



NEWS of the 24 Churches of the York Association

**Partners in Blessing - Cooperative Mission,
Cooperative Ministry**

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AUGUST 2023 – Newsletter

Mission Statement

We, the members of the York Association of the United Church of Christ, are called by God and empowered by the Holy Spirit to represent Christ by:

- supporting one another in our covenantal relationship;
- calling clergy and laity to mutual accountability to the faith and order of the church;
- witnessing together to God's redeeming love. (Adopted April 28, 1991)

**Ordination of Thomas Kiepert
at Faith UCC, 509 Pacific Ave, York Pa
Sunday, July 23 at 3:00 PM
all are welcome to come
and a light meal will follow.**

General Synod Notes from YA President – Lisa Young

I received an e-mail from the Conference office at 6:00am, Wednesday, June 28th. There was a need for a last-minute Delegate for General Synod. I was registered as a Visitor, so I made the transition to Delegate. Over the course of the next few months, I will be providing a recap of General Synod news and resolutions for your review. If you have any questions regarding Synod, please feel free to reach out.

We bid a fond farewell to Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer at the completion of eight years of ministry to the UCC as our General Minister and President. Thank you, John, for your years of service to the church and beyond.

The UCC, being known for many firsts, celebrated the election of the Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson as our first Black female General Minister and President. Rev. Dr. Thompson serves as our denomination's current Officer for global concerns and interfaith relations. I look forward to seeing the direction the UCC will take under her leadership.

The UCC By-laws amendment passed (by a single vote), changing Synod frequency to every three years beginning with Synod 36 in 2028. This discussion was the most contentious of our gathered time together. The change in frequency is a step that recognizes the enormous human, financial, and environmental costs of a Synod event. It also recognizes and responds to the changing face of the denomination as we become much smaller, and our national staff shrinks.

One of the most moving moments of Synod was the formal recognition and celebration of the Afro-Christian Convention as the "Fifth Stream" of the UCC, joining the Congregationalist, Christian, Evangelical Synod, and German Reformed traditions.

This recognition is long overdue. Thanks to years of work by the UCC Historical Council we finally hear the voices and contributions of the Afro-Christian Convention, a rich tradition with its beginnings in West Africa and continuing to the Tidewater regions of Virginia and North Carolina. The book Afro-Christian Convention: The Fifth Stream of the United Church of Christ, and an eight-part study guide, is available for those who want to explore and discuss this story of faith and endurance.

34th General Synod Delegate Recap

I would like to share my report as a delegate to the 34th General Synod. Please feel free to share any or all of my report with anyone who may be interested. Please reach out if you have any questions.

Thanks, Andrew Boyer

From June 30th-July 4th, 2023, I attend the 34th General Synod of the UCC with a couple dozen other delegates and visitors from Penn Central Conference. This was the national gathering that currently occurs every two years, but a bylaw changed was passed to move it to every three years starting after 2025. The theme this year was "Making All Things New". We had a total of 736 delegates and approximately 2000 people including visitors and other guests. I could write a detailed report about each resolution (more to come about how we can implement resolutions in the coming weeks), the results of each piece of business done, the worship services, and the food and fellowship that I had with the other delegates but I am choosing to reflect on something more specific. My biggest takeaway from the 34th General Synod was how we in the UCC care for one another.

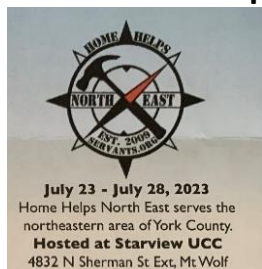
I attended a prayer walk to the state capitol in Indianapolis lead by Indiana congresspeople and members of the UCC national staff. A few hundred of the attendees marched and prayed for God to watch over all people but specifically included in our prayers were LGBTQ, the homeless, people with disabilities, migrants, and care for God's creation. We also heard from many speakers that gave us insight on

how to care for others as well as ourselves. The newly elected first female General Minister and President of the UCC, the Rev Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson, spoke to us about “widening the table and widening the door” to allow for all to be included. I am just hoping we are able to have discussions about that at both a national and conference level so that everyone along the political spectrum feels heard and cared for. We also heard from outgoing General Minister and President, the Rev Dr. John Dorhauer who reminded us, as always, that “God envisions a world in which you matter”.

