

Conference Connection is the monthly eNewsletter of the Southeast Conference of the United Church of Christ. You're receiving this email because you have expressed an interest in the work of the Southeast Conference. Don't forget to add clwaldron@secucc.org to your address book so we'll be sure to land in your inbox!

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**Building God's House
2015 Southeast Conference Annual Meeting**

DEADLINE IS THIS FRIDAY!

Online Registration closes at the end-of-day on Friday, June 5
Mailed registration must be received by Friday, June 5

[CLICK HERE TO REGISTER](#)

We will gather once again at Piedmont College June 12-13 for the 49th Annual Meeting of the Southeast Conference. Last year

we looked at the moment in time that began this journey of renewal and transition. This year we focus our attention on the building of God's house as we do the ministries of the Conference. Next year, as we celebrate our 50th anniversary as a Conference, we will look to the laborers in the vineyard.

We have a full slate of workshops and exhibitors scheduled. Reverend June Boutwell will give the keynote address on the State of the Conference and we will conduct our annual business meeting to adopt a budget, elect leadership, and install these leaders to their respective positions. Of course, we will honor our churches and pastors for their support of ministries and their years of service. We will remember with gratitude the faithful servants that have died during the past twelve months and gather at Christ's table to remind ourselves of the covenant we have with the Holy One and with each other as brothers and sisters in faith.

We are excited to welcome Reverend Elizabeth Diley of the Ministerial Excellence, Support, and Authorization Ministry Team of Local Church Ministries in the national setting of the UCC. She will be leading the Authorized Ministers Retreat on June 11, meeting with the Persons in Exploration/Members in Discernment Retreat on Friday morning, and offering a workshop.

Reverend Denise Bell, Regional Minister of the Christian Church in Georgia (Disciples of Christ) will join us for worship on Friday night. We are working to strengthen the long standing partnership between the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

All reports will be available online prior to Annual Meeting. All delegates and visitors need to print the materials to bring to Annual Meeting, or be able to access the material online (free WiFi will be available). As we are being good stewards of the environment (and finances) hard-copy printouts will NOT be available onsite.

- Click here for the Annual Meeting documents: <http://www.secucc.org/2015-annual-meeting-document/>
- Full details are available on our website: <http://www.secucc.org/annual-meeting-2015-registration/>

Hope to see you at the Annual Meeting!



We are continuing the process of praying for authorized ministers, congregations, and ministry groups throughout 2015. Each month, we will publish a weekly list for the month and post them weekly on our Facebook page. We encourage you to include these prayers requests in your local church newsletter, share them with your prayer circle, and include them in your own prayers.

- [Click here to download the June and July prayer list](#)
- [Click here to see the entire 2015 prayer list](#)

Highlights for June:

- Continued prayers for **Rev. Dr. Sarah Kim**, Southeast Conference Director of Theological Education and Dean of PATHWAYS, as she continues her sabbatical.
- **Dan Stark** will be ordained on June 14, 2015 at 3:30 p.m. at Decatur UCC.
- **Church of the Savior** will dedicate their new building at 100 Prospect Place, Alpharetta Georgia 30005 on June 14, 2015.
- Pilgrim UCC, Birmingham has called **Rev. Paul Eknes-Tucker** to serve as senior pastor beginning June 1, 2015
- **Rev. Leslie Etheredge** has been called to serve as Regional Minister of the Gulf Coast (Western) Region of the Florida Conference beginning in August.

Churches in transition:

Oak Grove Congregational Christian, Pine Mountain Georgia; Church of the Savior, Alpharetta Georgia; United Church, Cookeville Tennessee; Peace Congregational UCC, Clemson South Carolina; Pensacola UCC, Pensacola Florida; Pilgrim Congregational UCC, Chattanooga Tennessee; Brookmeade Congregational UCC, Nashville Tennessee; Howard Congregational

Jottings from June

'Tis the Season

No, I am not celebrating Christmas in June. But this is the season of meetings in the United Church of Christ. I hope to see all of you at the Southeast Conference Annual Meeting at Piedmont College in Demorest, Georgia June 12-13. Remember that registration deadline is this Friday, June 5 ([visit our website to register](#)).

Our UCC polity lifts up the values of autonomy and covenant. Our Conference is in covenant with three others that make up the Southern Region. We are one of 39 Conferences in the UCC, with many holding their annual meeting in June. I will be attending the meeting of the South Central Conference in New Orleans June 5-7 to represent our relationships within the wider church and to honor their Conference Minister, Douglas Anders, who is retiring. Some of you may remember him as a keynote speaker at our Annual Meeting last year. I will also be attending the Annual Meeting of the Southern Conference on June 18-20 as they celebrate their 50th anniversary where I hope to get some ideas for our Golden anniversary next year.



