



THE MINNESOTA CONFERENCE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

122 WEST FRANKLIN, SUITE 323, MINNEAPOLIS, MN 55404 PHONE:(612) 871-0359 FAX: (612) 870-4885
MN PHONE: 1-800-684-1718 WEB SITE: HTTP://WWW.UCCMN.ORG

March, 2010

**Attention Minnesota Conference UCC Congregations & Authorized Ministers:
You are hereby called to the Minnesota Conference 48th Annual Meeting,
June 11-13, 2010, College of Saint Benedict, St. Joseph, Minnesota:
“Witnesses... to the ends of the earth!”**

KAREN SMITH SELLERS
Conference Minister
122 W. Franklin, Suite 323
Minneapolis, MN 55404
Phone: (612) 871-0359
kareness@uccmn.org

ELENA LARSEN
Associate Conference Minister
122 W. Franklin, Suite 323
Minneapolis, MN 55404
Phone: (612) 871-0359
elenal@uccmn.org

RICHARD WAGNER
Associate Conference Minister
122 W. Franklin, Suite 323
Minneapolis, MN 55404
Phone: (612) 871-0359
rickw@uccmn.org

DEE DRESSLER
Managing Director
Pilgrim Point Camp
P.O. Box 305
Alexandria, MN 56308
Camp Phone: (320) 846-2852
Office: (320) 763-6549
Cell: (320) 241-1394
deed@uccmn.org

WADE ZICK
Ashley Minister
of Faith Formation
for Children and Youth
122 W. Franklin, Suite 323
Minneapolis, MN 55404
Phone: (612) 871-0359
wadez@uccmn.org

Four members of the national UCC Wider Church Ministries staff are our honored guests at this year's Annual Meeting. Rev. Cally Rogers-Witte, executive minister of the UCC's Wider Church Ministries and co-executive for Global Ministries, will provide a keynote address and will preach at our Sunday morning worship service. Susan Sanders, Minister and Team Leader for Global Sharing of Resources, will share her knowledge of the work and impact of One Great Hour of Sharing. Rev. Mike Schuenemeyer, Executive for Health and Wholeness Advocacy, has particular expertise in HIV/AIDS and its impact both domestically and globally. Rev. Xiaoling Zhu, Area Executive for East Asia and the Pacific on the Partner Relations Ministry Team, will share his knowledge on the issue of climate change and particularly how it is affecting East Asia and the Pacific.

Registration will open at 11:00am, and all who are able are asked to arrive for the first plenary session at 1:00 on Friday afternoon. We also anticipate having the opportunity to hear from Kaleidoscope, Inc., the consulting firm working with us to identify a viable mission and ministry plan for the Minnesota Conference related to Pilgrim Point Camp, and to offer feedback to that process. We will be asked to ratify changes to the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ (approved at General Synod in Grand Rapids).

Our worship times will be enhanced by exciting and culturally diverse music and traditions. We look forward to a plethora of informative workshops, wonderful Bible studies, and an opportunity to meet up with old friends while making new ones.

Childcare for children ages infant to ten years (just finishing fifth grade) will be provided during all Plenary and workshop sessions for those who register in advance. Please use the enclosed form.

This year, there will be exhibits all day Saturday right in the Gorecki Center. The College offers a discounted suite rate for families with children. Suites are also available at a regular rate for those desiring toilet facilities “en suite.” And please remember, you are encouraged to send a young adult (or youth) delegate from your congregation to the Annual Meeting.

We request the honor of your presence at the 2010 Minnesota Conference Annual Meeting.

Rev. Dr. Karen Smith Sellers Rev. Mark Kuether

Rev. Helen McEvoy-Freese

Conference Minister

Conference Moderator

Annual Meeting Planning

**New term for “Local Church”
speaks to Conference Annual Meeting theme**

A November 2009 Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ letter to our local congregations mentioned a new nomenclature that has been recommended to replace the term “Local Church” with the wider conception **“local community of ministry and mission.”**

These words are authored by the eminent church theologian and scholar Rev. Dr. Clyde J. Steckel, a member of the First Congregational UCC of Minnesota and Professor Emeritus at the United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities.

Dr. Steckel, in his new Pilgrim Press publication, *New Ecclesiology and Polity: The United Church of Christ*, recommends that the term **“local community of ministry and mission”** replace the more limited and limiting designation of “local church”.

My response as I now re-read the November epistle is that this new term would both enhance the concept of what it means to be the church in regard to the ever-expanding relationship we have with the church universal and the realities of “Globalism” and its interdependence with our lives in the twenty-first century.

When we gather for the Minnesota Conference Annual Meeting, June 11-13, at the College of St. Benedict, we will be a gathering of local communities of ministry and mission seeking to explore our roles and responsibilities throughout our conference and throughout God’s world.

This new term for the “local church” certainly speaks to the Conference Annual Meeting theme: **“WITNESSES... TO THE ENDS OF THE EARTH!”**

Rev. Xiaoling Zhu, Wider Church Ministries Area Executive for East Asia and the Pacific, will address our connection to the ministries in that part of God’s world. His office encompasses a vast region. It ranges from Mongolia to New Zealand and from China to the Pacific Island nations. One quarter of the world’s population – almost 1.6 billion of God’s children – live there, a region encompassing one-sixth of the landmass of the world.

Global Ministries has partners and projects with China, Taiwan, Korea, the Philippines and other countries. It has 16 missionaries in seven different countries.

Rev. Zhu will provide valuable insights into our relationships with this part of the world as we, informed by a new and more visionary concept of what it means to the church – **“local communities of ministry and mission”** - seek to explore ways of serving God together as member congregations in the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ.

By Rev. Dick Fylling, Annual Meeting Planning Work Group