

CONFERENCE *connection*

Alabama • Georgia • Mississippi
South Carolina • Tennessee • NW Florida



SOUTHEAST UCC Conference

July 1, 2016

50th Annual Meeting: Thank You!

It is an impossible task to thank everyone who helped make Annual Meeting a wonderful event. Too many people just stepped in to make things happen when they noticed. So we apologize to those who were helping hands and willing hearts and not listed here.

- **Planning Committee:** Heather Bardole, Kim Buchanan, Ashley Cleere, Thomas Coates, JR Finney, Connye Florance, Dorothy Gager, Amber Kirkendoll, Kevin Madill, Michael Stroud.
- **Registrar:** Rebecca Seldomridge assisted by Heath Battles and Kim Yarini
- **Worship:** Thomas Coates for the design of the table covering. Musicians Kim Buchanan, James Mellichamp, Allen Mullinax, Jodi Yarini. MIDS for opening worship and Board Members for closing worship. All those who served as ushers.
- **Offerings and Receipts:** special thanks to JR Finney and Heath Battles for being counters for the cash box.
- **Workshops and Exhibits:** Debbie Spearman for coordinating and setup. To all workshop leaders: Tonya Barnette, Linda Brown, John Gill, Christopher Goss, Michelle Holtmann, Dennie Kelley, Shannon Michael Pater, Kim Sorrells, John & Nancy Stewart, Michael Stroud.
- **PATHWAYS Used Book Sale:** Thanks to all who donated books and shopped. The net proceeds were over \$400 to support PATHWAYS. Special thanks to Sarah Kim and the Pathways Advisory Committee for their organizational skills. Thanks also to our authors who did book signings-Joyce Hollyday, Lou Kavar, and Glenna Shepherd.
- **Gift Bags:** Thanks to Bryce Current, Amber Kirkendoll, Susan Mitchell, and Rebecca Seldomridge for organizing the tickets and gift bag distribution. And a huge thanks to all who contributed a gift bag. This was a fun way to lift up our ministries and share with one another. Don't forget to write a thank you card to the donor if you received a gift bag.
- **Piedmont College:** Special thanks to Ashley Cleere, Megan Ramsey, Petraq Barto, the food service staff, residential life staff, bus and van drivers, security personnel, and all those who made sure we were welcomed and cared for while at Piedmont College.

And thanks to everyone who came to join the celebration. More names and numbers to follow in the next newsletter as we finalize reports and paperwork.

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Coming Events

SEC Staff Meeting

Thu, July 14, 2016

Conference Office

National Youth Event

July 26-29, 2016

Disney World, Orlando FL

Conference Staff

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Designated

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View a gallery of images on our Facebook page: https://www.facebook.com/SECUCC/photos/?tab=album&album_id=828567843942938

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From the Conference Office



We are continuing the process of praying for authorized ministers, congregations, and ministry groups throughout 2016. 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 prayer requests in your local church newsletter, share them with your prayer circle, and include them in your own prayers.

- [Click here to download the entire 2016 prayer list](#)

Highlights:

- Condolences to the family of **Joseph Gyorke**, retired UCC minister who moved to Pleasant Hill, Tennessee in 1991 after serving 21 years at St. Paul's UCC in Schaefferstown, Pennsylvania. He died on June 23, 2016.
- Continued prayers for **Bill Eure** as receives treatment at MD Anderson Cancer Center in Houston. He is the spouse of Rev. Michael Piazza serving Virginia Highland Church in Atlanta.
- Blessings to **Rev. Ginnie Ferrell** as she retires July 31 from active ministry as Associate Pastor of Central Congregational UCC in Atlanta. Her farewell Sunday is July 10.
- Blessings for **Rev. Laurie Hill** whose last Sunday at Fairfield Glade Community Church in Tennessee will be August 7. She has accepted a call at a UCC church in Illinois.
- Prayers for the newly elected and appointed officers, board members, General Synod delegates, and committee chairs and members as they begin their service to the Conference.
- Prayers for both **Kirkwood UCC** in Atlanta and **Decatur UCC** in Georgia as they relocate to different temporary ministry sites as part of a transitional ministry plan.

