

## COMMITTEE ON MINISTRY OF THE EASTERN ASSOCIATION 2009 ANNUAL REPORT

### Committee Members:

The Rev. Dr. William Schwab, chair, (St. Peter's UCC, Washington); Mr. Jim Blaue, (St. Paul's UCC, Gerald); The Rev. Doris Judy, (Faith UCC, Wentzville); The Rev. Jeanne Lischer, (Immanuel's UCC, Holstein and St. John's UCC, Pinckney); Mr. Roger Miyasaka, (Grace UCC, O'Fallon); The Rev. Bruce Moeller, (Femme Osage UCC, Femme Osage); The Rev. David Poe, (St. Peter's UCC, New Haven); Mr. Karl Rethemeyer, (St. John's UCC, Weldon Spring); Mrs. Joyce Schutt, (Bethany UCC, Berger;); The Rev. John Silea, (St. John's UCC, Weldon Spring); Ms. Rhonda Stockglausner, (St. Peter's UCC, Washington); Mrs. Karen Watson (Friedens-Peace UCC, New Melle). The Rev. Krista Betz, Acting Associate Conference Minister, *ex officio*.

Six lay members and six clergy members elected by the association comprise the Eastern Association Committee on Ministry. The committee meets at least monthly for six hours at St. Peter's United Church of Christ, Washington.

The committee approves the standing of churches and ministers in the association, in covenant with the United Church of Christ and the Missouri Mid-South Conference. The more than 200 page United Church of Christ *Manual on Ministry* is the primary resource of the committee. This manual was approved by the General Synod of the United Church of Christ and provides the framework for all committees on ministry throughout the denomination. It is also available on the UCC website.

Most of the committee's time is spent determining fitness for ministry of clergy and then authorizing them for ministry. This process entails gathering information and interviewing persons who are responding to a call to ministry. They are called Members in Discernment. These persons, typically seminarians, receive oversight from the committee on their journey to ordination.

The committee approves the transfer of clergy into and out of our association. An interview is usually held with each pastor moving in or out of the association or changing churches within the association to again determine fitness for ministry.

On behalf of the United Church of Christ, the Eastern Association Committee on Ministry interviews and assembles documents for persons seeking ordination. Upon completion of all pre-requisites, a person seeking ordination is extensively interviewed by the committee. If the candidate is determined to be fit for ministry, permission is granted to circulate a Clergy Profile and seek a call. Upon receiving a call, a Service of Ordination is set and, in conjunction with the local church and the association, the candidate is ordained and authorized for ministry.

Another aspect of the committee's work involves Situational Support Consultations. When a local church, pastor or the Committee on Ministry deems it wise to do so, a Situational Support Consultation is implemented. Often this process is initiated when there is conflict within congregations. Churches and clergy frequently agree to Plans of Growth as an outcome of the consultations. Growth plans are designed to improve communication within congregations and therefore improve the quality of ministry of congregations and their pastors.

Considerable time was spent this year on Fitness Reviews. When anyone calls to the attention of the Committee on Ministry a potential violation of the Ordained Minister's Code by a clergyperson authorized by the Eastern Association, a Response Team from the conference is asked to do a thorough investigation of the charge. The Committee on Ministry receives information from the Response Team and determines if there is enough information to warrant a Fitness Review. If there is, a thorough review follows with outcomes ranging from total clearance of a charge to the termination of a clergyperson's authorization for ministry in the United Church of Christ.

The Eastern Association Committee on Ministry seeks to maintain high standards for clergy and churches authorized to carry out ministry in our midst. Its function depends greatly on the cooperation of all clergy and churches and the covenant we have with each other with God as our witness.

The following is a summary of the actions of our committee during the past year.

