"Back to the Future: Who Do We Want to Be?"





Philippians 3:14-21 (The Message)









Back to the Future "fixes" the past.

Maybe many of us here think it might be a great thing to be able to do that – "fix" the past.

So much has happened since we last gathered:

uncertainty about who we will be as an annual conference and even a denomination continues to hang over us



We can't fix the past... but we can reclaim our future.





The sankofa is a mythic bird from a tribe in Ghana. It means: to return (to the past) to look, seek and fetch that which is at risk of being left behind.







The sankofa flies forward (into the future) while looking backward (at who it has been in the past) with an egg in its mouth (symbolizing that future of potential).

We often have to go back, then we can go forward knowing who we are.





200 years of mission in the Methodist tradition.

50 years of Black Methodist for Church Renewal





150 years of women's mission in the Methodist tradition

and the 180th anniversary of continuous ministry in the northern Illinois area.





Commemorating 180 Years of Ministry

1800s 2000s 2000s







Looking back allows an organization to look farther ahead than if you don't consider who you've been.



We have been, and are, an annual conference who has sought to be more inclusive of others.





The question that we will need to ask over and over again is:

Who will we be?



Something significantly shifted when the Traditional Plan was approved.





If you're a conservative church, be a fruitful conservative church.

If you're a progressive church, be a fruitful progressive!



We may need an amicable separation to find "a new form of unity"

We can no longer afford to continue to do harm to each other in regards to human sexuality.





At this point, my vision, my hope, is that there is a plan for affiliation.

Conversations are only beginning and there are, as of now, no solid proposals.





As we discern the future together how will we be with each other?

I encourage us to allow everyone to get to the future intact.





Let's not unduly provoke one another

but instead let us do no harm.





Hebrews 10:24: "let us consider how to provoke one another to love and good deeds."





We will be determining who we will be by the election of our delegates to GC2020.

We need to have the very best delegation!





We need delegates who can influence others and build coalitions for a future hope.



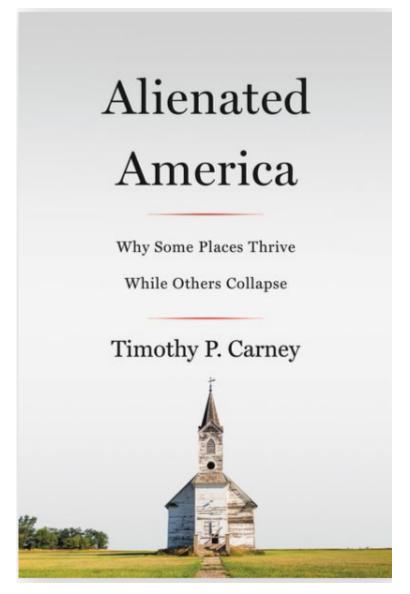


There is much to do this year as an annual conference.

We cannot take our eyes off the goal of caring for our neighbors!











We have a mission to fulfill!





ACST is bringing three strategic goals:

Grow in discipleship

Anti-Racism



Capacity & sustainability as local churches and an annual conference

We have much to do this year!





So let's stay focused on who we are, with our eyes on the goal where God is beckoning us onward!



