



## 2015 Ohio Conference Annual Gathering

### *In Remembrance . . .*

#### **Central Southeast Ohio Association**

**Rev. W. William "Bill" Crawford**, 77, of Huntington, WV passed away on July 21, 2015 at the Village at Riverview, Barboursville. He was born January 10, 1938 in Clifton Forge, Virginia, a son of the late Charles Samuel and Nina Virginia Buckner Crawford. He graduated from Barboursville High School in 1956, Marshall University with a B.A. in 1960, and Andover Newton Theological School in 1964. He was ordained February 7, 1965. During seminary he served as Youth Director at Central United Church of Christ, Newtonville, MA. He served churches at Castleton Federated Church, Castleton, VT, St. Marks United Church of Christ in Cumberland, MD, Christ Church U.C.C. in Fort Thomas, KY, Associate Pastor at Zion Evangelical U.C.C. in Indianapolis, IN, St. John's U.C.C. in Elkhart, IN, and Brooklyn Heights U.C.C. in Cleveland, Ohio.

**The Rev. Dr. Virginia J Fordham**, 89, of Marietta passed away August 24, 2015 at Harmar Place. She was born in Marietta, the daughter of Harlan and Irene (Hawkins) Fordham of Marietta. She was called to the Christian ministry. Her extensive education included: A.B. from Marietta College, B.S. from Andover-Newton Theological School, S.T.M. from Oberlin College, and D. Min. from Vanderbilt University. In later years she took continuing education courses at Washington State Community College. Rev. Fordham served as Pastor of the Highland Ridge Community Church for twenty years. She also served as pastor of churches in Conneaut, Somerset, Hannibal and Sardis, Ohio. In the 1960s she taught religious education in the Washington County Schools and was owner of the Midwest Book Shop in Marietta.

**Daniel A. Vanderploeg** died on August 16, 2014. He was 76 years old. He was born in Wisconsin on October 22, 1937. Dan lived with Parkinson's Disease for 21 years, complicated by Lewy Body Dementia towards end of life. Dan was a graduate of United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities and was an ordained minister in the United Church of Christ. He served for 46 years in local churches and at the regional level, including several years on the Ohio Conference staff in the late 1970s and early 1980s, before moving to Minnesota.

**Dr. Amos Jesse James White, Jr.** passed away on July 27, 2015. He was born in Portsmouth, Ohio January 2, 1934, the eldest of 12 children, to Amos Jesse James, Sr. and Ira Mae Baggett White.

He graduated from Portsmouth High School and attended Capital University where he majored in music education with a major in French horn and trumpet. He served in the US army for 2 years. Amos received his Ph.D. from OSU in Curriculum, Instruction and Urban Education in 1978. He then served for 13 years as Director of the Department of Curriculum and Instruction. After retirement, he served as a Consultant for Curriculum for the Higher Ground Charter School and as a Consultant to the Portsmouth City Schools. During this time, Amos organized and participated in a mentoring program for boys at West High School in Columbus. He served on many boards and committees in the community including:

Community Arts Project, Chair (precursor to MLK Center Board), ECCO Family Health Center Chair; Columbus Literacy Council, Bexley Youth Athletic Association, Martin Luther King Holiday Observance Committee (precursor to MLK Breakfast), Columbus Black Administrators Association, Co-Organizer and Defiance College, Trustee. Amos was a 50 year member of Alpha Phi Alpha Fraternity, Inc., Alpha Rho Lambda Chapter where he served in many ways including as President and Director of Education. He was instrumental in establishing the Alpha Rho Lambda Education Foundation.

Amos was also a 50 year member of the First Congregational Church, UCC where he served in the Chancel Choir, as a Deacon, Chair of the Board of Trustees and as Moderator. Beyond his local church, Amos served on many committees of the Central Southeast Ohio Association, most recently as Chairman of the Church and Ministry and the Personnel committees. He served as Moderator of the Ohio Conference in 1985-86. At the national level, Amos was a member of the United Church Board for World Ministries where he later was elected Chairman of its Board of Directors. Amos received many honors and awards which included Friends of Literacy, Champion of Urban Health, Defiance College Trustee Emeritus, Alpha Rho Lambda President's Award and the Theodore M. Berry Award (2008) and , along with his wife, the first First Congregational Church Lay Leadership Award (2008). Amos was a man of faith who was strong and kind, intelligent and humble, loving and loved. He directed and empowered his faith and his life by doing to others as he would have them do to him and by what does the Lord require of him but to do justice and to love kindness and to walk humbly with his God.