## October 2008

- The Committee on Ministry re-organized: Rev. Bill Schwab, Chairperson; Rev. David Poe, Vice-Chairperson; Joyce Schutt, Secretary; Roger Miyasaka, Clergy lists and tracking; Rev. John Silea, Members in Discernment; Jim Blaue, Members in Discernment; Rev. Jeanne Lischer, Licensed Ministers; Karen Watson, Exit Interviews; Karl Rethemeyer, Transfer of Standing; Rhonda Stockglausner, Council Liaison, Rev. Doris Judy, Information Reviews and Periodic Reviews; Rev. Bruce Moeller, Ordained Ministerial Partnership and Privilege of Call.
- Granted license to Darrel Deeker, Zion-St. Paul UCC, Bay until 12.31.2009.
- Information of concern regarding an authorized minister was presented to the Committee on Ministry, which, if found to be true, would call into question this person's fitness for ministry on behalf of the United Church of Christ. A response team was called into action to gather information.
- Approved letter to be mailed to St. Paul's UCC, Marthasville affirming the church's standing with the Eastern Association and the Missouri Mid-South Conference. The leadership of the church wanted clarification on this point after calling an unauthorized person to serve as their minister.
- Received exit interview report from meeting with Rev. David Arndt and St. John's UCC, Casco.
- Granted license to David Machon, Fulton UCC, Fulton until 12.31.2009.
- An authorized minister was deemed to have completed the prescribed plan of growth, which was the outcome of a fitness review.
- Committee members participated in the Service of Farewell for Rev. Randy Ross at Friedens-Peace UCC, New Melle on 10.26.2008.
- Installation of The Rev. Polly McWilliams as pastor of Emmanuel, UCC, Weldon Spring 10.12.09
- Installation of Dr. Paul Koch as Senior Minister, St. Peter's UCC Washington 10.25.08.

## November 2008

- Granted approval for Darrell Deeker to perform community funerals on behalf of St. John's UCC, Stolpe (Hermann).
- A request from St. John's UCC Fruitland was received calling for the ordination of licensed minister David Schaffner. The Committee on Ministry is awaiting more information from the Parish Life and Leadership Office of the United Church of Christ regarding multiple paths to ordination, thus the request was tabled. Discussion followed regarding the outstanding contributions of our licensed ministers and how to recognize their achievements and provide greater support to them.
- The Committee on Ministry spent considerable time reviewing and discussing the latest draft documents pertaining to Multiple Paths to Ordination.
- Received exit interview report from meeting with lay leaders at Friedens Peace UCC, New Melle.
- Brad Urban was approved for ordination pending a call.
- Met with Jerry Reisinger and representatives of Friedens-Peace UCC, New Melle as they were seeking licensure for Jerry. After deliberation, the decision was tabled until he prepared the necessary documentation to meet the current requirements for licensed ministry.
- Ordination into the Christian Ministry service for Nadine Aydt at St. John UCC, St. Charles on 11.16.2009
- Licensure granted until 12.31.2009 for: Darrel Deeker (St. John UCC, Stolpe), Don Frandsen (St. Paul UCC, Defiance), Jeff Fulk (Shannondale UCC), Glenn Hollander (St. James UCC, Charlotte), David Machon (Fulton UCC), Eugene Rahmier (Friedens UCC, Moscow Mills), Barbara Zastrow (Zion-St. Peter UCC, Pershing, Ebenezer UCC, Ryors, and St. James UCC, Morrison), Sarah Bloesch (Pilgrim UCC, Labadie), David Schaffner (St. John UCC, Fruitland), Frances Wollard (First Congregational UCC, Grandin) and Dan Johnson, (Evangelical UCC, Cape Girardeau.)

#### December 2008

- Approved request for transfer of standing for Rev. Nadine Aydt to Southwest Association of the Iowa Conference.
- Renewed Rev. David Brune's leave of absence status for another year.
- Requested the Eastern Association Council recognize ministers who have served 10, 25, or 50 years of service at the Fall Meeting.
- Committee members participated in the Service of Farewell for Rev. Richard Brueseke at Ebenezer-Stone UCC, Gerald on 12.28.2009

