October 15, 2017

Announcing our New Associate Conference Minister

Dear Friends,

It seems like every day we hear more news about how the mainline church is in decline. Unfortunately, some of the news is true. Things are changing; what worked for decades is no longer working and it calls for a new way to sing God's song in our land. Yet we in the Southeast Conference are learning how to sing that new song. Even though some of our churches are experiencing decline, many are growing: with young families, with children, with single people of all ages and all stages of life. It is a time of new birth for a number of our churches.

The Conference is in a rebirth as well. You all did some good and hard work the past few years. The Conference now has a balanced budget. Committees and processes are streamlined. We are poised for new growth and new avenues of ministry. This is how it should be: when hard work is done well, we all experience the benefits.

Your Board of Directors at their last retreat responded to this new birth with excitement and hope for the future ministry we all can accomplish in the Southeast Conference. The Board of Directors unanimously voted to create a full time Associate Conference Minister position. This position will incorporate the duties presently done by our Registrar position, but will also include greater responsibilities for the Commission on Ministry and represent the Conference (in addition to the Conference Minister.) This position gives us the opportunity to serve the congregations and pastors of the Southeast Conference better and begins to bring future possibilities of ministry closer to being reality.

The salary of this new position, along with the salary of your Interim Conference Minister—while adequate—are by no means luxurious. If you have detailed questions about the finances, please contact any member of the Board of Directors or one of us.

The Board of Directors also unanimously voted to call Heather Fosburgh Bardole as Associate Conference Minister. Since she began working for the Conference in November, Heather has become an invaluable resource to us. At General Synod we heard numerous times, "Oh, Heather works for your conference, she is amazing." She is indeed a great gift and her ministry is essential to our success.

The other exciting part of this is that Heather is Approved for Ordination Pending Call, and this position is an ordainable call, so I joyfully invite you to the Ordination of Heather Fosburgh Bardole into the Christian Ministry on Sunday, November 12, 2017 at 5:00 p.m. at Kirkwood United Church of Christ, Atlanta, GA.

This Conference is poised to do great things. We are blessed to serve with you at this time.

Blessings,

Marie Bacchiocchi, Interim Conference Minister
News from Around the Conference

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 October 15
- Peace Congregational UCC; Clemson, South Carolina
- James Cavanaugh
- Julius Jessup Peterson
- Jennifer Sanders
- Lyle Weible

Week of October 22
- Methodist Congregational Federated; Demorest, Georgia
- Soo Man Chang
- Artis Johnson
- Troy Sanders
- J Houston Wheeler

Conference Transitions
- Rev. Michael Malcom was installed as Senior Pastor of Rush Memorial UCC in Atlanta on Sunday, October 15, 2017.
- A service of Ordination into Christian Ministry will be held for Heather Fosburgh Bardole on Sunday, November 12, 2017 at Kirkwood UCC in Atlanta.

Grant Monies Increase Church’s Visibility via Facebook Ads, Printed Brochures

Community Congregational United Church of Christ in Montgomery, AL reports that their recent infusion of nearly $5,000 from a Transforming Churches-Transforming Lives
Grant allowed them to do some work that was so necessary for this season in their life as a growing congregation with a stretched budget and graying core membership; primarily around outreach and publicity, getting the word out about our congregation and the denomination.

They were greatly overwhelmed by the success of this endeavor, and were astounded to see how well advertising on Facebook worked! Pastor Ray Speller that explains their success and outlines in detail (with a PowerPoint!) how they were able to accomplish so much! Read the article on our website.

Remember, the current Capital Campaign grant cycle closes October 31, 2017! Submit your grant online using our new, easy-to-use form.

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**The Edible Gospel: Recipes and Reflections from Circular Congregational Church**

Circular Congregational Church is pleased to announce the publication of The Edible Gospel, Recipes and Reflections from Circular Congregational Church (UCC) $18.00. This Charleston cookbook includes essays by Stephanie Hunt, artwork by Debra Stokes, and a tempting collection of over 180 recipes from the sea, the farm, the farmer’s market and the dessert table. Learn more about the cookbook (and how to purchase) on our website.

The culmination of 21 months of meetings, gathering recipes, writing essays, testing and tasting wonderful foods, while telling stories about our church and It’s traditions, Circular Congregational would love to be a resource for other congregations who would like to do the same thing. If you’re interested in learning more, feel free to contact Barbara Brant-Williams at bbw4652@gmail.com.

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**October 14 & 15 was a busy weekend around the Conference!**

The ALA-TN Association gathered for worship and fellowship at Pleasant Hill

Decatur UCC had a booth at the Atlanta Pride festival in Piedmont Park.
Pilgrimage UCC (Marietta) had a booth at the Atlanta Pride festival in Piedmont Park.

Kirkwood UCC (Atlanta) participated with a float in the Atlanta Pride parade.

### Training and Retreat Opportunities

**2017 Retired Servants Retreat**

The group gathered for this year’s Retired Servant's Retreat that was entitled "For Such a Time as This: Practicing Our Faith in the Public Square."

### Equipping Local Church Members For Ministry With Online Theological Education

Equipping local church members for ministry: that's one facet of the PATHWAYS mission. Often, members of local churches want to learn more to help them grow into the ministries they share in the local churches. Among the things congregants seek are greater knowledge of the Bible (and how to read the Bible as Progressive Christians) and the role of worship in their lives.

PATHWAYS course offerings this month include a course in *Old Testament Hermeneutics* that Bible study leaders will find engaging and informative. Facilitated by the Rev. Dr. Ruth Shaver from the Massachusetts Conference, participants will gain a greater understanding of the rich literature that comprises the Hebrew scriptures.

Gaining an appreciation of worship as both part of the shared life of the congregation and an individual's spiritual practice is the focus of the course *The Art of Worship*. Poetic, artist and licensed minister, Regina Drake, a member of Victory for the World UCC in Georgia will
Both courses begin on October 23, last six weeks, and are available online. For more information, visit www.pathways-ucc.org.

**Still Reforming:** a national conference to empower church culture, innovation, and sustainability

Join First Congregational Church in Atlanta and the Center for Progressive Renewal on November 8-10 for this workshop. In working with churches, the Center for Progressive Renewal hears three big questions:

1. How do we understand and reach millennials?
2. What are some new significant things churches are doing?
3. How do we sustain ministry as primary donors age and younger members have less to give?

Leading thinkers will present their ideas/best practices and convene conversations that will nurture creativity and learning. Optional free pre-conferences include Innovation in Theological Education and reVision: Discerning God's Call for the Future of Your Church.

For more information and to register, visit progressiverenewal.org.

**Workshop for Church Leaders: Healthy Congregations**

The Lombard Mennonite Peace Center invites you to a Friday evening and Saturday workshop designed to equip leaders to respond to anxiety in congregational systems, in order to prevent destructive conflict and help churches stay focused on their mission.

This workshop is designed for Pastors, Church Council / Vestry / Session members, Judicatory leaders, and lay leaders. The workshop would be especially helpful if a team made up of both clergy and lay leadership from a congregation would attend the event together.

This interdenominational workshop will be hosted by Union United Methodist Church in Irmo, SC (Columbia area) on November 3-4, 2017.

Discounts are available for individuals and groups who register by October 20, 2017.

For more information or registration, go to www.LMPeaceCenter.org.

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