

MINUTES

St. Louis Association, Missouri Mid-South Conference, United Church of Christ
Fall 2008 Meeting
Saturday, September 27, 2008
St. Lucas United Church of Christ
11735 Denny Road, St. Louis, MO 63126

Pre-Meeting Forum:

Kathie Spross (St John Evangelical), President St Louis Association Council welcomed attendees and introduced Rev Mark Robinson of the Habakkuk Project.

Rev. Mark Robinson (Pilgrim UCC) asked Conference Minister (MMS) Jeff Whitman to give a brief overview of the Habakkuk Project.

Rev. Whitman explained that upon accepting the call as Conference Minister last fall, he met with the 102 Directors of the Conference. Three areas of focus were identified:

1. Strategic Planning—defined as discerning the movement of the Spirit in the Missouri Mid-South Conference; a clear definition of the mission of the Conference for the next 3-5 years.
2. Conference Structure—the current structure our ministry
3. Conference Staffing—there was early discussion about reducing the number of Associate Conference Ministers from three to two without a plan of how to do this.

The Habakkuk Project was created to deal with the first issue, Strategic Planning. There are seven members from each of the three Associations (East, West and St. Louis).

Rev. Robinson then gave an overview of the Habakkuk Project's activities. There was a statewide survey in the Spring which began to identify issues within the Conference. Next the Project went to each Association to have member churches and individual members voice their concerns in cluster groups. The other Associations have almost finished this phase. The St Louis Association will complete this phase today by holding multiple cluster groups all at once. The Project will meet next week in Columbia, MO to pull together all the information gathered from the cluster groups and hope to have something ready for preliminary presentation at Faithworks, October 17-19. Finally, the Project will have a proposal ready for the Conference by Spring 2009. The other two areas of focus, Structure and Staffing, are on hold until this Strategic Planning focus is complete.

The group split into 12 cluster groups. The groups were to identify what is working and what is not regarding relationships with our church at a local, Association and Conference level.

The 12 groups came back together to report out to the whole group. Common themes were identified and Rev. Robinson collected all the data to take back to the Project.

Lunch was provided by the host church, St. Lucas UCC. Thank you!

FALL BUSINESS MEETING—ST. LOUIS ASSOCIATION:

Kathie Spross (St. John Evangelical) President of the St Louis Association Council welcomed the attendees and introduced Rev. Dr. David Mehl, Senior Pastor of St. Lucas UCC.

Worship began at 12:30 with a welcome and opening prayer by Rev. Mehl.

Call to Order by President Spross at 12:40. There is no Parliamentarian for this meeting. Roberts Rules of Order is available if needed.
The agenda reviewed, a motion to accept by Paul Cook (Kirkwood UCC), second by Rev Cindy Bumb (Pilgrim UCC) was passed.

Approval of the 2007 Minutes. Rev. Tom Ressler, (Immanuel Congregational) Recording Secretary of the St Louis Association Council, presented the 2007 minutes which were previously mailed to the congregations and have been available on the website. A motion by Rev. Duane Dollgener (St. Thomas) second by Rev. Donna Philips (Prince of Peace) passed.

Roll Call of Churches was called by Rev. Tom Ressler. Rev Ressler reported that a quorum is established with 38 clergy, 68 delegates and 16 visitors (count unverified).

Correspondence: Rev Ressler read a letter to the Association from Dr David Greenhaw, President of Eden Seminary stating he is unable to attend due to a schedule conflict. Dr. Greenhaw is the key note speaker for the Northern Iowa Conference's Annual Meeting today.

Introduction of Rev. Dr. Jack Seville Rev. Jeff Whitman introduced Rev. Dr. Jack Seville as the Interim Associate Minister for the St. Louis Association. Rev Seville served as church pastor for UCC churches in Pennsylvania, as Association Conference Minister in South Dakota and Conference Minister of Great Plains Conference before retiring. Since his retirement, he has served conferences in Pennsylvania and Ohio as Interim Conference and Associate Minister.

Call to Offering: Rev Jeff Whitman: The Offering goes to Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM).

Nomination Committee Report: Mrs. Florence Simonson The Nominee Biographies were distributed in print at the meeting. Mrs. Simonson is retiring as Chairperson of this committee, thank you for your service.
President Spross called for election for the 2009 Committee members.
MOTION: Accept the Nominating Committees recommendations for committee membership by Cindy Bumb, second by . Motion PASSED.

Committee on Ministry: Rev Kevin Cameron: (See attached written report).
Rev Cameron introduced clergy new to the St Louis Association. Welcome to all.

Outreach Committee Report: Mrs. Sue Stohr
Ms Stohr is retiring as chair of this committee, thank you for your service. Mr. Paul Cook will be chair person next year. The request for outreach donations to our mission partners is \$147,000, an 84% decrease from previous year.

The deadline for 2010 applications is March 1, 2009.
For the last four years, all payments have been made as budgeted.

Presentation of the 2009 Proposed Budget: Mrs. Sandy Muller, Treasurer SLA Council
Printed copies of the proposed budget were distributed at the meeting.

Ms. Muller noted a new line item under Administration #9600 for Administrative Support from the Conference office staff.

- Burt Merle, 1st Congregational, St Louis asked about an income statement—the income statement was not provided today. Is available from the SLA Council.
- Margaret Phillip, Bethlehem asked about the \$800.00 in travel expenses for Memphis and Little Rock. The amount is based on previous year's budget.
- Cindy Bumb, Pilgrim commented that this is the only Association in the Conference and one of the only Associations nationwide with this kind of budget for mission partners in the Association. It can cause confusion with members with two budgets—Association and OCWM (Conference). It may be time to do something different with resources dwindling.
- There was discussion regarding the Association budget and outreach. No motion made. Agreement to consider alternatives as needed and ask the Council to review other options.

President Spross called for the Vote:

MOTION: Accept the 2009 Budget as proposed by Paul Cook, second by Margaret Philips. Motion PASSED 0 opposed, 0 abstain.

Preparation for Ministry Committee Report Mrs. Jane Porchey

- The committee worked with the Committee on Ministry this year to clearly identify the role of each committee.
- Licensed Lay Ministry and In Care are functions of Preparation for Ministry Committee
- "In Care" status list reviewed.

Speakouts:

- Judy Camper—Gateway OA
- Jane Porchey—Faithworks, Gathering Ministry
- Bill Rehurst—Youth Coordinators
- Tom Ressler—Doorways
- Sharon Maddux—CUE Committee
- Jeff Whitman—Upcoming Meetings and gatherings (Dr James Forbes, Dr David Greenhaw)
- Linda Tarry-Chard—Project People
- Courier—eConnections
- Mike Krewson—Church Master Giving Ministry
- Bob Keller—Neighborhood Houses

Comments from Dr. Rev Jack Seville, Interim Association Minister

Rev Seville retired as Conference Minister of the Great Plains Conference in South Dakota and has been working with conferences in an interim role. His wife, Fanny, is with him in St Louis. Welcome!

Rev Seville discussed the history of change and possibility in the country and the church in the past 100 years. We are going through another period of change and possibility.

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As a church our task is to lay the foundation of the church for our children and grandchildren. He calls on us to work together for the future of the church.

Installation of Committee and Council Members: Dr. Rev Jack Seville

Call for Adjournment

President Spross called for a motion to adjourn. MOTION by Tom Ressler, second by Cindy Bumb. Motion PASSED unanimously.

Benediction Rev Carol Keller