

UCC Disabilities Ministries and UCC Mental Illness Network
FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE (June 8, 2013)
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**New Keynote Speaker Announced for Widening the Welcome Pre-Synod
Conference
to be held June 27, 2013 in Long Beach**

The planning committee for the Widening the Welcome is happy to announce that Ann Ito will be the lunch hour keynote speaker for the Fourth Widening the Welcome: Inclusion for All Conference to be held at the Renaissance Long Beach Hotel, CA. Widening the Welcome 2013 will commence at 7:30 am and conclude at 7:30 pm on Thursday, June 27th, 2013. Registration for this event continues and will also be available on-site. The registration brochure for this event can be accessed through the on-line [Widening the Welcome 2013 Registration Brochure](#).

Ann Ito is a member of the Board of Directors of the United Church of Christ Disabilities Ministries and represents the UCCDM's concerns to the UCC Executive Council. Mrs. Ito lives with blindness and increasing hearing loss. Ann has spent the last four decades serving college students with disabilities toward equity of opportunity by advocating for equal access for persons with a wide range of disabilities in public transportation, communication, rehabilitation, library services, employment, higher education, etc. Ann will be the lunch hour Keynote Speaker. The morning keynote speaker will be The Rev. Susan Gregg-Schroder, Founder Mental Health Ministries, who will speak on "Mental Health as a Spiritual Journey" and offer a workshop on "Mental Illness and Families of Faith: How Congregations Can Respond."

Other workshops will include "Becoming A2A (Accessible to All): From Theory to Practice", "Mental Illness in Prison: Understanding the Facts", "Spiritual Care for People with Disabilities & Brain Disorders of Aging", "Centers of Hope and Transformation: People with Disabilities Creating a Consciousness of Inclusion", "Cherish the Parents, Care for the Child: Supporting the Emotional Well Being of Families from Birth to Young Adulthood," and "Developing and Sustaining a Spiritual Support Group for Mental Health and Wellness".

It's not too late to register for this Pre-Synod Conference! Please join us as we continue with this movement to Widen the Welcome and inclusion of people with disabilities and mental health issues and their families into the full participation of the life of our churches!