

CENTRAL ATLANTIC CONFERENCE MEETS

We again had the honor of serving as your delegates to the annual meeting of the Central Atlantic Conference at the University of Delaware, Newark, DE. The Rev. Jean Thompson was also a participant and presenter.

This year's Annual Meeting was something of a departure from past meetings. Most often the delegates hear inspirational talks, participate in workshops oriented to the needs of local churches, pass some resolutions about matters of common concern, conduct the necessary business matters of the Conference, and disperse. All that did indeed happen; but to their great credit, leaders of the Conference realized that this year, we needed to start taking action in two areas.

One "area" is that of the resolutions the Conference has adopted, and General Synod has adopted, in recent years. The 2015 General Synod adopted a Resolution regarding the Israeli-Palestinian Conflict, a resolution synthesizing those adopted by the CAC and some other Conferences. The UCC was called upon to boycott and/or divest holdings in companies that profit from human rights abuses in the West Bank. Multiple presentations and workshops highlighted what has been accomplished, but there is much more to be done. UCC General Minister, the Rev. John Dorhauer has asked the CAC to take the lead in monitoring implementation of the resolution. (Translation: Due to declining contributions to conferences and the national setting through Our Church's Wider Mission, the national setting has no one to do this.) The CAC Board has agreed, with the understanding that the task will fall mostly on volunteers, primarily the Palestine-Israel Network of the Conference, which mostly consists of members of the Potomac Association. The latter would be most pleased to hear from people who would like to help; Chuck can put you in touch.

The 2015 General Synod adopted resolutions calling for Dismantling the New Jim Crow and an end to Mass Incarceration. Chris Shank, Deputy Chief of Staff to Governor Larry Hogan, explained the work of the Maryland Justice Reinvestment Coordinating Council (which he chaired), intended to reach agreement on sentencing reform in Maryland. (Mr. Shank, currently a member of a Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) local church, was until recently a lifelong member of a UCC church.) Mr. Hillary Shelton, Director NAACP Washington Bureau/Senior Vice President for Advocacy and Policy, reminded us of the magnitude of injustice that has occurred and of how much remains to be addressed. Chaplain Lynn Litchfield, a former Virginia prison chaplain now on the staff of the ecumenical Christian ministry that provides chaplain services in Virginia prisons (at no cost to the state), acquainted us with the magnitude of the injustices (including denial of access to religious ministries) routinely carried out in our names. (Rev. Litchfield, who was ordained as a Baptist, now holds standing with the UCC.)

The Rev. Graylan Hagler, senior pastor of Plymouth Congregational Church UCC in Washington, DC, led a workshop on "Racism in America and its Manifestations in the World."

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EXERCISE YOUR GOD-GIVEN MATURITY

This appeared as a StillSpeaking Daily Devotional on February 26, 2015
Written by **Lillian Daniel**

"Unlike the culture around you, always dragging you down to its level of immaturity, God brings the best out of you, develops well-formed maturity in you." - Romans 12:2 (MSG)

Oh, if only this were true. I would like to think that God is always bringing out the best in people, but sometimes it seems like people act their very worst around God.

Someone who, on any other topic, would be open-minded becomes a judgmental maniac on the topic of God. It's always the true believer who says that everyone else is wrong.

True believers on the God topic scare me, whether they are arguing for or against. Sometimes, when atheists and Christians debate, I want both teams to be disqualified. If I were God, I wouldn't want any of them arguing on my behalf or even in my ballpark.

But then I remember all the quiet people. They are all over God's house and all over the world. They quietly live the God life without drawing attention to themselves. They listen more than they lecture. They give more examples and fewer instructions.

They have that God-given maturity that makes them comfortable enough to sit back when the immature people are taking up all the space. They are the ones who will stay around to pick up the pieces. In God's house, and out in the world, they're the ones who set up the chairs and then put them away afterwards.

