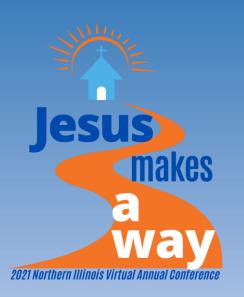
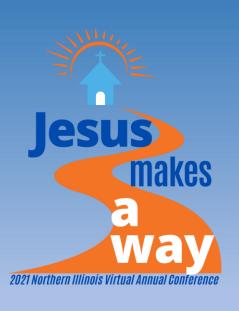
Bishop John L. Hopkins Northern Illinois Annual Conference July 16, 2021

"Jesus Makes a Way"



Celebrate our Strengths in the Northern Illinois Conference

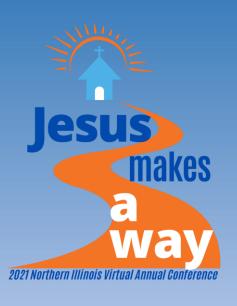
- Gifted and dedicated clergy and laity
- Strong stand for equity and justice—full inclusion of everyone
- Commitment to celebrate diversity
- Devotion to missions (*Mission Links: Living the Beatitudes*)
- Effective advocacy ministry for immigrants (NIJFON)
- New structure is working Conference events well attended
- Local churches are doing front line mission and ministry



Challenges Facing the

Northern Illinois Conference

- Financial challenges
- Concerns about division in the church and full inclusion
- Need to increase capacity of clergy and laity to address changing communities
- Need to Develop a pipeline of diverse clergy
- Low clergy morale
- Lack of respect between progressive and conservative for opposing viewpoints
- Lack of support for our connectional system
- Need to close or "right-size" some churches



Four Priorities from ACST for 2021:

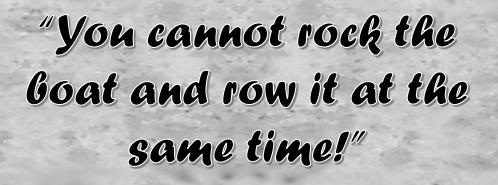
- 1. Guiding the NIC in the event of a significant shift in the denomination or jurisdictional realignment of conferences
- 2. Facilitating communication and healthy relationships between districts, NIC leadership, staff, committees, and ministries
- 3. Focusing NIC resources to equip local churches and ministry settings to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world
 - Advocating, monitoring, and celebrating diversity at every level of leadership throughout the NIC

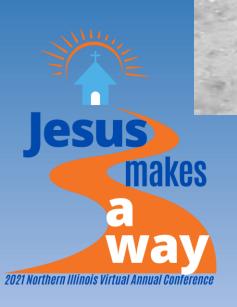




"We may come from different cultures, but we are all in the same boat now!"







"Pray to God – Row to Shore"





