

CONFERENCE *connection*

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



SOUTHEAST UCC Conference

September 1, 2017



From the Conference Minister

Dear Friends,

For more than a week we have all watched in sadness and compassion as Hurricane Harvey came ashore in Texas and then continued to dump water on the southeastern part of the state. In this newsletter, there is an article stating how you can donate money through UCC Disaster Relief Services and other things you can do. There are many ways to help. I want to encourage you, if you choose to donate, to do it through Disaster Relief. **When you donate through the UCC, 100% of your donation goes to “on the ground help.”** The national setting of the UCC has already released funds for Hurricane Harvey relief efforts. I can also assure you that long after the 24/7 media coverage leaves Houston and the surrounding area, the UCC will continue to be there. Our denomination’s focus in disaster relief is long-term recovery. We arrive as the crisis managers leave and we stay until homes and communities are restored. It is not glamorous work, but it the work of Christ made flesh in our world.

[DONATE TO UCC HURRICANE RELIEF](#)

The other reminder I want to add is that it is the beginning of September and we are all beginning to regroup from the summer. Please, remember your OCWM pledges. OCWM giving always slows during the summer, and this is your friendly reminder that the work of the conference and national settings continues in the summer months. **Also remember that it is your OCWM contributions that make it possible for your Disaster Relief funds to go solely to relief efforts.** Your OCWM giving allows the national setting to pay for the staff and the overhead that is needed for Disaster Relief whenever and wherever it happens.

I have heard from the Rev. Dr. Don Longbottom, Conference Minister of the South Central Conference, UCC. He is doing well, but several of our sister UCC churches are under

water. Please keep them all in prayer during the coming weeks and months. As other opportunities for assisting our neighboring conference arises, I will let you know.

Thank you for your generosity in the face of Hurricane Harvey.

Blessings and peace,
Marie

News from Around the Conference

Next Transforming Churches- Transforming Lives Grants Open September 18

Starting Monday September 18 thru Tuesday October 31, 2017, the *Transforming Churches-Transforming Lives* application process will be open for accepting applications. If you have a project in your church that meets the criteria of furthering the mission or ministry in your community, send in an application. Awards are reviewed and awarded for up to \$5,000.00 in November.



If you have any questions, please email Debbie Spearman, Generosity Coordinator at dspearman@secucc.org.



Prayer List

We are continuing the process of praying for authorized ministers, congregations, and ministry groups throughout 2017. 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 2017 prayer list.](#)

Week of September 6

- Fairfield Glade Community Church; Fairfield Glade, Tennessee
- Larry Calbert
- Reginald Holloway
- Alan Brett Roof
- Cameron Trimble

Week of September 13

- Community Congregational UCC; Montgomery, Alabama
- Michelle Calderon
- Michelle Holtmann
- Benjamin Rose
- Herbert Turner

Transitions

- **Rev. Michael Piazza** has received a call to Middle Collegiate Church, Manhattan, NY. His last Sunday at Virginia Highland Church is Sunday, September 24th.
- **Rev. Sharon Temple** is retiring from Brookmeade Congregational UCC, Nashville, TN. Her last Sunday will be Sunday, September 24th.

Register Today for the Retired UCC Servants Retreat

Retired Clergy! Make sure to register today for the 7th annual Retired UCC Servants Retreat. Join your peers from October 2-4 at an event for intellectual stimulation; spiritual enlightenment and reflection; and renewing friendships and/or making new friends for Retired UCC Clergy, Missionaries, Volunteer Ministry Workers and Spouses of the Southeast and Southern Conferences of the United Church of Christ.

Please register by contacting Ms. Amy Stamey, reservations manager at Blowing Rock Conference Center, at 828-295-7813 or amy@brccenter.org. Please let Amy know when you are arriving, Sunday evening, Monday morning, or Monday afternoon, so that Blowing Rock can prepare Monday lunch for those who have arrived early. Also, let Amy know the number of nights you are staying.

The full details, including schedule and cost, is [available on our website](#).

News from our Local Churches



Elon University Recognizes Joyce Myers-Brown

Elon University, a historically UCC affiliated university, recently recognized Southeast Conference member Joyce Myers-Brown in their alumni magazine and on their website.

In an article entitled "Alumna dedicates life to advocate for peace and justice," they write "From an early age, faith and family helped the Rev. Joyce Myers-Brown '59 develop an attitude of love for every being that has guided her life."

[Read the article on the Elon website](#)



Big Success in South Georgia from a Church Grant recipient!

In the South Georgia town of Thomasville at Evergreen UCC, Dr. Myrtle and Rev. Dr. Artis Johnson, decided that their children K thru 12 needed to improve their Reading and Math Skills based on their report cards. So they started a project called **Evergreen U.C.C. Parents United for Children Chromebook Tutorial**. The church applied and was granted \$5,000.00 from [the Southeast Conference Transforming Churches – Transforming Lives Capital Campaign](#) in January 2017.

[Read more on our website.](#)

News from our Denomination

UCC Responds to Hurricane Harvey with Emergency Fund

Want to help those affected by Hurricane Harvey? Donate today to the UCC Emergency USA Fund. All contributions are tax-deductible and 100% of your money goes to those in need.

[Learn more on our website.](#)



Matching Grants Available for Hurricane Relief

UCC Disaster Ministries is offering congregations matching grants of up to \$250 as an incentive to assemble Church World Service kits — in particular, CWS Emergency Cleanup Buckets but also CWS School and Hygiene Kits. A heavy demand for buckets in 2016 has brought CWS's stockpiles down to only 1,800. [Learn more on our website.](#)

Preserve Your Community: Learn about the Insurance Board

Keep safe the haven of your house of worship, facilities, property and services with insurance designed just for the United Church of Christ. The Insurance Board is a nonprofit corporation established by the participating Conferences of the UCC, including the Southeast Conference. More than 4,000 churches participate in the program insuring more than \$14 billion dollars in property value.

The Insurance Board's quarterly newsletter ([available here](#)) offers terrific articles with valuable information, including Background Check Compliance, Sanctuary Churches, Bounce Houses; Green Endorsement; Boundary Training, and much more.

Although many of our UCC congregations around the country use the Insurance Board, only 40% of those in the Southeast Conference participate. Check out the IB website for more details: insuranceboard.org or [contact Tom Mitchell](#), a member of the Board of Directors of the IB and a new member of Pleasant Hill Community Church.

Training and Retreat Opportunities

Fall 2017 PATHWAYS Course Registration Now Open

Do you want to know more about what it means to be a Christian? Are you a leader in your church or do you want to serve more faithfully? Have you always wanted that chance to learn more about the Bible or other aspects of theology? PATHWAYS can help you in all these ways.

PATHWAYS Theological Education offers courses (completely online) for everyone who seeks to deepen their knowledge and who wants to bring their questions about Christianity into a conversation with other learners. PATHWAYS also brings a full curriculum for people who are wanting a practical theological education and who may be answering a call to authorized ministry. As a group, the PATHWAYS Advisory Committee wrote a [Progressive Christianity Statement](#) in order to share our theological approach.

We have participants from near and far around the UCC and beyond. All are welcome to our 4-week long Explorer Series courses and to our 6-week long Level One foundational

courses. Please go to pathways-ucc.org for more information.

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