TOP TEN THINGS TO KNOW ABOUT THE 2017 CONFERENCE ANNUAL GATHERING

The 2017 Missouri Mid-South Conference Annual Gathering is going to be a very exciting event, with the culmination of several matters of business, and the continuation of others as we "Energize our Ministry for a New Day" in our Conference. Your participation in the event is very important! To that end, there are at least 10 things you should know about the 2017 Conference Annual Gathering….

10. ***The Conference Annual Gathering will begin on Thursday morning*** (check in time starts at 10:00am) ***and conclude at 1:00 Saturday afternoon.*** The dates for this event are June 8-10, 2017. Plan to be there the whole time so you don't miss out on anything!
9. ***You can arrive Wednesday evening if you wish!*** Conference staff and the Conference Annual Gathering Planning Team will be arriving Wednesday evening. If you chose this option to get a jump on the Thursday festivities, Wednesday evening could be a great time of Sabbath, joining your Conference friends poolside or in the hotel lounge.
8. ***The venue for this event will be the Holiday Inn in Columbia, MO.*** While there is no perfect location in our geographically challenged Conference, this hotel is easily accessible from Highway 70 and provides amenities that could make a journey from Memphis, Cape Girardeau or Arkansas a bit more feasible.
7. ***Please stay overnight at the Holiday Inn!*** While this venue could lend participants to stay at other hotels or drive to and from the Gathering each day, such endeavors detract from the community atmosphere and family feel we are trying to build around our Conference during this event. As we stay together, play together and work together, this gathering will help us grow together in unity!
6. ***There will be youth activities and involvement!*** Jay Burbridge will be working to directly involve youth (focusing on 6-12 grades) in the activities of the Conference, while providing a few separate opportunities for them as well. Each church is allowed Youth Delegates, and all churches are encouraged to send some!
5. ***There will be childcare and children's programming!*** Tracey Harris will be providing childcare for the event. Bring the children; it will be a fun Gathering for them, too! You need to register for childcare on the registration website.
4. ***We will focus on Church Vitality!*** Thursday will focus on this important topic. Cameron Trimble, the CEO of the Center for Progressive Renewal, will be our guest speaker. Evening worship on Thursday will feature Rev. Ginny Brown Daniel, as well as testimonies from youth across our Conference. Our Worship leader for the whole event is Shamar Jordan, Minister of Music at Christ the King UCC, who is bringing their Church Choir. Rev. Kimi Yokoyama is coordinating worship for the whole event.

3. ***We will focus on our mutual ministry!*** Friday will focus on "Our Pentecost Moment" with Rev. Tara Barber as our featured speaker. Tara will lead us in a workshop session that afternoon as well on "Clergy Communities of Practice". We will also have several workshop options that afternoon to highlight our mutual ministry.
2. ***We will do God's Work together!*** This event is a celebration of both clergy and lay ministries, and how our mutual ministries can lift each other up and celebrate the ways we work together to do God's work in the world.
1. ***Registration is online exclusively!*** To streamline the registration process in light of our stewardship of Conference resources, registration is online only. We realize this may be difficult for some; but we hope that others will join together to help those with online challenges. For those who are technologically challenged, please contact your local church pastor or another in your church to help make the registration process seamless. Every participant must register online, including Youth and Children.

These are just a few reasons why the 2017 Conference Annual Gathering is a Gathering not to be missed! This event will offer much in the way of education, illumination, and spiritual renewal. Come gather, worship, celebrate and serve with your Conference Family as we "Energize our Ministry for a New Day" in our Conference!