



February 16, 2017



Brothers and Sisters of the Southern Conference, "come one, come all"! It pleases me to **kick off** the 52nd Annual Gathering of the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ. What a proud and rich history we share. This is why I am so excited, to once again experience the festive fellowship that we cherish so dearly in the conference.

Our theme, "**Living Our Faith, Building On Hope, and Sharing Our Love**," will be the central expression of this gathering that will be held in Virginia Beach, VA. Our gracious host, the **Eastern Virginia Association**, will prepare and join with us for what will be a fun, festive, and joyful occasion to the Glory of God.

You Don't Want To Miss It! This will be a time where we gather, learn, relax and enjoy the beauty of the ocean as we include our plenary business together. You will be able to walk, pray and hopefully get away from some of the many issues that you face every single day. We will provide opportunities for our youth and young people to share in this fun and festive occasion as this is a time for the entire family to enjoy the fruits of our labor, while we honor the legacy of this great conference.

The Virginia Beach Convention Center will be bubbling and over flowing with people from all over the conference. We will have a Friday evening that will be set aside to enjoy the "Love Boat." Yes, the "Love Boat." You will imagine yourself on a cruise sailing away to the island of fun. Please bring your Hawaiian shirts or your island gear and let us sail on the "Love Boat" together. We will be entertained by a live jazz band and food that will satisfy any appetite. And yes, our business sessions will also be on the menu.

Look for more to come as we look for ways to "Live Our Faith, Build On Hope and Share Our Love", once again at our Annual Gathering. More information to come. **See You There!**

Rev. Dr. Edward Davis
Conference Minister