

“Back to the Future: Who Do We Want to Be?”

Back to the Future 
2019 Northern Illinois Annual Conference

Bishop Sally Dyck
 **Northern Illinois Conference**
OF THE UNITED METHODIST CHURCH

Philippians 3:14-21 (The Message)



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“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



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**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!**

Alienated America

Why Some Places Thrive
While Others Collapse

Timothy P. Carney



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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!**