

**MINUTES OF THE WESTERN ASSOCIATION ANNUAL MEETING  
MISSOURI MID-SOUTH CONFERENCE - UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST  
April 26, 2008**

The Western Association Annual Meeting was held on April 26, 2008, at Columbia UCC in Columbia, Missouri. Registration began at 9:00 a.m. and the meeting followed by a call to order with welcome and greetings from Mr. Jerry Cundiff, Chair of Western Association, Rev. Tom Nordberg, Pastor of Columbia UCC, the host church, and Connie Burnham, Columbia UCC Church Council Vice-President. The following 23 churches were represented:

**Central Cluster:** California UCC – California; Central UCC - Jefferson City; Columbia UCC – Columbia; Evangelical UCC – Boonville; Immanuel UCC – Sedalia; Peace UCC – Hartsburg; Salem UCC (McGirk) – California; St Johns UCC – Billingsville;

**Kansas City Cluster:** Congregational Christian Church of Samoa – Independence; Country Club Congregational UCC - Kansas City; Ivanhoe UCC – Raytown; St. Luke's UCC – Independence; St Marks Union UCC - Kansas City; St Peters UCC - Kansas City; Southwood UCC – Raytown;

**Lafayette Cluster:** Bethel UCC – Concordia; Ebenezer UCC – Levasy; Salem UCC – Higginsville; St Luke UCC - Grand Pass; St Paul UCC – Blackburn; Zion UCC – Mayview;

**Ozark Cluster:** St John's Chapel UCC – Springfield;

**St Joseph Cluster:** Zion UCC - St Joseph.

In attendance were 55 registered members and one registered guest, 10 additional Columbia UCC members (including those preparing the luncheon), and Rev. Jeff Whitman, Missouri Mid-South Conference Minister. Twenty-three congregations were represented from all five WA Clusters.

**Opening Worship: "In the Midst of New Dimensions"**

Rev. Ruth Hotle, liturgist, led Responsive Scripture: Exodus 13:14-14:25(selections). Rev. Thomas G. Nordberg presented the Morning Worship Message, "Cloud and Fire."

**Business Session I**

April 2007 Annual Meeting Minutes were presented. Rev. Stephen Redman made the motion to accept the minutes, Rev. Isaiah Muita seconded. Motion carried. Minutes of the September 2007 Fall Fellowship Rally were presented. Martha Hawthorne made the motion to accept, Uel Blank seconded. Motion carried.

Jerry Cundiff, Association Chair, presented the report of the Nominating Committee. Nominating presented a slate of officers and committee positions with the exception of an Association Representative to Planning. Wayne Gadt explained the task of the Planning Ministry. If no one makes a nomination for this position, the Executive Committee will pursue filling the position. Additional nominations may be made before the vote in the afternoon session.

Rev. Ruth Hotle, Chairperson of the Church and Ministry Committee, presented the Church and Ministry Report (see attached). The Church and Ministry Committee has

been increased from nine members to 12 as per a change in the By-Laws adopted last year.

Paul Osgood led conversation involving Strategic Planning. He will be happy to meet with individual churches in the Association. The National Church wants our input regarding the question, "How can we be an advocate for God's mission on earth?"

We prepared for small group break-out discussions on: Growth/Evangelism; Healthy Congregational Relationships; Stewardship; Creating New Congregational Ministries; Denominational Identity; and Leadership Development.

Discussion questions included: How do we deal with change and transition; What challenges do we face in our local settings; What gives us hope; What does it mean to be and belong to the UCC as it relates to your setting(s)?

We reassembled to share reports from discussion groups. Morning session concluded, and we moved downstairs for the lunch prepared and served by members of Columbia UCC.

## **Business Session II**

Jerry Cundiff shared the Chair's Remarks, and Rev. Dale Parson shared his Associate Conference Minister's Report.

Election: A motion was made by Joe Schroeder, Columbia UCC, to accept the Nominating Committee's slate. Anne Lennington, Zion UCC, St. Joseph, seconded the motion. Motion carried. Elected were: Chair, Jerry Cundiff; Vice-Chair, Linda Stenger; Secretary/Treasurer, Rev. Robert Atkinson; Church and Ministry, Class of 2011 - Rev. Gail Danley, Fred Droege, Rev. Dane Sommer, Rev. Michael Stephens; Association Representative to Planning - Juanita Wright, Zion UCC, Mayview; Association Representatives to Nominating - Wayne Gadt and Rev. Karen Redman; Association Representative to Administrating - Rev. Clairnel Nervik; Cluster Representatives to Association Council - Central, Rev. Tom Nordberg; Lafayette, Dennis Zeller; Kansas City, Rev. Pat Glover; Ozark, Rev. Becky Hebert; St. Joseph, Rev. John Middleton; General Synod 28 delegates – Rev. Albon Langbon; Rev. Robert Atkinson; Josh Priven.

Conference Minister Rev. Jeffrey Whitman introduced the Habakkuk 223 Project as he responded to the theme, "In the Midst of New Dimensions." He discussed staff configuration; purpose of the Conference; and strategic planning as an on-going piece. Asked the questions: What is the new mission field? Where should our attention go in the next five years?

## **Closing Worship**

Opening song: "Lead On, O Cloud of Yahweh"; Installations: Presentations and Covenant; Rev. Dale Parson offered "Reflections On the Day"; Sacrament of Holy Communion; Closing hymn: "In the Midst of New Dimensions."

Meeting was adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted,  
Kathy Homfeld, Secretary/Treasurer