

What does the UCCDM Logo Symbolize?

The United Church of Christ Disabilities Ministries (UCCDM) logo is based on the United Church of Christ's cross and orb logo which is a cross with a bisected circle at the bottom and the crown on top. To the right of the cross and orb is "UCCDM" in large print--a nod to large print as part of accessibility for persons with visual impairments. Underneath "UCCDM" is a dash followed by five icons then another dash. The five icons were intentionally chosen by the UCCDM Board of Directors to symbolize various disabilities. The first icon is the American Sign Language symbol of "I love you" which symbolizes an aspect of accessibility and inclusion as well as a reminder that God loves persons with disabilities. The second icon is a box with no symbol which signifies all known disabilities unable to be included in our logo design due to space limitations, as well as disabilities that do not have a known associated symbol; it is a reminder that God has created more than we can anticipate. The third icon includes a human head with the brain highlighted. This symbolizes disabilities related to the brain including mental health related disabilities, developmental and intellectual disabilities. It is a reminder that we are all "fearfully and wonderfully made" (Psalm 139:14). The fourth icon is of a human figure in a racing wheelchair. This icon was developed by disability activists at "the accessible icon project" for the public domain as a means of challenging traditional ideas of disability. The implication of motion symbolizes the importance of people with disabilities defining themselves and as a reminder of UCCDM's work for disability (social) justice. The fifth and final icon is the icon for hidden, or invisible, disabilities. You cannot see, or discern, invisible disabilities by looking at individuals who have them. People with invisible disabilities are often marginalized for not appearing "disabled". This reminds us that only God sees all things. Underneath the icons, the words "United Church of Christ Disabilities Ministries" is spelled out in smaller font.



In Collaboration With The NYC

Presents: "Living, Learning, Leading!"



November 1-3, 2018

Conference & Event Center Niagara Falls

& Sheraton At The Falls

Niagara Falls, NY

Welcome from UCC Disabilities Ministries

Friends,

On behalf of the UCC Disabilities Ministries Board of Directors, I would like to welcome you to Widening The Welcome 2018! We hope this conference and venue expresses the radical inclusivity and extravagant welcome that we are striving for in our beloved church! Our robust preachers and speaker line up promises to be engaging and live up to our conference theme of “Living, Learning, Leading!”.

This conference was planned with the purpose of equipping you with information that you can take home to your local churches; whether you are looking for ways to expand your Accessible 2 All Covenant or are just starting, we hope there is something for everyone! *Thank you for coming!*

Paul Fogle,
UCCDM Chair

UCCDM extends a heartfelt **Thank You** to the UCC New York Conference, the Retirement Housing Foundation, UCC Insurance Board, UCC Financial Ministries, the Mental Health Network, Rev. Traci Blackmon, Rev. Jennifer Brownell, Ms. Miah Yager, Ms. Candace Low, Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund, Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer, the staffs of Sheraton at the Falls and The Conference & Event Center Niagara Falls, and all who helped make this event possible.



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST FINANCIAL MINISTRIES

United Church Funds

United Church of Christ Church Building & Loan Fund

Insurance Board

United Church of Christ Cornerstone Fund

“I PRAISE YOU, FOR
I AM FEARFULLY
AND
WONDERFULLY
MADE...”

PSALM 139:14



*Our roots are in the United Church of Christ
and we're a national leader in the field of affordable housing.*



Affordable housing continues to be a critical issue facing older adults, low-income families, and people with disabilities in America. Find out how you can partner with RHF and help build affordable housing in your area.

Learn more about us at www.rhf.org.

You can also call **1-800-590-1900 ext. 5131** or email info@rhf.org.

