

August 2020  
eNews

As the  
Spirit  
Moves



# Wider Church and Community Resources

*Click on these logo links for resource information*

**UCC SANKOFA**

**Northern Plains**



WEBinar with authors of  
"Radical Reconciliation"  
August 11, 1:30 -3:30 pm



**Resource Council**  
Local Food Challenge during  
August



**UCC CHSM**  
Food Insecurity advocacy  
resource



**Horizons Stewardship**  
5 Giving Trends for 2020



**UCC Disaster Ministries**  
Recovering Hope amidst  
CoVid, pastoral resources



**National Council of Churches**  
Weekly Scripture and Prayer  
on racism



**World Council of Churches**  
Voices of Faith at the United  
Nations



**Innovative Ministries**  
WEBinar recording on  
Bridging Cultural Divides,  
Marc Stewart hosting



**UCC Stewardship**  
2020 Stewardship Materials:  
Beloved Love



**Innovative Ministries**  
WEBinar recording on Virtual  
Business Meetings, Bonnie  
Bate hosting



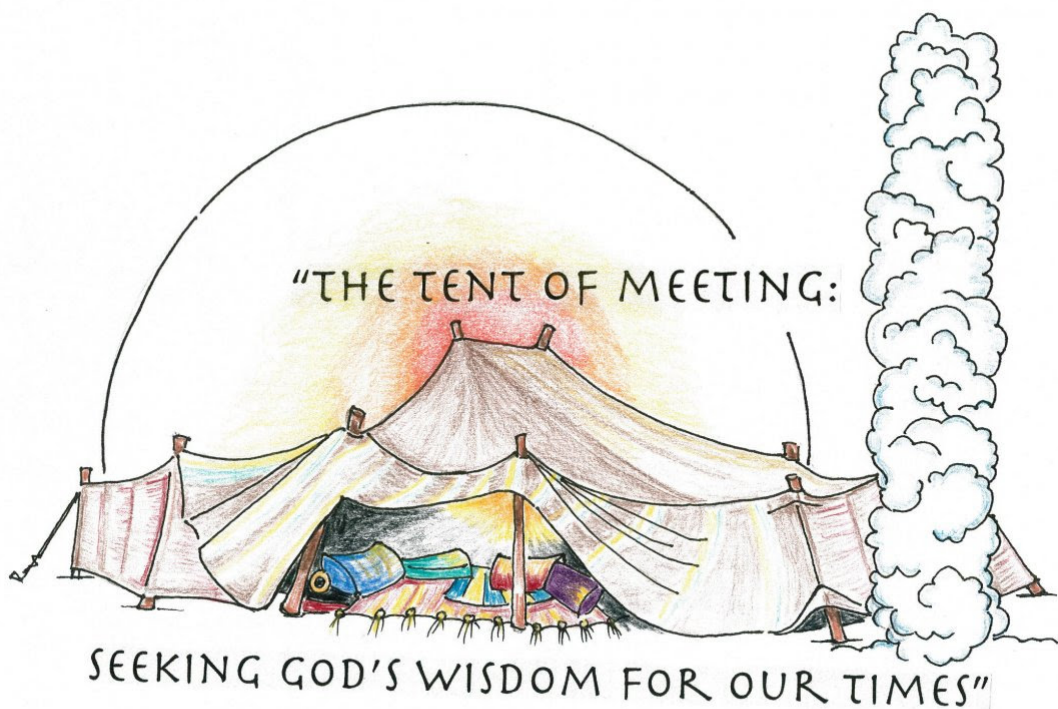
**2021 Virtual Synod**  
UCC Virtual General Synod,  
July 11 -18, 2021



**Innovative Ministries**  
WEBinar recording on  
Phasing to In-Person  
Worship, Don Remick

# 135th Conference Annual Meeting

**our very first Virtual CAM: Sept 18 - 20, 2020**



## Format

The format is highly interactive as everything, even the agenda itself will be derived from the wisdom and energy of the gathered group. We are excited to work with [Rev. Dr. Sara Rosenau](#), a facilitator using Open Space Technology and the Circle Way. Participants have the opportunity to find and connect with others' common interests. Along the way, priorities discerned in our gathering will inform the Conference budget and planning.

## Sunday Worship

Sunday morning worship, featuring [Rev. Traci Blackmon](#) as preacher, and a virtual choir led by [Dr. Keith Hampton](#), will be available to all churches through virtual streaming such as FaceBook, SKYPE, or YouTube.

## Virtual Choir

A virtual choir will be conducted by [Dr. Keith Hampton](#), Director of Chicago

Community Chorus and a board member of the UCC Musicians Association. Choir members individually video-record their part ahead and then the many videos are put together. Open to all voices. Indicate interest on [CAM pre-registration](#) form by August 15.

## **Registration Process**

All participants are asked to [pre-register](#) by September 3.

After September 7, pre-registered participants will receive Zoom registration information. Participants should register with Zoom before September 15 to receive a link that can be used to join by computer, tablet, smart phone, or dial-in phone. Registrations will not be able to be processed after September 15.

## **No Individual Registration Costs**

Registration costs are per church rather than per person. Any number of members or friends are invited to participate at the one church fee, \$25 - \$125 per church depending on membership size. Churches with participating members or friends will receive an invoice based on the church membership size. Participants will not need to pay any fees when registering.

