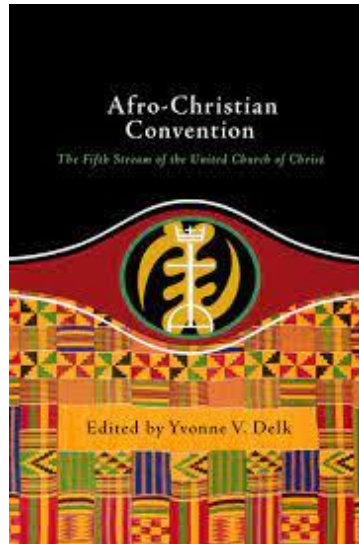


**Afro-Christian Convention**  
**Book Study and Discussion Series**  
1<sup>st</sup> Congregational Church of Winona  
Peace United Church of Christ, Rochester  
Congregational United Church of Christ, Rochester

**Schedule and Study Guide**



The book can be purchased from [Amazon](#) or [Pilgrim Press](#)

*"The Afro-Christian Convention was here from the beginning. There was always a fifth stream nurturing the roots of the UCC. For me, and those who look like me, the history of our Church is like a Cajun gumbo, carrying the distinct characteristics of many faith bodies, each bringing their uniqueness, and the fifth stream is the roux. Truth is never really hidden from those who seek to know it." - Rev. Traci D. Blackmon, Associate General Minister of the UCC*

Join Zoom Meeting

<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/89808714902?pwd=ZFhvdkhNjNjZDRldldQZ3VQN2Nydz09>

Meeting ID: 898 0871 4902

Passcode: 55987

Facilitators

Jerry Locula

Rev. Danielle K Bartz

## **Tuesday September 26, 2023**

*Prior to the meeting please read the Foreword, Chapter 1, Chapter 9, and Chapter 10*

6:30pm - Prayer, Scriptural Grounding, Introductions, and Group Covenant

6:50pm - Opening remarks by facilitators and general questions from participants

7:00pm – Break-Out Discussion Groups

- What does it mean that the Afro-Christian Convention was not born, but tested, in slavery?
- When have you or your community learned something about your history that changed your self-understanding and caused you to act differently?
- Delk says the church is not static. Has your community ever confused fidelity with a refusal to change or stability with permanence? How have you navigated these conversations?

7:30pm – Large Group Wrap-Up

- What was a new learning for you?
- What are your lingering questions?
- Plans for next week

7:40pm – Closing

- [Lift Every Voice and Sing](#)

## **Tuesday October 3, 2023**

*Prior to the meeting please read Chapter 2, Chapter 3, and Chapter 4*

6:30pm – Prayer, Scriptural Grounding, and Reminder of Group Covenant

6:40pm – Introduction of Rev. Brenda Square, currently serving as the Director of the Afro Christian Preservation Project of Franklinton Center at Bricks. She is also co-pastor of Beecher Memorial Congregational United Church of Christ in New Orleans, Louisiana.

6:45pm – Conversation with Rev. Square

7:15pm – Break-Out Discussion Groups

- Name and discuss some of the points of affirmation and question that have emerged for you in light of this renewed collective history?
- Where do you see points of connection between the Afro-Christian story and the other streams of our faith communities?

7:30pm – Large Group Wrap-Up

- Thank you to Rev. Square
- What are your lingering questions
- Plans for next week
- Closing Prayer/Poem

## **Tuesday October 10<sup>th</sup>**

*Prior to the meeting please read Chapter 5 and Chapter 6*

6:30pm - Prayer, Scriptural Grounding, Reminder of Group Covenant

6:35pm – Summary and Highlights of the reading by facilitators

6:45pm – General questions from participants

6:50pm – Break-Out Discussion Groups

- When in your faith community have you encountered varying and challenging theological positions? How were those perspectives expressed?
- Name and discuss times in your faith community when differences were understood or interpreted as ‘deficiencies.’ How did those experiences shape or misshape efforts toward unity?
- Discuss the values of Ubuntu (respect, dignity, compassion, co-responsibility, personhood, justice). How could those values be used to honor and encourage unity?

7:20pm – Large Group Wrap-Up

- What was a new learning for you?
- What are your lingering questions?
- Plans for next week

7:35pm – Closing Prayer/Poem

## **Tuesday October 24<sup>th</sup>**

*Prior to the meeting please read Chapter 7 and Chapter 8*

6:30pm - Prayer, Scriptural Grounding, Reminder of Group Covenant

6:35pm – Summary and Highlights of the reading by facilitators

6:45pm – General questions from participants

6:50pm – Break-Out Discussion Groups

- Name and discuss some of the ways that the current climate of division and mistrust in our nation have shaken feelings of self-worth and dignity in your faith community.
- What does the partnering of personal piety and social responsibility look like in your personal life and in your community?
- Which values of Ubuntu (respect, dignity, compassion, co-responsibility, personhood, justice) can be used as a model that support and sustain the beloved community in your community

7:20pm – Large Group Wrap-Up

- What was a new learning for you?
- What are your lingering questions?
- Plans for next week

7:35pm – Closing Prayer/Poem

**Tuesday October 31<sup>st</sup>**

6:30pm - Prayer, Scriptural Grounding, Reminder of Group Covenant

6:35pm – Break-Out Discussion Groups

- How do you understand the United Church of Christ differently now that the Afro-Christian Convention is an acknowledged and understood stream of our identity?
- Building on everything we have learned thus far, where do we as individuals and faith communities go from here?

7:05pm – Large Group Discussion

- What do we, as a covenanted community in SE Minnesota what do to next to continue to learn about and honor our expanded understanding of history and identity of the United Church of Christ?

7:20pm – Facilitator’s Closing Remarks

7:30pm – Closing Prayer/Poem