



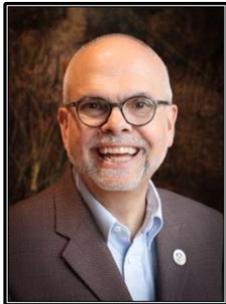
HEARTLAND CONFERENCE

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Jesus went on with his disciples to the villages of Caesarea Philippi,
and on the way he asked his disciples, “Who do people say that I am?” -Mark 8:27

“Into the Deep – Who Is this Jesus we say we follow?”

Come Be Part of the Heartland Conference Annual Gathering!
Friday, September 26th, 2025!



Dear Beloved in Christ,

I am so excited to invite and urge you to attend this year’s Heartland Conference Annual Gathering! Based on feedback we have received over the years, **this year’s Annual Gathering will be for one day, on Friday, September 26, 2025!** We will be meeting at Ohio Wesleyan University in Delaware, Ohio, just north and west of Columbus at the wonderful Benes Center. **Our covenant calls each congregation to send one lay delegate. Every authorized minister, regardless of ministry setting is also a delegate.** I look forward to being with you all! I hope you will register today by clicking [here](#). I want you to be aware of some of the highlights that await us.

Rev. Dr. Molly T. Marshall, President of United Theological Seminary, will be our keynote speaker addressing the question, “Who Is this Jesus we say we follow?” There is much happening in the world today in the name of Jesus that has little to do with the Jesus of the gospels. Dr. Marshall will help us “go deep” in our consideration of Jesus and how our thinking can inform the good news we are called to be and share in the world. Her keynote will be followed by a wonderful opportunity to engage each other in response to her presentation.

Music will offer a spiritual weave throughout the day. In the morning, Rev. Dillon Shipman, Rev. Marla Flewellan, and Rosemary Valentine will weave our time with music and rhythm from the **Music Makes Community paperless music movement.** In the afternoon, Ms. Janelle Rogers and the Common Grace Band from First Community Church will continue the weave culminating with our closing communion worship that will feature the preaching of **Mr. Jamar Doyle, President and CEO of our Council for Health and Human Services Ministries!** Those who attended Synod in Indianapolis will remember his powerful and spirit-led preaching presence.

While the morning will give us opportunity to consider theologically and spiritually the call of Christ in these days, the afternoon will lead us to consider the call of our shared ministry. **A Panel of Sages**, featuring our Association Ministers, **Rev. Patricia Battle, Rev. Dan Busch, Rev. Dr. Elena Larssen, and Rev. MiMi Chamberlin**, alongside dear ecumenical partners, **Rev. Allen Harris**, Regional Pastor and President of the Christian Church in Ohio, and **Rev. Dr. Jack Sullivan, Jr.**, Executive Director of the Ohio Council of Churches will **engage your questions**, about ministry in this season of history.

There will be **updates about the sale process of Templed Hills Camp and Retreat Center**, consideration of our 2026 budget, and election of new leaders to serve on our Board of Directors. **Rev. Dr. Chad Abbott, Conference Minister of the Indiana-Kentucky Conference and I** will offer reflections on the **ever-expanding cross-conference listening circles** that are considering how we might partner in various ways that make sense given the realities of church and world we inhabit together.



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Of course, there will also be **time to connect around tables with long-time friends and make new friends!** The day will be rich with opportunities for encouragement and blessing. **But it won't be complete without you!** For more information, [click here](#). **Our registration deadline is September 16th!** Please register today! I hope and pray you will be part of this year's Heartland Conference Annual Gathering so we may be renewed and deepened by the Spirit who calls us to bear good news into the world together. I look forward to seeing you on September 26th.

Blessings on you all!
Pastor Dave