The mature ones aren't afraid to stay late and clean up. Perhaps, in their own immature pasts, they threw a few pieces themselves.

We don't just land in the world, already mature but in a diaper. Everybody has to come from somewhere.

Maybe the way to maturity is through immaturity. Maybe both conditions are gifts from God, who thought the journey would be good for us.

Prayer

God, today I promise you....wait, make that, I pinky promise you... that I will clean my whole room, use my best manners and think about other people all day long, without once having one, single, solitary tantrum, ever. Amen. And I'm serious!

About the Author

Lillian Daniel, author of [When "Spiritual But Not Religious" is Not Enough](#), has a chapter in the new anthology, [What My Mother Gave Me: Thirty-one Women on the Gifts That Mattered Most](#). Follow her on twitter [@lillianfdaniel](#).

Bible Reading ... at Home

(Adapted from SeasonsFUSION - *Seasons of the Spirit*™ Wood Lake Publishing)

July 3 - Voice of Unexpected Wisdom

2 Kings 5:1-14

Psalm 30

Luke 10:1-11, 16-20

Galatians 6:(1-6), 7-16

So often it is in the word or deed of someone who is disregarded, insignificant, outcast, or beyond the usual realm of relationships and expectations that God is made known. In each of this week's readings, from Naaman and the captive slave girl, to the disciples who venture out "like lambs among wolves," we are invited to notice the wisdom of God where we would not expect to find it.

REFLECTION: So often, God, our good intentions are just that, and do not translate into actions that bring your healing and accepting peace. May we be aware of the voices that we block out from our hearing, and help us to be open to their insights and wisdom. Amen.

July 10 - Beyond Expectations

Amos 7:7-17

Psalm 82

Luke 10:25-37

Colossians 1:1-14

Each one of us is called to measure the degree to which we remain faithful to the call of God to treat every human being with love and justice. We present the human face of God in so many situations. As compassionate disciples, we love God with all our hearts and our neighbors as ourselves. What acts of justice and kindness – given and received – have accompanied your faith journey?

July 17 - Listening, Learning, and Living

Amos 8:1-12

Psalm 52

Luke 10:38-42

Colossians 1:15-28

Discipleship encompasses a call to ground our daily living in the word of God. We are called to

listen to God's word of grace, and then let it shape our living. In spite of the ways we fall short as disciples as we live in God's reign, it is Christ – and not our own actions – that holds all together.

REFLECTION: Living God, may we make time and space in our busy lives to be with you. May we find your presence in this time and space; listening for your living word, feeling your hand hold our very being, knowing your love surrounds each moment. Amen.

July 24 - Passion of Prayer

Hosea 1:2-10

Psalm 85

Luke 11:1-13

Colossians 2:6-15, (16-19)

Many people who have never attended church still know the words and themes of the so-called "Lord's Prayer." In Luke's simple version, this prayer formula focuses us on the things that really matter: God's presence, God's provision, and God's forgiveness.

REFLECTION: Listening God, teach us to pray. Loving God, teach us to trust. Life-giving God, teach us to truly live for you. Amen.

July 31 - Life Consists of ...

Hosea 11:1-11

Psalm 107:1-9, 43

Luke 12:13-21

Colossians 3:1-11

What is important in the life of a disciple? Jesus tells a parable about a rich farmer who allowed love of possessions to dominate life. Jesus warns against all kinds of greed – which the letter to Colossians identifies as "idolatry." Life consists of living in ways that are rich toward God.

REFLECTION: Help us grow toward your sense of abundance: abundant listening, active love, fullest life. Amen.

PLEASE HELP LINKAGES TO LEARNING BY DONATING NEW BACKPACKS AND SCHOOL SUPPLIES

The Sharing Team will be collecting new backpacks for needy elementary and middle school youth from July 17 until August 7.