**James Phillips Wolfe**, 83, of Hillsboro, passed away peacefully at his home early Friday morning, Jan. 2, 2015. He was born Aug. 5, 1931, in Toledo, the son of the late James P. and Thelma Lucy Rebecca (Phillips) Wolfe. He was a Korean War veteran of the U.S. Air Force. In 1957 he received his Bachelor of Arts degree from Ohio Northern University and then received his Master's in Divinity from Vanderbilt University. In 1975 he received his certificate of ministerial standing from the United Church of Christ. In 1978 Jim served as outreach coordinator at the Pike County Recovery Council; in 1979 he became a licensed independent chemical counselor; in 1989 he became an Ohio certified prevention specialist II; in 1996 he qualified as an administer of Myers-Briggs Type Indicator; in 2000 he became a licensed social worker; and in 2007 Jim served on the Highland County Board of MRDD. Jim served as a clinical supervisor at Family Recovery Services, where he served from 1990 until 2004 and was an internationally recognized alcohol and drug counselor. He also helped co-found the Pastoral Counseling Center in Portsmouth. After his retirement he provided counseling free of charge one day a week at the Hillsboro First United Methodist Church. In 2013 he was inducted into the Ohio Addictions Professionals Hall of Fame. He lived a life of service because he cared so deeply about everyone.

**The Rev. Donald M. Yaekle**, 93, of Pataskala peacefully passed away at home on March 30, 2015 following an extended illness. The Rev. Yaekle was born in Columbus, Ohio on November 30, 1921. He was a graduate of Bexley High School; Capital University, Columbus, OH; Eden Seminary, St. Louis, MO and Boston University Graduate School of Theology. He was ordained a Minister of the Word and Sacrament in his home church, St. John's UCC Columbus in 1946. Following his ordination he served churches in Olney, Illinois, Acton Center, Massachusetts, and Lawrenceburg, Indiana before serving St. John's UCC in Lorain, Ohio for 31 years, retiring in 1969. In 1989, he and his wife, Sylvia moved to Pataskala where he continued an active ministry providing interim pastoral services to area churches. Rev. Yaekle's service to the greater church and community included serving as a Delegate to the UCC General Synod, terms as Chairman of the Christian Education Department, Missions Priority Department and Nominating Committees of the UCC Western Reserve Association and the establishment of UCC's Temple Hills Ohio Church Camp. He served on the District Board of Boy Scouts of America, was President of Lorain Rotary Club, Lorain Ministerial Association, and a Member of the Board of Directors of Lorain Neighborhood.

## Eastern Ohio Association

**Rev. Arnold H. Klaiber** died Wednesday, June 10, 2015. He graduated from Heidelberg College at Tiffin in 1951, Eden Theological Seminary at St. Louis, Missouri in 1954 and was ordained in 1954. He served as pastor of the Doylestown-Mt Zwingli Charge in Wadsworth from 1954-1959 and then First United Church of Christ in Sugarcreek until retiring in 1992. Arnie was a member of the Eastern Ohio Association of United Church of Christ and served twice as Interim Association Minister. He was active in the Garaway school system and in his community. He enjoyed golfing and following all the Garaway school and sporting events.

**Rev. Peter S. Shults** died Sunday, October 12, 2014. He graduated from Ursinus College in Collegeville, PA and Lancaster Theological Seminary in Lancaster, PA and served congregations in Vermont, Pennsylvania, Indiana, Wisconsin, Minnesota and Ohio before retiring from St. John's United Church of Christ in Coshocton. After retirement, he continued to be active in many congregations in the area. He was a long-standing member of the Coshocton Community Choir.

## Northwest Ohio Association

**Betty L. Adams**, wife of Gary Adams, former pastor at Zion UCC- Bettsville passed away on Friday, Sept. 5, 2014. Betty was born Feb. 4, 1935, in Fremont, to the late Kenneth and Mary (King) Winters. She married Gary Adams Oct. 15, 1955, and he survives in Bellevue. She also is survived by three children, James (Diane) Adams and Denise (Lewis) Gerber, both of Bellevue, and Barbara (Jesse) Della Rosa of Mechanicsburg, Pennsylvania; six grandchildren; six great-grandchildren; and three siblings. Visitation was Sunday, Sept. 7<sup>th</sup>, at Foos and Foos Funeral Service, Bellevue. The funeral was held at St. Paul's UCC, Bellevue on Monday, Sept. 8<sup>th</sup> with burial at Meadow Green Memorial Park in Huron.

