

Living into the Vision

Welcome to Bloomington, Illinois

Located in Central Illinois, the twin cities of Bloomington-Normal, as it's known locally, is a vibrant community that exemplifies Midwest values and our remarkable quality of life. Our location in the heart of Illinois at the junction of Interstates 55, 39, and 74 makes getting here easy. Just a few hours from Chicago and St. Louis, Bloomington-Normal boasts a bustling airport as well as frequent Amtrak service.

We are proud to be the headquarters for State Farm Insurance, Mitsubishi Motors North America, and COUNTRY Financial. Our higher educational institutions include Illinois State University, Illinois Wesleyan University, Heartland Community College, and Lincoln College-Normal.

The Illinois Great Rivers Annual Conference is delighted to host you for the NCJCORR 2012 Annual Learning Event. We're excited about this opportunity and invite you to share in our enthusiasm. This Jurisdictional Learning Event will be held at the Doubletree Inn & Conference Center. Our theme is "Living into the Vision, the Beloved Community."

Cross-racial/cross-cultural appointments represent a nexus point for our prevailing conversations on congregational vitality, denominational growth, and relevance. A panel will discuss best practices as well as strategies for building relationships and multicultural ministries. We hope you can leave with a developing and renewed commitment to a more inclusive and intercultural dialog in our communities.

Registration will open at 11 a.m. on Friday, October 19th. Lunch will be on your own. The conference will begin with a welcome from the IGRC Resident Bishop, who will lead us in a time of worship. The late afternoon will offer an opportunity for a plenary session led by Ms. Erin Hawkins, General Secretary for the General Commission on Religion and Race. Additionally, we will present several panels exploring inner faith dialog and congregational vitality viewed through multi-cultural lenses. A group dinner will complete our day.

Saturday will begin with Bible Study and Worship. Training workshops will be offered at 9:30 a.m., 1:00 p.m. and 2:45 p.m. Each session is designed to address pragmatic and practical applications of cross cultural ministry in the local church. Participants will leave the summit with some new ideas, skills, and strategies that can be used in strengthening ministry in their local community. We will conclude the day with our evening banquet.

Here's a sampling of speakers and workshop offerings:

- ▶ **Erin Hawkins** is joining us from our General Commission on Religion & Race will be General Secretary.
- ▶ **Rev. Nora Colmenares Martinez**, Asst. Gen. Secretary, General Board of Global Ministries Workshop: "The Reverse of Babel: Reclaiming our Church Identity."
- ▶ **Rev. Dr. Jerome (Jerry) DeVine**, Director of Connectional Ministries, Detroit Conference UMC.
- ▶ **Rev. LeKisha Reed**, Assoc. Director for Mission and Advocacy, Indiana Conference UMC.
- ▶ **Pastor Samuel Sarpiya**, Rockford Community Church, co-founder Rockford Partners for Excellence Workshop: The Beloved Community "The Framework for the Future."
- ▶ **Kathleen Hinkle**, Board Member of Church & Society, Illinois Great Rivers Conference Workshop: "H.E.L.P.S. Ministry Outreach," an Advance Special of IGRC.
- ▶ **Dr. Carolyn Johnson**, former president of former North Indiana United Methodist Women and Women's Division.
- ▶ **Rev. Rob Kirby**, Campus Minister, Wesley Foundation University of Illinois, Champaign-Urbana.
- ▶ **Michael Chrzastowski**, Workshop: "Islam for Christians: Understanding the Third of the Three Abrahamic Religions."
- ▶ **Erica Granados - De La Rosa**, (spoken word artist) "Our Spoken Word: bridging community through performance poetry."

the Beloved Community