Churches in Transition:

Oak Grove Congregational Christian, Pine Mountain Georgia; Church of the Savior, Alpharetta Georgia; Pensacola UCC, Pensacola Florida; Pilgrim Congregational UCC, Chattanooga Tennessee; Brookmeade Congregational UCC, Nashville Tennessee; Howard Congregational UCC, Nashville Tennessee; Beloved Community, Birmingham Alabama; First United Church, Belvidere Tennessee.

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Connect with Us!



Jottings from June

What a Jubilee celebration we had at Annual Meeting! This edition of the newsletter will be highlighting the activities of our gathering.



Highlights include preaching by Joyce Hollyday, the introduction of the new Conference history written by Michael T. Stroud, Ye Shall be Witnesses unto Me in the Southland, a program book (available on the website) that contained a wealth of historical information, a chance to honor and thank Gerri Hudson for her years of service with flowers and an airline voucher, a business meeting that adjourned ahead of schedule, the sharing of gift bags from local congregations and Piedmont College in lieu of door prizes at the Friday night banquet, and lots of UCC goodies at the lunch on Saturday.

Once again, we experienced the extravagant hospitality of Piedmont College and appreciated the new Student Commons which is a lovely facility and met our needs quite well and the efforts of Rev. Ashley Cleere and Megan Ramsey as Piedmont staff who helped coordinate our meeting logistics. A special thanks to Dr. James Mellichamp, president of Piedmont, who generously sponsored our Friday night banquet. And, of course, was our organist as we held opening worship in the chapel at the college.

There are pictures in galleries on the website and our Facebook page. If you have pictures to share, we would love to receive them. Please send them to Don Harris at communicationsdirector@secucc.org.

As always, we could not have done this without the efforts of staff, the planning committee, Piedmont staff, and all our SEC volunteers who stepped up and filled in where there was a need. See the more complete thank you list elsewhere in this newsletter.

I am writing this while on vacation. I had the joy of being with my father in Wyoming for Father's Day and attending my high school alumni weekend and am now enjoying some time at my home in California catching up with neighbors and friends. I will return to the office on July 11 before heading to National Youth Event in Orlando Florida later in the month.

Blessings to you all as we approach the Fourth of July and some holiday time. But I urge you to remember that we were first free by the grace and love of God, the example of Jesus Christ who walked among us as liberator, and the power of the Holy Spirit to remove all obstacles to living life fully. May you be truly free, deeply loved, and full of grace during these summer days.

6th Annual Retired Servants Conference/ Retreat is Oct 3-5

You are invited to attend the Sixth Annual Retired UCC Servants Conference/Retreat that will be held Monday dinner through Wednesday morning on October 3-5, 2016. This event is being planned for Retired UCC Servants of the Southeast and Southern Conferences of the UCC. It is being held at Blowing Rock Conference Center in Blowing Rock, NC amid the beauty of fall coming to the NC mountains!

[Click here to view all the information on our website.](#)

50th Anniversary History Books Available

Copies of the 50th Anniversary history of the Southeast Conference are still available. The cost is \$25 which includes shipping and handling.

Please send a note detailing how many copies are desired and the complete mailing address along with a check for the total amount. Or you may pay through our [on-line contribution site](#) noting the payment is for History Book and emailing the shipping details to info@secucc.org. Please allow 2-3 weeks for processing.

OCWM Basic Support Payment Reminder

All OCWM Basic Support payments and all Special Offerings should be sent to the Southeast Conference Office, 105 Courtland Street, Atlanta, GA 30303. If sending online, please make sure you are on the SECUCC.ORG website; not the National UCC website.

Boycott Wendy's: Stand with Farm Workers!

For 10 years Wendy's has refused to participate in the Coalition of Immokalee Workers' Fair Food Program which protects the human rights of Florida farm workers - shielding them from sexual harassment, child labor, and even slavery and boosting their pay by one penny per pound of tomatoes.

As people of faith we cannot stand by why workers are exploited. Honor the Coalition of Immokalee Workers' boycott of fast-food giant Wendy's. Join members of the United Church of Christ and many other people in supporting farm workers! Learn more here: ucc.org/boycott_wendys