We had some 1 minute testimonies from many of the attendees on a variety of topics. I spoke out on youth involvement in our churches because this is an issue of paramount importance and is vital to the future of our church. I also want to highlight another testimony because it shows how we care for one another. There was a large quilt hanging in the back of our meeting hall with the names of people who had died from AIDS. A pastor from the Florida conference got up to remind people to check out the quilt but became too emotional to finish his speech. We would later find out he lost his partner 40 years ago to AIDS. The next delegate in line got up to speak but, instead of promoting her book like she intended, she reminded us that each of the lives on that quilt were a life cut short and a “book to be written”. It brings to mind something that was said by keynote speaker Nadia Bolz Weber when she referred to the men who lowered their friend through the roof to be healed by Jesus. She pointed out that “Sometimes we are the ones lowering our friends down to Jesus and sometimes we are the ones being lowered down”.

I will admit that there were several times this weekend that made me quite emotional. As I was sitting in my hotel room on July 4th looking at the fireworks outside of my window, I was reflecting back on the last 5 days, my place in the UCC, and what God was making new in my life. As I was doing this, the last words my grandfather said to my mother popped into my head, “It was all very beautiful”. My hope for the UCC is that moving forward there is truly a place for everyone at the table and that everyone feels heard. I hope, looking back at the end of my life, I am able to say I was part of something that was “all very beautiful”.

Servant Work Camps –



Here is the link for volunteers to sign up.

<https://www.servants.org/workcamps>

The next newsletter, September, will be emailed August 15. Please send all articles to news@yorkassociationucc.org by August 12.

How Many Postcards Can Your Congregation Collect?

The great postcard collection race has begun! It is not too late to join the UCC Climate Hope Cards drive to collect as many postcards as possible to address life and death matters of pollution and climate change by advocating for strengthened Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) protections. [Download cards](#), get a [toolkit](#), and [register](#) your congregation to get updates. I will collect your postcards at the end of July, and they will be mailed along with others from York Association to our Washington D.C. UCC Office of Policy and Advocacy and then delivered to President Biden and the Director of the EPA.
Submitted by: Libby Loser, loser11411@comcast.net



Around the Association

New Hope Fissel's UCC

3426 Fissel's Church Road, Glen Rock, PA

What: Fissel's Flashback, 21st Annual Car Show.

When: Saturday, August 5, 2023, 11am till 5:00pm

Please bring your classic cars 1998 or earlier or any other motorized vehicles including tractors for a day of tasty food and fun. Join us for our 'Sweets Stroll' (cake walk) at 12:30 PM followed with live music by Jon Nicklow's band 'Caution' which is scheduled to begin at 1pm. For more information call the church office 717-235-2033.

Locust Grove UCC,

1035 Locust Grove Road, York

What: Chicken Barbecue and Bake Sale

When: Saturday, August 5, 2023, 11 am till 1pm or sold out, rain or shine.

Dinner Cost: \$11

Dinners include one-half chicken, baked potato, applesauce, dinner roll & butter, cupcake, and a bottle of water. Dinners can be eat-in on site or carried out. Pre-order by calling 717-755-1318. To reserve dinners, please leave your name, phone number, and the number of dinners. All reserved dinners must be picked up by 12:30pm.

St. John's Blymire UCC

1009 Blymire Road, Dallastown

What: Outdoor concerts, pavilion behind church

When: Sundays - 2pm – 4pm.

July 23 – Timeless, (50' s and 60's rock & roll)

August 6 - The Red Lion Felton Band

September 3 - First Capital Brass Ensemble

York Association UCC Clergy Gathering

When: Wednesday, August 9 @ 11am

Where: Lion's Pride Restaurant, Red Lion, PA

From: Martha Boyer, Communicator, 717.858.2991
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