Then June 25-30 I will be attending General Synod, the biennial national meeting of the UCC. This year it is being held in Cleveland which is the location of our national offices. It is a reunion time for many of us in the UCC and I look forward to seeing many friends and colleagues. It will also be a busy time as our Southeast Conference delegation votes on matters before the church. All of us - including visitors from this Conference and many others - gather for worship and fellowship and workshops and time in the exhibit hall. I encourage you to look at the General Synod page at www.ucc.org. Last month we published links to all the resolutions that will be considered. You can view General Synod on a live stream if you are interested. I am always interested in people's thoughts, reactions, questions, and comments about our life together, so be in touch.

In the midst of all this, I will also be celebrating the ordination of Dan Stark at Decatur (GA) UCC and the building dedication of Church of the Savior, Alpharetta (GA). It is always about the balance in our church life between our own service, work in our local church, and attention to the wider church. It is a privilege to serve in this kind of way. It is always the season for faithful living. I pray that will be how you experience this month of life and ministry. And please hold our General Synod delegates and visitors in prayer.

Blessings, June



General Synod 2015 in Cleveland Ohio

There is still time to register for General Synod this year. The Southeast Conference Delegates are ready to represent the Conference as the entire UCC community gathers for fellowship, worship, and tending to the business of the ministry of the United Church of Christ. There are fifteen proposed resolutions for consideration. The full list is available on our website: <http://www.secucc.org/general-synod-30-in-cleveland/>

We invite your prayers as we travel and deliberate and celebrate this wonderful denomination and its presence as advocates and

Generosity Corner



Transforming Churches • Transforming Lives
SOUTHEAST CONFERENCE
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

Grant Applications will begin Sept. 15

All churches be advised that Capital Campaign grant applications will be open starting September 15 and run through October 31. All information for the grants will be on the Conference website, including the application. Circle the dates on your calendar.

Please contact Debbie Spearman, Generosity Coordinator at dpsearnan@secucc.org if you have questions.



A mailing from the National UCC about the new Reading Mission Initiative, Reading Changes Lives, was just mailed to local churches. The final phase is entitled: Engage Three Ways.

I. STUFF THE PACK: A General Synod Mission Project to stuff 1,000 backpacks with school supplies. Delegates and Visitors are asked bring school supplies to fill the backpacks. If you won't be at General Synod, you initiate a similar project in your own community.

II. TUTOR THE TUTOR: A special presentation at General Synod. Come and learn the basics of becoming an literacy tutor. This event will be held at General Synod: Sunday - June 28 from 12:30 P.M. to 2:00 P.M.

III. SCHOOL SUPPLIES FOR CAIRO: This is an opportunity to help others through the Coptic Evangelical Organization for Social Service, a literacy program in Cairo, Egypt through our Global Ministries. Cash donations will provide school supplies for children in need.

Visit: ucc.org/literacy to participate. This project is through October 2015.

*United Church of Christ
2015 Southern Region Women's Retreat*

*October 16-18, 2015
Sumatanga Conference Center
Gallant, AL*

*Come celebrate the
LORD of the
DANCE!*



2015 Southern Region Women's Retreat

We invite you to come dance with us at this year's Southern Region Women's Retreat. This includes the United Church of Christ Conferences: Southeast, South Central, Southern and Florida. This fun and meaningful event is taking place October 16-18 amidst the beautiful fall foliage of Sumatanga Conference Center in Gallant, Alabama, about 45 minutes north of Birmingham.

During our time together we will experience a time of relaxation, refreshment and renewal as all of us, in our own way, Celebrate the Lord of the Dance. You can look forward to a time of fellowship with old friends and new, as well as some great "takeaways" for your own sacred dance and also that of your church.

Celebrate 30 Years of ONA

**OPEN AND AFFIRMING
COALITION**
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST



The Open and Affirming Coalition is celebrating 30 years of ministry, which began with the ONA resolution in 1985's General Synod. The Coalition will hold the National ONA Gathering on June 24-25 in Cleveland, right before the start of this summer's Synod. The gathering will feature dynamic speakers and worship opportunities and two tracks, one for established ONA churches and the other for church leaders that are going through the ONA process.

[Click here for a flyer for the event](#)

[Click here to register online](#)

[Click here for more information the SECUCC website](#)

Matching grant to help NEPAL

The Retirement Housing Foundation (RHF) is matching up to \$50,000 or until June 15, 2015 for donations made to the disaster fund helping Nepal.