#### January 2009

- Approved brochure introducing the Committee on Ministry along with a power point presentation to use in cluster groups.
- Granted Leave of Absence to Alvyne Rethemeyer as Commissioned Minister.
- Information reviews were sent to all authorized ministers.
- Exit interview was conducted for Rev. Richard Brueseke and Ebenezer Stone UCC Church, Gerald.
- Approved request for transfer of standing for Rev. John Nourse and Rev. Audrey Nourse who come to us from the St. Louis Association.
- Committee members participated in the Service of Farewell for Rev. Deborah Pope at St. John UCC, Chamois on 01.18.2009

#### February 2009

- Approved request for transfer of standing for Rev. Michael Kasevich who comes to us from Hartford East Association of the Connecticut Conference to St. Paul's UCC, Old Monroe.
- Approved request for transfer of standing for Rev. Richard Riedel who comes to us from Prairie Lake Association of the South Dakota Conference to St. Paul's UCC, Hermann.
- Presentations on the work of the Committee on Ministry were held for the Heritage Cluster and the Grape Country Cluster.

#### March 2009

- Approved denominational Guidelines for a Conference Minister's Fitness Review and submitted document for Eastern Association Council approval.
- Fitness Review resulted in the termination of standing in the United Church of Christ for Rev. Randy Ross.
- Approved request for transfer of standing for Rev. Deborah Pope to accept call in the Iowa Conference.
- Service of Recognition for Licensed Ministry was held for David Machon and Fulton UCC on 03.01.2209
- Ordination Service into the Christian Ministry was held for Leah Atkinson-Bilinski at St. John UCC, St. Charles on 03.08.2009.
- Members attended the Conference-wide Committee on Ministry Retreat 03.20.2009 to 03.21.2009. The Retreat was led by Christy Trudo, a UCC national staff member in the Parish Life and Leadership Office, Local Church Ministries. The topic was Fitness Review training.

#### April 2009

- JoAnn Alves was approved for ordination pending a call.

- Approved request for transfer of standing for Rev. John Attaway who comes to us from the Northeast Association of the Iowa Conference to Good Shepherd UCC, St. Charles.
- Service of Recognition for Licensed Ministry for Don Frandsen and St. Paul UCC, Defiance was held 04.19.2009

#### May 2009

- Granted license to Sarah Bloesch, Grace UCC, O'Fallon for month of 07.2009.
- Presentation about the work of the Committee on Ministry was shared with St. Peter's UCC, Washington.
- Installation service for Rev. Michael Kasevich at St. Paul's UCC, Old Monroe 05.31.2009.
- Bruce Moeller reported on the curriculum revisions for Boundary Training to include additional materials related to technology and its use in ministry along with various other topics.
- Members participated in the Service of Farewell for Sarah Bloesch at Pilgrim UCC, Labadie on 05.17.2009

#### June 2009

- Approved request for transfer of standing for Rev. Michael Bone who comes to us from the Northeast Association of the Rocky Mountain Conference to Zion UCC, Union.
- The Committee on Ministry adopted a resolution to recognize licensed and ordained ministers with ten or more years of faithful service. This recognition will take place at Fall Meetings of the Eastern Association.
- Installation service for Rev. John Attaway at Good Shepherd UCC, St. Charles on 06.07.2009
- Installation service for Rev. Rick Riedel at St. Paul UCC, Hermann on 06.14.2009

#### July 2009

- Granted license to Dennis Ureche, Pilgrim UCC, Labadie until 12.21. 2009.
- Information of concern regarding an authorized minister was presented to the Committee on Ministry, which, if found to be true, would call into question, this person's fitness for ministry on behalf of the United Church of Christ. Once the name of the authorized minister was provided, the Committee on Ministry voted to refer the Fitness Review to either Western Association or St. Louis Association to due to possible conflicts of interest. A response team was called into action to gather information.

#### August 2009

- Western Association's Committee on Ministry agreed to conduct the Fitness Review on our behalf.
- Installation service for Rev. Michael Bone at Zion UCC, Union on 08.23.2009
- Installation service for Rev. Leah Atkinson Bilinski at St. Peters UCC, Washington on 08.30.2009

Respectfully submitted,

The Rev. William Schwab, chair  
The Rev. David Poe, vice-chair