Word was received that **Ida Diehm**, wife of the late Rev. George Diehm passed away on October 15, 2013.

**Rev. Harold Konz** passed away on Saturday, January 3, 2015 at the age of 94. In his earlier years, Harold serviced a church in Fostoria and another in Findlay. He also serviced churches in Cincinnati and Detroit. Harold was the pastor at St. John's UCC in Mansfield for 12 years. Harold's calling hours and service was on Wednesday, January 7, 2015 at the Wappner Funeral Home, 98 S. Diamond St., Mansfield, OH.

Word was received that **Naomi J. Link**, wife of the late Rev. Charles G. Link passed away on December 29, 2012.

**Rev. Elizabeth N. Proudfoot** passed away in her home in Rutland, Mass. on Saturday, October 11, 2014. Liz was born Sept. 27, 1946 in Sandusky. She was the oldest child of three and graduated from Sandusky High School in 1964 entering the Navy shortly after. Liz met her husband of 22 years while in the Navy. They traveled extensively for many years while serving in the military. During this time she had three daughters, Amy, Stephanie and Kelly. After the death of her husband, Liz moved back to Sandusky. Liz began volunteering in the church and eventually studied ministry, graduating from the Northwest Ohio Association UCC Lay School of Religion and went on to study at Winebrenner Theological Seminary graduating with MDiv in 2007. Liz was Ordained on March 4, 2012 Called as the Minister of Outreach at First Congregational UCC in Sandusky. In 2012, Liz reached her dream of becoming an ordained minister. Liz is survived by her children, Amy and Andrew White, FL; Stephanie and Michael Keith, Mass; and Kelly and Martin Wilson, Sandusky; eight grandchildren. A memorial service was held on Thursday, October 16 at Parkvue Place in Sandusky.

**Josephine J. Shelly**, wife of The Rev. Ed Shelly, Norwalk passed away Sunday, February 1, 2015 after a lengthy illness. Jo was born Oct. 22, 1930, in Upper Sandusky, Ohio, to the late George and Eva (Payne) Gibson. Jo graduated Cum Laude from Upper Sandusky High School in 1948 and was a 1951 graduate of Bowling Green State University with a degree in education. She worked for 22 years teaching math at Berlin-Milan Schools and was a member of St. John's United Church of Christ, Milan. She volunteered in the manuscripts department of the Hayes Center, Fremont, for 14 years. Her hobbies were genealogy, reading and watching football games on TV. Her family was everything to her. Josephine is survived by her husband of 60 years, the Rev. Edgar Shelly Jr.; daughter, Rachel Borck of Sandusky; son, Timothy (Holly) Shelly of Milan; granddaughter, Hannah. Visitation was held at Groff Funeral Homes & Crematory Milan Chapel in Milan with the memorial service on Monday, Feb. 16, at St. John's United Church of Christ, Milan.

### **Southwest Ohio Northern Kentucky Association**

**Mrs. Roselise "Rody" Hartmann Barthlemeh** died July 25, 2015 at the age of 92. She was the widow of Rev. Donald J. Barthlemeh, who was pastor of St. Peter and St. Paul UCC, Cincinnati, Ohio from 1966-1982 and moderator of Southwest Ohio Northern Kentucky Association from 1977-1978. A memorial service for her was held on August 1, 2015 at St. Peter and St. Paul UCC where she was a member. She is survived by a son, Donald M. Barthlemeh and a daughter, Beth Jones. We give thanks to God for the life and ministry of Mrs. Roselise Barthlemeh.

**Rev. Edward L. Z. Culver** was born August 26, 1920. He was a graduate of the University of Cincinnati and United Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio. His first career was in chemical engineering. Rev. Culver was ordained to ministry in November, 1956. He served as pastor at Lees Creek UCC, Sabina, Ohio, Point Place UCC, Toledo, Ohio, First UCC, Troy, Ohio, St. John UCC, Reading, Ohio and as interim pastor at Pilgrim UCC, Cincinnati, St. Peter's UCC, Cincinnati and Price Hill UCC. He was pastor emeritus at St. John UCC, Reading. Rev. Culver was involved in many denominational and community ministries. He was preceded in death by his wife of 57 years, Ruth, who died in 2000 and by a son David. Rev. Edward Culver died November 11, 2014. He is survived by his son, Steve and a daughter, Barb. A memorial service was held for him on December 21, 2014 at St. John UCC, Reading. We give thanks to God for the life and ministry of Rev. Edward L. Z. Culver.