## **Basic Agenda**

Friday, September 18: 1 pm – 4:30 pm  
with Business Meeting, 6:30 pm – 8:45 pm  
Design Workshop

Saturday, September 19: 9 am – noon,  
1:30 pm – 4:45 pm Design Workshop

Sunday, September 20: 10 am CAM virtual  
worship

15 minute breaks will happen every 60 –  
90 minutes

Full agenda will be posted in early August

## How we will meet by Zoom

Zoom is a way to meet together using a computer with internet connection, tablet, smart phone, or dial-in phone. The preferred connection is through the video and audio capabilities of a computer, tablet, or smart phone. No more than 2 participants per computer connection, please.

It is the intent that all members of the Conference who desire to participate will be afforded access. The national United Church of Christ Wider Church Ministries office has provided us a grant to help us cover some expenses for our rural churches to develop their virtual connections. Please [contact the Conference Office](#) if you need computer, video, audio or internet equipment to connect.

Technical support will be coordinated by Conference Administrator, [Jennifer Penfield](#), throughout all steps of the registration process and during the meeting.

## Conference Highlights

### MT-NWy Receives \$10,000 UCC Grant

The national setting of the United Church of Christ has earmarked funds to provide CoVid recovery assistance and special ministry support to local churches and conferences. Three of our churches have received up to the maximum \$3000 grant, and our conference received the maximum \$10,000 grant.

The grant received for the conference will provide support towards three areas of conference and local church ministry:

1. The Board of Directors has been working with a coach-consultant, [Rev. Dr. Claire Bamberg](#), to focus on effective board functioning, especially during this era of virtual meetings and in our focus on moving forward with new vision and mission. \$4000 allocation.
2. Many of our rural churches have struggled during their time of refraining from in-person gatherings. Limited technological capacity in some churches resulted in sermon manuscript distribution becoming the primary form of worship. [Gabriel Stewart](#), son of Marc and Cheryl Stewart, is a media tech professional from Los Angeles. He is living in Billings during the pandemic, and has offered free tech consulting to any of our churches. The grant provides a total of \$4000 for tech hardware that might be needed to help our most rural churches offer virtual worship.
3. Our 135th Conference Annual Meeting will focus on connecting churches and members around common interests, while also providing direction to the Board of Directors as it renews our vision and mission. We will be facilitated by [Rev. Dr. Sara Rosenau](#) throughout CAM. \$2000 allocation.

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## God-seeds

[Rev. Dr. Marc Ian Stewart](#)

### Tent of Meeting

Now Moses used to take a tent and pitch it outside the camp some distance away, calling it the “tent of meeting.” Exodus 33:7



I am curious why Moses setup worship space some distance away from the main encampment.

Did worship need to be set apart from everyday hustle and bustle?

Was movement to a difference place one of the necessary activities of coming into worship?

Was it way to protect sacred space from intrusions of those who might want to profane the space?

Was it Mose's way of protecting the people, as he well knew the lightning strikes that could happen in the presence of God, such as when he climbed the mountain and received the commandments?

Was there something more than worship going on at this "tent of meeting" that would come back to the encampment?

Whatever the reason, people were curious about what was going on between Moses and God in the "tent of meeting." So, they stood at their places, perhaps the best the best the could do to accompany Moses.

In our congregational way of accompanying each other in the presence of God, we are all like Moses and we are all like the people, concurrently. We know we do not need anyone to intercede for us in relationship with God and we also are attentive to the indwelling of Spirit with others. That is, we know something of God and we heed what others know about God.

Our 135th Conference Annual Meeting planning team saw that the "tent of meeting" was the image we need to imagine God-with-us as we do CAM virtually. Imagine the "tent of meeting" being that place where God is speaking to us; and from our own places, where God is speaking among us; and within the spirit-gifts in every individual, where Gd is speaking through us.

Whether you join by computer, tablet, smart phone, or dial-up phone, you will be in a "tent of meeting" during CAM. This CAM is a place that has been prayerfully set-up and promises to be Spirit-filled.



# Prayers

Payers of Thanksgiving for Life be with Rev. Jim and Val Smith, as Val's daughter, Dana, passed following a long cancer battle.

Prayers with Rev. Guy Pontotiero as he continues to recover from and broken foot and infection.

Prayer of Thanksgiving for Life be with Leslie Roche, as her mother, Donna Bennet passed July 17 in Billings.



Prayers of celebration as Rev. Nicholas Knoblauch and Kiely as they are married in Broadus on August 8.

Prayers of celebration with Laura Keating and Cameron Clevidence as they are married at First UCC Billings on August 22. Laura is a First UCC Billings Member in Discernment attending Pacific School of Religion.

## Calendar

- August 3 Faith Formation Committee Zoom meeting 3 - 5 pm
- August 4 Board of Directors Zoom meeting 9:30 - 11 am
- August 15 CAM virtual choir [registration](#) due
- August 17 Committee for Outdoor Ministries Zoom meeting 7 - 8:30 pm
- August 24 CAM reports due to [office](#)
- August 31 Church greeting videos due
- September 15 Last day to [register for CAM](#)
- September 18-20 [Conference Annual Meeting](#) will be held using virtual technology, such as Zoom, instead of in person at Red Lodge
- November 1-6 Rocky Mountain College Virtual [Black Tie/Blue Jeans](#) Scholarship Benefit
- July 11 - 18, 2021 [General Synod 33](#) will be held using virtual technology, such as Zoom, instead of in-person in Kansas City

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### Montana - N.Wyoming Conference United Church of Christ

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