

God's Surprising Wonders

Welcome

“God’s miracles are staggering, God’s wonders are surprising. God’s kingdom lasts and lasts, God’s sovereign rule goes on forever.” Daniel 4:3 (The Message)

God's Surprising Wonders were experienced by me at every stage of planning the 2012 Annual Event for APCE! When asked to be the annual event chair, I was surprised and overwhelmed by the privilege to serve in this way. The theme was chosen by the Annual Event Committee and sounded exciting and promising! I'm continually surprised by what God placed before all of us.

I've been to Michigan, but never Grand Rapids! It's a wonderful place and I'm so glad that so many of you will have the opportunity to come and learn about that great city. I've heard of the Calvin Symposium on Worship and what a great conference it is and always wanted to attend, but it is always about the same time as APCE! Well, folks, here is another one of God's surprising wonders. You can go to the Symposium on Worship, which happens January 26–28. They were wonderful partners as we planned some events that will happen January 31–February 4. Some of the leaders for their workshops will also be presenting at APCE. You can check out the website and learn more about the [Calvin Symposium on Worship](#).



John Bell will be presenting at the Symposium and at APCE! We are looking forward to two preconference opportunities on Tuesday, January 31. In addition to John Bell's "Things They Never Told Me about Jesus," John Roberto will present "Faith Formation in the 21st Century." There are over

80 workshops to choose from—two in-depth workshops—and one workshop that will be led by Bruce Reyes-Chow through Skype! There are opportunities for off-site workshops—one to Holland, Michigan!



We will begin with worship on Wednesday and celebrate communion. We are pleased to have Rev. Susan Davis Krummel as our preacher. Rev. Carol McDonald will be coordinating worship and C.J. Kingdom Grier, director of music at Maple Avenue Ministries, in Holland, Michigan, will be working with John Bell as they lead the music for our worship. C.J. will be leading music for our closing worship on Saturday and hopes to be able to bring his children's choir to be with us that day.



We are excited to have Rabbi Sandy Sasso with us on Thursday. She will be presenting in the morning and afternoon. Many of her books are used by educators in a myriad of settings.

Friday is our workshop day! We will celebrate with each other on Friday evening as we recognize not only those educators who were selected as award winners, but all of us will celebrate during the "APCE's Got Talent" portion of the evening! Be thinking about the talent that you wish to share.

Each morning we will have time for giving thanks to God by using the devotional guide that was created for you by Carol Wehrheim.

As we renew our baptism on Saturday morning's worship with Cláudio Carvalhaes preaching, I know that you will rejoice as I have at how wonderful it is to experience God in our lives in so many surprising ways.

I look forward to seeing you in Grand Rapids!

Faithfully,
Loretta Grati-Bremer



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Highlights

Pre-Event Options

Certification courses begin on Monday, the Large Church Conference begins on Tuesday, and two pre-seminars are planned for Tuesday afternoon. Be sure to check the 2012 Annual Event schedule and "Options" information at apcenet.org for complete details.

PC(USA) Face-to-Face

The 2012 APCE Annual Event includes an opportunity for church educators, associate pastors, youth directors, and representatives of congregations to meet face-to-face to discuss where God may be calling. The office of Vocation sponsors this opportunity in conjunction with the APCE 2012 Annual Event. If you are interested in participating, please contact [Jewel McRae](mailto:jewel.mcrae@pcusa.org) (jewel.mcrae@pcusa.org) or call (800) 728-7228, ext. 5748.

Presbyterians Organized in Nurture and Teaching (POINT)

Designated POINT representatives will gather Tuesday evening and Wednesday morning for annual training. Take the opportunity to share ideas for curriculum interpretation and to strengthen skills for assisting churches with their educational ministry. Visit pcusa.org/point for the 2012 POINT event schedule and registration.

Worship

Our worship and plenary sessions will be held in the [DeVos Place Convention Center](#). Our gathering will begin by celebrating communion and we will renew our baptism at the closing worship on Saturday morning.

Regional Gatherings

Regions will gather for breakfast on Thursday morning. Be sure to check the regional map to determine your region.

Welcome

Welcome Dinner will be held at the [Grand Rapids Public Museum](#), just a short distance from our hotel. You will have an opportunity to do a self-guided tour of the museum while you're having dinner! Be sure to ride the 1928 Carousel before you leave!