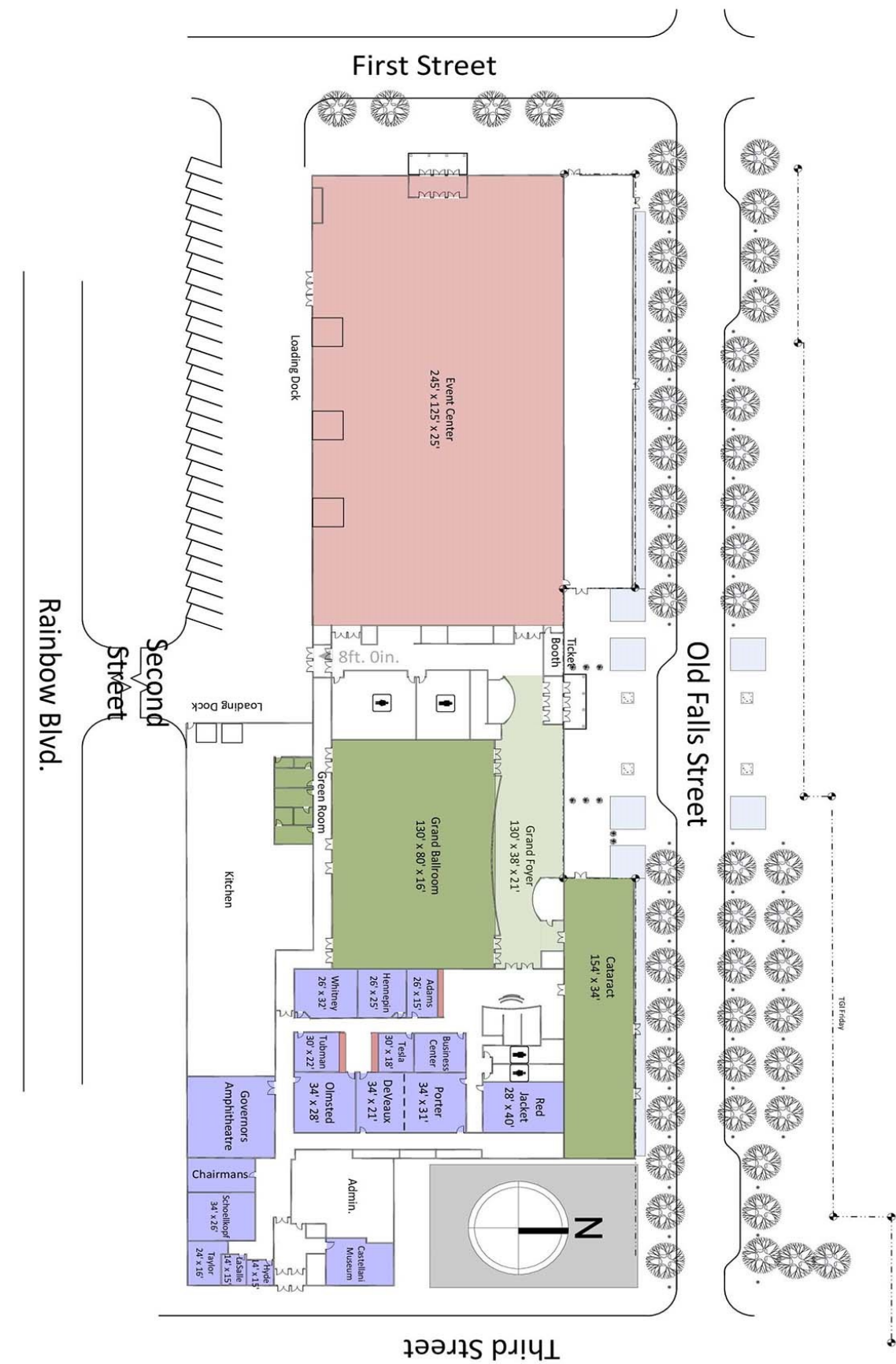
We would like to thank the UCC Disabilities Ministries Board of Directors for inviting Dr. Laverne Joseph, President and CEO of RHF (Retirement Housing Foundation), to speak at Widening the Welcome.

Dr. Joseph became President and CEO of RHF in July of 1987 when the organization had 65 communities in 15 states. RHF currently owns, sponsors, and manages 196 communities in 29 states, the District of Columbia, Puerto Rico, and the U.S. Virgin Islands.

Dr. Joseph is an ordained minister of the United Church of Christ (UCC) and is a founding member and formerly chaired the board of the National Affordable Housing Trust, which has provided more than one billion dollars in funding for low-income housing.



Convention Center Floor Plan



Widening the Welcome Conference Schedule

Thursday, November 1, 2018 Sheraton at the Falls Hotel		
7:30-8:00	Mental Health 1 st Aid Registration	
8:00- 12:00	Mental Health 1st Aid Workshop	Organized by MHN and DM
12:00-12:30	Lunch (included)	
12:30-4:00	Mental Health 1st Aid Workshop	
2:00-7:00	Widening the Welcome Registration	
5:00-7:00	Hospitality Hour	Heavy Hors d’oeuvres
7:00-7:10	Welcome/Announcements	DM/NYC
7:10-8:10	Opening Worship	Rev. Traci Blackmon
8:15-9:00	Small Groups	

