

**2016 Annual Gathering**  
**Theological Reflectors – Saturday, June 11**

**Rev. Timothy Ahrens**  
**First Congregational UCC, Columbus**



Rev. Timothy C. Ahrens is in his 15th year of ministry as Senior Minister of First Congregational Church, UCC in downtown Columbus, a church known for its witness to social justice since its birth as an abolitionist congregation in 1852.

Rev. Ahrens arrived in Columbus in 1985 and has built relationships with other pastors, lay people and city leaders to work to end poverty through improved education, fair labor laws, job creation, fair housing, health care reform and equal rights for all people. He has advocated for the end of gun violence and the abolition of the death penalty and has served two terms as co-president of B.R.E.A.D. (Building Responsibility Equality And Dignity), which he helped found in 1996. To move compassion for the poor forward across Ohio, Rev. Ahrens launched We Believe Ohio in 2006.

He has served the United Church of Christ at the association, conference and national level. Before coming to First Church, he served as senior pastor of North Congregational UCC in northwest Columbus for more than 10 years. Prior to that, he served congregations in Cleveland, St. Louis, New Haven and Philadelphia, stimulating growth and revitalization by helping congregations to become more multi-racial, more multi-cultural and more accepting and tolerant of all people.

Rev. Ahrens is currently working on his doctor of ministry degree at Chicago Theological Seminary. His thesis is entitled: “Young and Growing Stronger: Creating a Model of Social Justice with a new Generation of 21<sup>st</sup> Century Prophetic Witness Leaders.” He and his wife, Susan Sitler, have been married since November 1985 and are the parents of four adult children.

**Rev. Avery Danage**  
**Kent United Church of Christ**



The Rev. Avery Danage is an ordained minister of the United Church of Christ, serving as the Associate Pastor at the United Church of Christ of Kent, Ohio. Pastor Avery primarily provides pastoral ministry to the youth, children, and families.

Pastor Avery passionately empowers youth people college students, and adults to reach their full potential in Christ. Ardently opposed to inequality and racism, Pastor Avery is called by God for the purpose of dismantling structures of injustice and inequality, and is committed to promoting racial reconciliation within the body of Christ. Pastor Avery is the co-founder of

Tuesday Night Thunder (T-N-T), a multi-racial campus ministry at Kent State University, where he also serves as the Chaplain for the KSU Football Team. He is also on faculty at Tri-State Bible College.

A native of Warren, Ohio, Pastor Avery holds an undergraduate degree from Kent State a Master of Divinity from Ashland Theological Seminary, and currently pursuing a Doctorate of Ministry in Transformational Leadership. Pastor Avery and his wife Semone have been married for 25 years, and together they have four adult children, Avery Jr, Ambyr, Jessica, and Arielle, and granddaughter Corrine Noelle. They currently reside in Kent, Ohio.



**Pastor Beth Staten, Outreach Director  
Move United Church, Columbus**

Beth Kavanaugh Staten has been a staff member at Move United Church since 2008. She helps new people get involved, offers pastoral care, and provides administrative leadership. Beth also enjoys preaching from time to time.

She has a BA in public relations from Drury University and is pursuing an MDiv at Methodist Theological School in Ohio. Beth is a Member In Discernment and anticipates becoming an ordained minister in 2017.

She is a spelling whiz, a seamstress, and an amateur gardener. You can connect with her at [beth@moveunited.org](mailto:beth@moveunited.org).