**Rev. Ralph Silvis** was born December 31, 1924 in Chicago, Illinois. He was a graduate of the Illinois Institute of Technology and the Oberlin School of Theology. Rev. Silvis worked in private industry before entering ordained ministry. Rev. Silvis was ordained to ministry June 9, 1960 at Pittsfield UCC, Pittsfield, Ohio where he had served three years as student pastor. He served as pastor of Bible Chapel UCC, Hamersville, Ohio from 1960 to 1986 when he retired. He was a member of Lakeview UCC, Maineville, Ohio in retirement. Rev. Silvis was present at the Uniting General Synod of the UCC in 1957 and he served as a delegate to the Ninth General Synod in 1973. He was part of the committees that wrote both the constitutions for the Ohio Conference and the Southwest Ohio Northern Kentucky Association. He also served on the SONKA Association Council and worked in ecumenical and community ministries. Rev. Ralph Silvis died September 20, 2015. He donated his body to medical science. We give thanks to God for the life and ministry of Rev. Ralph Silvis.

**Mr. Harold T. Hobe** was born October 27, 1946 in Salem, Ohio. He was a graduate of West Branch High School and the Northrup Institute of Technology, Inglewood, California. He worked for his entire career at GE Aviation in Evendale, Ohio. Hal was married for 41 years to Rev. Barb Hobe, pastor of Bethany UCC, Lebanon, Ohio. He was an active member of Faith Community United Methodist Church in West Chester, Ohio and served as a work camp volunteer on yearly mission trips to Henderson Settlement in Henderson, Kentucky. He was past president of the Lakota High School Band Boosters and was an avid

hiker and backpacker. Harold "Hal" Hobe died October 17, 2014 in Hamilton, Ohio. He donated his body to the University of Cincinnati's College of Medicine. A memorial service for him was held October 22, 2014 at Faith Community UMC. Besides his wife, Barb, he is survived by a daughter, Erin Herman of Elk Grove Village, Illinois and a son, Jeff Hobe of West Chester. We give thanks to God for the life and ministry of Hal Hobe.

**Rev. Dr. Reka Lois Black Kaetzel** was born April 7, 1922 in Raton, New Mexico. She was a graduate of the University of New Mexico and Yale Divinity School. She was ordained to ministry October 10, 1948 in South Africa. She began serving with the United Church Board for World Ministries in 1947 with her husband, Rev. Samuel Kaetzel, and they served together in South Africa and Ghana from 1947 through 1978. Rev. Kaetzel worked in a hostel for children in Ghana and with Girl Guides. In South Africa she worked with the Pietermaritzburg Congregational Church in Natal. She also served as Divisional Commissioner for the Girl Guides and Brownies and Assistant District Commissioner for Cubs in South Africa and Ghana. She returned to the United States to work and study in Boston, where in 1978 she taught a continuing education class at Boston City Hospital through Andover Newton Theological School. Revs. Reka and Samuel Kaetzel were named to the Honor Roll of the United Church Board for World Ministries for their 26 years of service. Rev. Samuel Kaetzel died June 25, 2012. Rev. Reka Kaetzel died September 22, 2014 in Lebanon, Ohio. She is survived by daughters Carol Booth of Wayne, Maine and Marcia Kaetzel of Cincinnati. We give thanks to God for the life and ministry of Rev. Dr. Reka Kaetzel.

**Mrs. Patricia Kanet** was born April 3, 1941. She was the wife of Rev. Donald W. Kanet, who is a retired UCC minister in Southwest Ohio Northern Kentucky Association. She served with him at Pleasant Hill UCC, Pleasant Hill, Ohio from 1984-1990, Newburgh UCC, Newburgh, Indiana from 1990-2002 and St. Luke UCC, Cincinnati, Ohio from 2002-2010. Patricia Kanet died May 24, 2015. A memorial service was held for her on June 6, 2015 at First United Methodist Church, Troy, Ohio. We give thanks for the life and ministry of Mrs. Patricia Kanet.