Although backpacks are the priority item, other supplies needed are :

| | |
|---------------------------|---------------------|
| Composition Books | Crayons and Markers |
| Folders and Binders | Paper |
| Pencils and large erasers | Pens |
| Glue Sticks | Spiral Notebooks |
| Calculators | |

Cash or check donations are welcome also. Please make your check out to BUCC with the note "school supplies" in the memo line.

There will be a collection bin in the narthex for the supplies.

This is a fun activity to get your children involved in picking out backpacks and supplies for other kids.

Thanks for your help.

Linkages to Learning is a partnership among public and nonprofit agencies, families, and communities whose goal is to provide accessible prevention and early intervention services in 28 high poverty school community.



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Then there were the other presentations (this was quite a full agenda.) The Rev. Heber Brown III, a representative of the Center for Progressive Renewal, managed to combine the thoughts of a church consultant with very realistic examples of what it means to be the body of Christ in a blighted and dangerous neighborhood in Baltimore.

In the Saturday "banquet" address, Mr. Douglas Hallward-Driemeier recounted his role in arguing for marriage equality before the U.S. Supreme Court, and also what had brought him to that point. He was one of two UCC members among the attorneys arguing for the plaintiffs. He does not claim to be a theologian, and of course the attorneys for the plaintiffs could only argue in legal terms, but he gave one of the better theological justifications for marriage equality we have heard.

Jean Thompson, on behalf of the racial justice working group of the Potomac Association and several individuals and with the endorsement of the Potomac Association, proposed a resolution intended to increase opportunities for several underrepresented groups to seek calls as senior and sole pastors of UCC churches in the Conference. The resolution was approved.

Linda Myers

Rev. Chuck Myers



SUNDAY SUNDAE SOCIAL

To help kick-off the *Linkages for Learning School Supply Collection* and other summer activities, the Sharing Team will host an ice cream social on **Sunday, July 10**.

This will happen immediately following services. We will have time to visit with one another as well as have a good excuse to eat ice cream before noon.

See you then

BOOK GROUP

The BUCC Book Group will meet on July 12 at 3:30 pm in the church parlor.

The book we will discuss is "Showdown: Thurgood Marshall and the Supreme Court Nomination that changed America" by Will Haywood.

"Even though I know that Marshall was confirmed and served on the Court for almost twenty-five years, I found myself on the edge of my seat wondering what the outcome would be... *Showdown* is the best kind of narrative history. The story line is taut, the characters are complex, and the backdrop is finely drawn. As with all of Haygood's books, *Showdown* has a somewhat breathless quality to it that made me sorry I had to turn out the light and go to bed. In this propitiously timed book, Haygood has reminded us how important Marshall was, not only to the African American community, but to the entire country. Every one of us lives in a world shaped by this extraordinary man. —*Columbus Free Press* (Amazon.com)

All are welcome to join in the discussion and fellowship.

BUCC CHRISTMAS SERVICE

Last month Outlook reported that the vote in favor of not having a Sunday morning service on Christmas, since Christmas falls on Sunday this year, was 23 for canceling it and 16 wishing to have one. Therefore we are not planning on having a worship service on Christmas morning. However, those people who are interested in having a service may organize their own service. If you are interested, please let Martha Knouss know so that the Trustees can arrange for the sanctuary to be open and warm for you. Again, the pastor, music director and Worship Team will not be involved in organizing a service.

CHANCE TO REPRESENT BUCC AT CAC MEETINGS

Year after year we report to you that the best part of the annual Central Atlantic Conference meeting is the fellowship with people from around the Conference, sharing stories of our various witnesses in very different circumstances. Our current delegates, the Rev. Chuck Myers and Linda Myers still find this to be the case. So much so that they are inclined to insist that in future years, some others take on the roles as delegates and share in the fun and good food that goes along with the Annual Meeting. In 2017, the UCC's General Synod is in Baltimore, and the CAC Annual Meeting will be a brief celebratory affair in Baltimore in October.