Friday, November 2, 2018 The Conference & Event Center Niagara Falls

7:30-8:30	Breakfast/Registration	
8:30-8:45	Morning Prayer	
8:45-9:00	Welcome/Announcements	
9:00-10:00	Featured Speaker:	Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund
10:15-11:30	Workshops #1	
	1. You Also Will Bear Witness	Rev. Jennifer Brownell
	2. Accessible to All: More Than Ramps and Elevators	Jacky Schofield
	3. Advocacy: Speaking Up and Speaking Out	Rachel Chapman and Mike Fekula
	4. Christian Education: Am I Welcome?	Miah Yager
	5. Let’s Communicate!	Candace Low
12:00-1:30	Lunch Presentation: Retirement Housing Foundation	Rev. Dr. Laverne Joseph

WIDENING THE WELCOME
2018 WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

You Also Will Bear Witness

Rev. Jennifer Brownell, UCC StillSpeaking Devotional Writer & Pastor, Vancouver UCC - Vancouver, Washington

Our stories can be opportunities for healing for ourselves and others, can testify to the work of God in our lives, and can be vehicles for grief and loss. In this workshop, explore ways to embody your story with both words and movement, as we encounter how our own stories interact with the ancient and powerful stories of our scriptural heritage.

Let’s Communicate!

Candace Low, Candace Low Consulting Services, Hartford, Connecticut

How can faith communities welcome and include members of the deaf and hard of hearing communities? Through sharing of personal experience and years of working with the disability and faith communities, Candace will provide strategies for embracing and including those two communities in church life. The workshop will cover disabling theology, practices and culture, ways to provide accessibility without breaking the bank and little things that make a big difference in welcoming participation and expanding hospitality.

Disability Theology and the Disabled God

Rebekah Anderson, UCCDM Board Member

Accessibility isn't just about what we do; it's about what we believe. What do we implicitly learn about disability in church, and what do we wish we were learning instead? This workshop is an introduction to disability theology. We will discuss several common ways theology has been used to harm people with disabilities, and explore alternative, empowering ways of imagining God and ourselves. Come prepared to listen, discuss, and imagine as a group.

.Find us at UCCDM.org

WIDENING THE WELCOME
2018 WORKSHOP DESCRIPTIONS

Accessible 2 All: More Than Ramps and Elevators

Jaclyn Scofield & Kevin Pettit, UCCDM A2A Committee Co-Chairs

Join UCCDM A2A Committee leaders as they explain the process for churches seeking A2A designation. Do we need an elevator? Do we need a ramp? These questions and more will be covered in this workshop.

CIT- Conference Inclusion Teams: What we can do together!

Terry Martinez Esquibel, UCCDM Vice-Chair

Join CIT Committee members to learn what a Conference Inclusion Team is, what we hope to accomplish together in the wider church, and how to start a new team.

What is a conference inclusion team? How do we start one? What does a conference inclusion team do? Join the Conference Inclusion Team committee for a discussion on this important part of disability ministry in the wider church.

Advocacy: Speaking Up and Speaking Out!

Rachel Chapman & Mike Fekula, UCCDM Advocacy & Education Committee

From public protests to civil disobedience to making suggestions that might benefit others, advocacy looks different in different situations and it all matters. Let’s talk about ways we can advocate for full inclusion and accessibility for all in our churches, communities and the world.

Am I Welcome?

Miah Yager, First Congregational UCC of Boulder, Colorado

Join Miah Yager as she talks about her story growing up in a local United Church of Christ parish as a woman with an intellectual disability. What makes a church welcoming? What turns people with disabilities away? Let’s talk about what works and what doesn’t.



<https://www.facebook.com/search/top/?q=ucc%20disabilities%20ministries>

2:00-3:15	Workshops #2	
	1. You Also Will Bear Witness	Rev. Jennifer Brownell
	2. Conference Inclusion Teams	Terry Martinez Esquibel
	3. Accessible to All: More Than Ramps and Elevators	Jacky Schofield
	4. Let’s Communicate!	Candace Low
	5. Christian Education: Am I Welcome?	Miah Yager
3:15-3:45	Small Groups/Optional Break	
4:00-5:30	Panel Discussion: Living and Worshipping with a Disability	Miah Yeager, Candace Low, Sharon Ballantyn, Phil Wilson
6:30-8:30	Banquet with Keynote Speaker:	Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer
9:00-10:00	Social Hour	