**Rev. Dr. Reva Fugate Minor** was born January 11, 1942 in Quicksand, Kentucky. She was a graduate of the College of St. Francis, Joliet, Illinois, Logan School of Chiropractic, Chesterfield, Missouri and United Theological Seminary, Dayton, Ohio. She served as interim pastor at Evangelical UCC, Portsmouth, Ohio and St. Mark UCC, Covington, Kentucky and as pastor of Zion UCC, Lawrenceburg, Indiana. Rev. Minor was married to Rev. Dr. Allen Minor, who formerly was pastor of Faith UCC, Hamilton, Ohio. Rev. Dr. Reva Minor died July 18, 2014 in Branson, Missouri. A memorial service was held for her July 26, 2014 at Zion UCC, Lawrenceburg, Indiana. We give thanks to God for the life and ministry of Rev. Dr. Reva Minor.

**Rev. George Sonneborn** died July 10, 2015 in St. Louis, Missouri at the age of 91. He was born in Cincinnati, Ohio and grew up in Dayton, Ohio. He was a graduate of Elmhurst College and Eden Theological Seminary in Webster Groves, Missouri. Rev. Sonneborn was ordained in 1948 and served in UCC ministries in St. Paul, Minnesota, Sidney, Cincinnati and Dayton, Ohio. He was pastor of Mt. Olive UCC, Trotwood, Ohio from 1970-1974 and served as moderator of the Southwest Ohio Northern Kentucky Association from 1971-1972. Rev. Sonneborn served as Associate Conference Minister in the Missouri Conference UCC from 1975-1981. In 1981 he began six years of interim ministry in a number of UCC churches in the St. Louis area. He retired from ministry in April, 2008, two weeks after the 60<sup>th</sup> anniversary of his ordination. A memorial service was held for Rev. Sonneborn on August 29, 2015 at St. Lucas UCC, St. Louis, Missouri. He was predeceased by his wife of 39 years, Barbara. He is survived by sons George Sonneborn, Jr. and David Sonneborn and a daughter, Julia Sonneborn. We give thanks to God for the life and ministry of Rev. George Sonneborn.

**Rev. Arden Virginia Brock Yakimow** was born November 24, 1931 in Loveland, Ohio. She was a graduate of Ohio University and Union Theological Seminary, New York City. She was ordained in the Presbyterian Church on December 29, 1958 at Loveland Presbyterian Church. Rev. Yakimow served as

pastor of the United Church of Christ in Whittier, California and as associate pastor at Pilgrim UCC, Cincinnati from 1976-1980. She then served as chaplain of the Riverview Community (United Church Homes) in Cincinnati until she retired in 1997. She was married to Art Yakimow from 1990 until his death in 1995. Rev. Arden Yakimow died December 4, 2014. Her funeral service was held December 10, 2014 at Loveland Presbyterian Church. Internment followed at Evergreen Cemetery in Clermont County. We give thanks to God for the life and ministry of Rev. Arden Yakimow.

### **Western Reserve Association**

**Rev. Dr. Valentino Lassiter** died Friday, June 12, 2015. He was a graduate of John F. Kennedy High School, Fisk University, Boston University, and Eden Theological Seminary. He was currently the pastor of East View United Church of Christ and professor of religious studies at John Carroll University. He also served as Pastor in Residence at John Carroll University. He was a member of William T. Boyd lodge number 79, Moorland on the Move Community Association, Epilepsy Action Network, and the Ecumenical Disciples.

**Rev. Dr. Joyce T. Morris** died Saturday, June 27, 2015. She was a graduate of Capital University and The Methodist Theological Seminary in Ohio. Joyce served Friedens UCC, Brecksville UCC and Zion UCC Tremont. She helped to do an extensive sanctuary renovation at Zion in the early 2000's and was instrumental in starting the food pantry and Saturday hot meals program which provided drop-in space and meals for the homeless community and a monthly food distribution.

**Rev. Robert T. Strommen** died Friday, June 19, 2015. He graduated from Princeton University, Union Theological Seminary and was ordained in 1959. He served as pastor of Calvary UCC in Turtle Creek, PA; Minister of Metropolitan Mission in the Penn Southeast Conference, UCC; Secretary for Social and Economic Justice Programs of the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries; and as Association Minister of the Western Reserve Association, Ohio Conference, UCC. He was a lifelong advocate of social justice causes.