister, have experience as a Lead or Senior Pastor, preferably with interim training.

If interested in this position, please submit the following:

- Cover letter that includes salary expectation
- Current resume (including email address and contact telephone numbers)
- Personal Statement of Faith
- Submit three personal and two professional (minister/pastor) letters of reference
- Copy of Ministerial License and/or Certificate of Ordination

Please submit your information to:  
The Protestant Community Church  
c/o Carol R. Vahlstrom  
100 Stokes Road  
Medford Lakes, NJ 08055