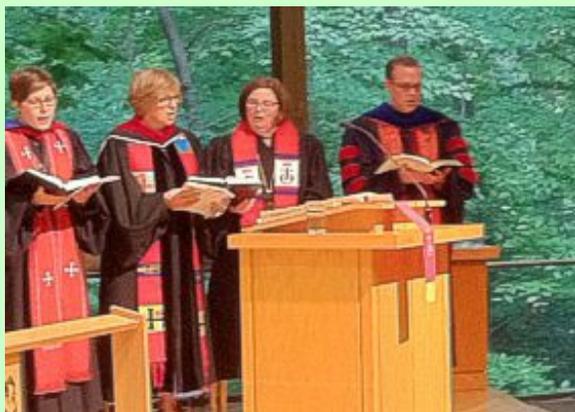
Send contributions to:

Retirement Housing Foundation
Attn: Stephanie Titis
VP of Philanthropy
911 North Studebaker Road
Long Beach, CA 90815



(Make checks out to RHF Disaster Response Fund with "Nepal" on the memo line.)

Gail McGill Ordained on May 24

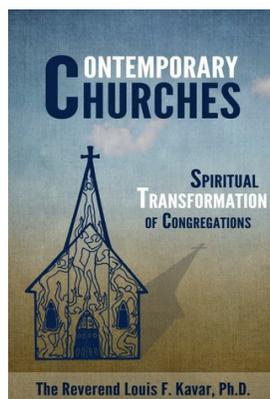


Gail McGill was ordained at Central Congregational UCC on May 24. Her extended family was there to celebrate with her. Two daughters read scripture and her husband, Walt, was the deacon to assist in communion. She serves as chaplain at Longleaf Hospice in Decatur.

Contemporary Churches: Spiritual Transformation of Congregations

A new book by Rev. Lou Kavar

Drawing on thirty-five years of authorized ministry and his work as a psychologist and spiritual director, the Rev. Lou Kavar's new book, *Contemporary Churches: Spiritual Transformation of Congregations*, provides insights on how to reimagine and restructure congregations that hope to be relevant for new generations of those who desire to live out the teachings of Jesus. Based on research, innovative models for ministry, and actual experience, *Contemporary Churches* is imaginative and thought provoking



Please mark your calendar with the following events!

June 11-13

Pre-event and Southeast Conference Annual Meeting, Piedmont College, Demorest GA

June 26-30

General Synod in Cleveland, OH

August 8

Commission on Ministry, Pilgrim Congregational UCC, Chattanooga, TN

October 5-7

Retired Servants Retreat, Blowing Rock Conference Center, NC

October 16-18

Southern Regional Women's Conference, Sumatanga Retreat Center, Gallant, AL

July 26-29, 2016

National Youth Event Orlando, FL

Living Our Faith in a Multi-Faith World: October 5-7, 2015!

Join us for the Fifth Annual Retreat for Retired UCC Servants at Blowing Rock Conference Center, Blowing Rock, North Carolina.

Speakers will be UCC Volunteer Coordinator Rev. Mary Schaller Blaufuss, who serves as Team Leader, Global Sharing of Resources, National UCC Staff and Dr. Jan Fuller, Chaplain at Elon University, will lead our discussion about Islam.

[Click here for more information and registration on the SEC website](#)

UCC Church Building & Loan Fund Partners in Building Program

The Partners in Building Program of the National UCC Building and Loan Fund is a six to twenty-four month program that helps UCC congregations prepare for planning and financing future church building projects.

for leaders of local churches.

[Click here to learn more about Lou's book](#) or purchase online from amazon.com.

You're Invited!



Join Beloved Community Church in Birmingham as they celebrate their 15th birthday! There will be a worship service, fabulous music, and a dinner and dessert buffet. For more details visit belovedcommunitychurch.org.

Share our newsletter with a friend!



This two-day program helps new and renewing churches answer these and other questions:

1. What do we need to know to purchase, build or renovate church property?
2. How does a church secure financing from the Church Building and Loan Fund?
3. I know we need more space, but how do we select and purchase real estate?

The next Partners in Building event is scheduled for September 25-26 in Raleigh, NC. Travel costs and accommodations for PIB participants are paid by the CBLF if certain criteria are met. The cost for attendees is \$70 per person. Each church is allowed two participants (specifically lay leaders involved in church finances) along with the pastor.

Conference Ministers recommend to the Church Building and Loan Fund possible churches for consideration to participate. If your church is interested in possibly participating in this event please be in touch with June Boutwell.



For More Information on Above Ads >> [Click the Links Below](#)

A. [SEC Offices](#) / B. [PATHWAYS](#) / C. [Capital Campaign](#)