Saturday, November 3, 2018 The Conference & Event Center Niagara Falls

7:30-8:30	Breakfast	
8:30-8:45	Morning Meditation	
8:45-9:00	Announcements	
9:00-10:00	Featured Speaker:	Rev. Jennifer Brownell
10:15-11:15	Workshops #3	
	1. Conference Inclusion Teams	Terry Martinez Esquibel
	2. Let’s Communicate!	Candace Low
	3. Advocacy: Speaking Up and Speaking Out	Rachel Chapman & Mike Fekula
	4. Disability Theology and the Disabled God	Rebekah Anderson
11:30-12:00	Small Groups	
12:15-1:30	Lunch	
	Closing Worship and Sacrament	Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund

Presenters at Widening the Welcome, 2018 in Niagara Falls, NY:

Rev. Traci Blackmon

Rev. Blackmon earned a Bachelor of Science degree in Nursing from Birmingham - Southern College in 1985 and a Master of Divinity degree from Eden Theological Seminary in 2009. Initially ordained in the African Methodist Episcopal Church, Rev. Blackmon served in various ministry capacities for 9 years, prior to becoming ordained in the United Church of Christ and installed as the first woman and 18th pastor in the 162 year history of Christ The King United Church of Christ in Florissant, MO. A registered nurse with more than 25 years of healthcare experience, Rev. Blackmon's clinical focus was cardiac care and in latter years her focus shifted to mobile healthcare in underserved communities with the greatest health disparities in her region. Rev. Traci Blackmon currently serves as the Executive Minister of Justice & Local Church Ministries for The United Church of Christ and Senior Pastor of Christ The King UCC.



Rev. Jennifer Brownell

Jennifer Brownell received her Master of Divinity at Seattle University School of Theology and Ministry in 2002, and since then has worked as a pastor at churches in Seattle and Portland. You can find her writing in her memoir, in the UCC Daily Devotionals, Revgalblogpals, and very sporadically at her own blog. She is the Pastor of First Congregational Church of Vancouver, Washington, and the author of Swim, Ride, Run, Breathe: How I Lost a Triathlon and Caught My Breath, her inspiring memoir.



Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer

The John C. Dorhauer obtained a Master of Divinity degree from Eden Theological Seminary in 1988, the same year he was ordained as pastor in the United Church of Christ. In 2004, he received a Doctor of Ministry degree from United Theological Seminary in Dayton, OH, where he studied white privilege and its effects on the church. He has served the First Congregational United Church of Christ and the Zion United Church of Christ, in rural Missouri as pastor. He has served as the Associate Conference Minister in the Missouri Mid-South Conference and also as the Conference Minister of the Southwest Conference. John is the author of, Beyond Resistance: The Institutional Church Meets the Postmodern World (2015) and Steeplejacking: How the Christian Right is Hijacking Mainstream Religion (2007), coauthored with Sheldon Culver. An author, minister, and theologian, Rev. Dr. Dorhauer currently serves as the ninth General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ.



Presenters at Widening the Welcome, 2018 in Niagara Falls, NY:

Candace Low

Candace is the former Executive Director of [Independence Unlimited](#), a non-profit providing advocacy and support services to persons with disabilities and their families in Hartford, CT. She now serves as the principal of **Candace Low Consulting Services**, helping faith communities become inclusive to the disability community. She is chair of the [Asylum Hill Congregational Church](#), UCC, Accessibility Task Force and a member of the [CT statewide UCC Disabilities Ministries](#). Candace is a graduate of [Hartford Seminary](#) with an emphasis on spirituality and worship. Candace is committed to social justice and full inclusion for everyone.



Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund

A graduate of both Princeton Theological Seminary and McCormick Theological Seminary, she is an ordained minister with standing in the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Pastor Sarah has served churches in Brooklyn, Minneapolis, and New Smyrna Beach. In addition, she has also served as Regional Minister for the Florida Conference of the United Church of Christ and worked as the Vice President for Advancement at the Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis, IN. She is the author of the widely regarded book "Blessed are the Crazy: Breaking the Silence About Mental Illness, Family and Church" (Chalice Press, 2014) and blogs at [sarahgriffithlund.com](#). Presently, she serves as senior pastor of the First Congregational UCC of Indianapolis, and has recently joined the UCC National Staff in a part-time position on the Wholeness Advocacy Team of Justice and Local Church Ministries, serving as the newly created Minister for Disabilities and Mental Health Justice.



Miah Yager

Miah N. Yager is a 25 year old woman living and working in Boulder, Colorado where she attends First Congregational Church of Boulder (sometimes). She spends a great deal of time as a songwriter, actress, and dancer in a hip hop/modern dance troupe. She thrives when she is creative and using her gifts to make a difference. Miah feels church was a safe and fun place full of connection when she was young and is now not sure what place church has in her life.