This would be an excellent time to involve someone new. The advantages of being a delegate are many. The Conference meets only once a year so there are no monthly church meetings to attend.

HELP AT SYNOD

Here is a chance to be a part of a large national convention, somewhat like the political conventions we will see this summer, but without the TV coverage. The Central Atlantic Conference is the host for the 2017 General Synod of the United Church of Christ, In Baltimore, June 30-July 4, 2017 (with additional events both before and after these dates). The host Conference and its Local Arrangements Committee do not determine the content of the Synod's business or worship. They "merely" provide the volunteer manpower, and some funding (largely for volunteers' expenses), so that General Synod can happen and so that delegates and guests can learn about our region and its rich history. The Conference needs people to volunteer NOW, so that assignments and training (by fellow volunteers) will be completed in good time. See <http://www.cacucc.org/generalsynod2017>, email Jill White at gs2017lac@gmail.com, or talk with Chuck Myers. It sounds like a memorable experience.



The Universoul Circus features Spiritual Night on Thursdays at 7:00 pm during its tour at the National Harbor. On Thursday, July 14, 2016 there will be a special evening sponsored by the Mayor's Interfaith Council of Washington, D.C. It promises to be an entertaining and spiritual experience that the entire family can enjoy.

Purchase your tickets at www.universoulcircus.com

Discount opportunities are available on select seating while supplies last. Use code MIC. Tickets are available through Ticketmaster and additional fees may apply.

JULY 2016

| Sunday | Monday | Tuesday | Wednesday | Thursday | Friday | Saturday |
|--|--|--|--|--|---|---|
| | | | | | 1 12:30 PM Islamic Center of Maryland 7:00 PM CrossPointe Fellowship | 2 8:00 AM SDA 6:00 PM SDA |
| 3 8:30 AM Choir Practice 10:30 AM Worship Service, Sunday School 2:00 PM CrossPointe Fellowship | 4 INDEPENDENCE DAY -- BUCC Office CLOSED | 5 3:30 PM Worship Team | 6 7:00 PM Metro Garden Club | 7 | 8 12:30 PM Islamic Center of Maryland 7:00 PM CrossPointe Fellowship | 9 8:00 AM SDA 6:00 PM SDA |
| 10 8:30 AM Choir Practice 10:30 AM Worship Service, Sunday School 12:00 PM Sunday Ice Cream Social 2:00 PM CrossPointe Fellowship | 11 7:00 PM Trustees Meeting | 12 3:30 PM BUCC Book Group | 13 | 14 7:00 PM Christian Education Team | 15 12:30 PM Islamic Center of Maryland 7:00 PM CrossPointe Fellowship | 16 8:00 AM SDA 6:00 PM SDA |
| 17 8:30 AM Choir Practice 10:30 AM Worship Service, Sunday School 2:00 PM CrossPointe Fellowship 7:00 PM SDA Special Services | 18 7:00 PM SDA Special Services | 19 7:00 PM SDA Special Services | 20 7:00 PM SDA Special Services | 21 7:00 PM SDA Special Services | 22 12:30 PM Islamic Center of Maryland 7:00 PM CrossPointe Fellowship 7:00 PM SDA Special Services | 23 8:00 AM SDA 6:00 PM SDA |
| 24 8:30 AM Choir Practice 10:30 AM Worship Service, Sunday School 2:00 PM CrossPointe Fellowship | 25 | 26 | 27 | 28 | 29 12:30 PM Islamic Center of Maryland 7:00 PM CrossPointe Fellowship | 30 8:00 AM SDA 6:00 PM SDA |
| 31 8:30 AM Choir Practice 10:30 AM Worship Service, Sunday School 2:00 PM CrossPointe Fellowship | | | | | | |



**YOU ARE INVITED TO A
SUNDAY ICE CREAM SOCIAL
on SUNDAY, JULY 10
In the Parlor after Church**



OUTLOOK

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