Market Place

Market Place will be located in the Ambassador Ballroom of the [Amway Grand Plaza Hotel](#). Make sure to carve out time in your schedule to experience Market Place, treating Market Place time as one of your workshop sessions!

Spirituality Center

The Spirituality Center will be equipped with a canvas floor labyrinth. This walking prayer path, which is a single, circular path with no dead ends that leads to the center, will be used to cultivate deeper levels of thinking. It will awaken one to ponder, contemplate, and consider God's Surprising Wonders. The pathway will be a way to explore God's ever presence with us.

This sacred place will also lend itself to awakening an understanding of God's truths and mysteries. It will be a place to transform one's mind, body, and spirit and empower one for the work of Christian ministry in the world. Additionally, the Spirituality Center will contain finger labyrinths, a sand labyrinth, and other related resources.

Seminary Gatherings

A number of seminaries affiliated with APCE's partner denominations will host special gatherings for their alums and prospective students. To date, Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, Princeton Theological Seminary, and Union Presbyterian Seminary are planning events. Watch for [more details](#) about these opportunities and other seminary gatherings closer to the event.

Workshops

There will be a "workshop day" this year on Friday! Choose from over 80 workshops, some for a short time and two for five hours! One of the off-site workshops will be to [In the Image](#), the recipient of the [Val Murphy Offering](#).

Free Time Options

Take advantage of the Grand Rapids area to ski, tube, or snowboard at [Pando Winter Sports Park](#), walk across the bridge from the hotel and convention center complex to visit the [Gerald R. Ford Presidential Library & Museum](#), or take a taxi ride to visit the [Frederik Meijer Gardens & Sculpture Park](#) for year-round beauty indoors or out.

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Market Place

Take time to explore the 2012 APCE Annual Event Market Place. Shop the conference bookstore, visit the variety of vendors, and gather in community areas to exchange ideas and enjoy conversations. Many vendors draw for prizes and offer giveaways. All vendors sell their own resources with the conference bookstore stocking books suggested by conference workshop presenters and leaders. Make sure to carve out time in your schedule to experience Market Place, treating Market Place time as one of your workshop sessions!

Market Place will be located in the Ambassador Ballroom of the [Amway Grand Plaza Hotel](#). Authors will sign books in Market Place on Thursday, February 2, 4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m. Come and enjoy hot chocolate and other festivities until 7:00 p.m. on Thursday!

Exhibitors paid a fee for the privilege of presenting their materials to participants at the Annual Event Market Place. APCE does not endorse, or necessarily recommend, the products displayed.

Market Place and Spirituality Center Schedule

Wednesday, February 1:

9:00 a.m. to 2:30 p.m.

Market Place and Spirituality Center

Thursday, February 2:

11:30 a.m. to 1:30 p.m.

Market Place and Spirituality Center

3:00 p.m. to 7:00 p.m.

Market Place and Spirituality Center

4:00 p.m. to 5:30 p.m.

Focus Groups and Hot Chocolate (in Market Place area)

Conversations with Denominational Leaders

Insights from the Educator of the Year

Exploring Certification

Conversation with the Event Artist

Authors' Book Signings

Missionaries in Colombia via Skype

Learning more about [In the Image](#)

Friday, February 3:

10:00 a.m. to 6:00 p.m.

Market Place and Spirituality Center

Val Murphy Offering

Val Murphy was the first APCE member to receive a Lifetime Achievement Award. A pioneer for minorities in church education, she served the Sixth Grace Presbyterian Church in Chicago from 1963–1974. She attended every APCE Annual Event until 1987 when failing health kept her at home. APCE has honored her annually by receiving the [Val Murphy Scholarship](#) offering.



An offering will be received during the Awards Banquet on Friday to benefit the Val Murphy Scholarship Fund and other causes. One half of the offering goes toward the variety of [APCE scholarships](#) through the generosity of APCE members and supporters. One quarter of the offering will go to the local committee's designated beneficiary, [In the Image](#), of Grand Rapids. Another quarter of the offering underwrites the racial-ethnic representatives to the APCE Cabinet.

[In the Image](#), an independent, faith-based, ecumenical organization in Grand Rapids, links gently used clothing, housewares, furniture, and appliances with people in need in a manner that enhances dignity, embraces choice, encourages participation, and builds a community of diversity. Take the opportunity to visit and help during one of the workshop times.