



## 2012 Annual Report for ELCA Central Southern Illinois Synod Illinois Conference of Churches

The Illinois Conference of Churches (ICC) is a state-wide ecumenical organization of 28 member Judicatories of 14 denominations representing the Protestant, Anglican, Catholic, and Orthodox Christian traditions. The ICC is an ecumenical table that brings together religious leaders, judicatory staff, clergy, and lay representatives from the member churches for dialogue, deliberation, and decisions to celebrate and make visible our sacred bonds of unity in Christ. The ICC is an institutional expression of the ecumenical movement, a vehicle for the church's mission in Illinois for bearing witness together to the gospel of reconciliation. The Illinois Conference of Churches website is located at [www.ilconfchurches.org](http://www.ilconfchurches.org).

### **Illinois Conference of Churches Mission Statement:**

The Illinois Conference of Churches seeks to be an inclusive community of churches that celebrates and makes visible our sacred bonds of unity in Christ. We will do this by promoting an honest sharing and understanding of both our common and divergent theological convictions; and making public, prophetic witness to Christ's love for all people, particularly by addressing poverty and racism.

The Illinois Conference of Churches is comprised of one full time staff position – Laurie Vial, Executive Director. The upgrading of this position represents a new direction that the ICC Leadership Team is taking. Part of the new direction will include an emphasis in grant writing and seeking grants to supplement donations in meeting budgetary goals. In addition, the ICC is comprised of teams of judicatory representatives and delegates who dedicate their time to furthering the mission and vision of the Illinois Conference of Churches.

**Leadership Team** – The Leadership Team governs the ICC as needed including all personnel matters and planning the ICC Annual Assembly. The Leadership Team is led by two co-chairs, at least one of whom is a Judicatory Executive. Four members of the team represent four geographical regions of the state. The chairs of the other four teams also sit on the Leadership Team. The 2012 Leadership Team consists of the following members: Very Rev. Robert Flannery, Co-Chair, Catholic Church; Rev. Kevin Kessler, C-Chair, Church of the Brethren; Rev. Dr. Teresa Dulyea-Parker, Secretary, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); Rev. Joan Coleman, treasurer, Episcopal; Robert Gilligan, Catholic Church; Rev. Father Michael Condos, Greek Orthodox Church; Rev. Catiana McKay, United Methodist Church; Fr. Kevin Laughery, Catholic Church; Dr. George Johnston, Presbyterian Church USA; Rev. Gary McCants, African Methodist Episcopal and Rev. Dr. Sheldon Culver, United Church of Christ.

**Public Policy Team** – The Public Policy Team (PPT) takes a leadership role on public policy issues that impact ICC member judicatories. The team is vocal on concerns primarily before the Illinois General Assembly and Congress. The team carries out the portion of the ICC's mission statement, *"to make public, prophetic witness to Christ's love for all people, and to address in particular, issues of poverty and racism."* It is this part of the mission statement that guides the PPT's efforts as it works in consultation with the ICC's Leadership Team and the Illinois Christians Encountering Racism (ICER) Team. The 2012 Public Policy Team consists of the following

members: Robert Gilligan, Chair, Catholic Conference of Illinois; Rev. Gary McCants, African Methodist Episcopal Church; Rev. Dan Schwick, Lutheran Social Services of Illinois; Rev. Michael Winters, Presbyterian Church USA; E. Garnet Fay, Religious Society of Friends; Rev. Chris Pierson, The United Methodist Church and Rev. Dr. John Rickard, Presbyterian Church USA.

**Illinois Christians Encountering Racism (ICER) Team** – The Illinois Christians Encountering Racism (ICER) Team is a ministry focused on dismantling systematic racism and building bridges to racial wholeness within churches, institutions, and communities. ICER implements its mission by offering training to members within the ICC network of churches as well as to the community. The 2012 ICER Team consists of the following members Rev. Kevin Laughery, chair, JCL, Catholic Church; Rev.. Dwight Bailey, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); Rev. Mark Harkness, United Methodist Church; Martha Herrin, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); Rev. Galda McCants, African Methodist Episcopal; Rev. Don Jones, African Methodist Episcopal Zion Church and Rev. Christine Hopkins, Episcopal Church.

**Forum and Bi-Annual Statewide Gathering Teams** – The Forum Team plans and implements one or more forums annually to engage denominational representatives and judicatory executives in meaningful dialog. Their primary focus is the Annual Assembly. The Tri-Annual Statewide Gathering Team plans and implements an ecumenical program in keeping with the ICC mission statement on topics of compelling interest to a wide range of Christians from across the state. The 2012 Forum Team consists of the following members: Rev. Catiana McKay, Chair, United Methodist Church; Sister Joan McGuire, OP, Catholic Church and Marianne Stowers, Christian Church Disciples of Christ. The 2012 Tri-Annual Statewide Gathering Team includes Rev. Dr. Teresa Dulyea-Parker, Chair, Christian Church (Disciples of Christ); Rev. Robert Sherman, United Church of Christ and Rev. Joan Coleman, Episcopal Church.

### **2012 Recap of activities**

- The Leadership Team met quarterly.
- The Leadership Team worked closely with the Public Policy Team to strengthen and bring forward those strategies agreed upon at the Annual Assembly.
- Held the seventh Annual Assembly in Champaign focusing on the 50<sup>th</sup> anniversary of Vatican II.
- Renewed commitment to public outreach and warmly extend offers to speak in person with any and all judicatories and churches who are interested in our mission and vision.
- Decreased our operational budget, seeking ways to become better stewards of our donations including closing our physical office.
- Designed a new newsletter to be published on a quarterly basis.
- Distributed a brochure about the ICC to be shared with judicatories and churches in Illinois.
- Updated our website providing information about member judicatories and linking back to their websites.
- Voted to roll out the Immigrant Welcoming Congregation program to all of our 14 member denominations and their members.
- Invited our 14 member denominations and their members to anti-racism training offered by the Christian Church Disciples of Christ.
- Voted to host an annual gathering of chaplains of colleges and universities in Illinois.
- Voted to host a dinner for Judicatory leaders the evening prior to our Annual Assembly.
- Voted to make a public statement on the gun control issue.