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Missouri Mid-South Conference  
United Church of Christ

Serving  
Missouri,  
Arkansas,  
and Memphis,  
Tennessee

## Resignation of Shirley Asmussen

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[Yearbook Report Forms](#)  
MMS provides this online resource to help fill out these forms. Due Feb. 19.

#### [Mission Trips](#)

Did your church go on mission trips this year? Share your story with the Conference by emailing [Leslie](#).

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Last week we received a letter of resignation from Shirley Asmussen as Director of Outdoor Ministries for the MMS. Shirley has asked that the following letter be shared:

*Dear Friends and Partners in Ministry,  
As many of you have already heard, I have submitted my letter of resignation as the Director of Outdoor Ministries. I would like to thank all of you for your support of the ministry of Camp Mo-Val and my work. I have had the honor of serving you for over fourteen years. I have worked hard on your behalf and learned much; I will leave with many good memories. There is much to celebrate – a solid summer camp program of faith formation, dedicated volunteers and staff members, significant new and renovated facilities, and a safe (physically and emotionally) place for people of all ages to experience God and grow in their faith. There are also many challenges to be faced, finances being just one of many. It's time for fresh eyes and new energy at Camp Mo-Val. I am tired and have been contemplating a move for a while; the timing seems right.*

*I am excited about the possibilities for Camp Mo-Val. An interim camp board of directors, with a dedicated chairperson (Rev. Rick Oberle), is in place. The vision, energy and support they will provide during this period of transition will be invaluable, but they can't do it alone. They will need your support and assistance. I am also excited about my transition. I am still working out the final pieces, so details are not yet available. I will be in the camp office the rest of this week tying up loose ends, and the interim will begin the next week so camp will be well covered.*

*I wish all of you the very best as your ministry continues in this conference, your local church, and with your neighbors - near and far. I close with two of my favorite quotes which encompass my hopes for you and this conference.*

*"We are each of us angels with only one wing, and we can only fly embracing one another." Unknown  
"Look Up, and Laugh, and Love and Lift." adapted from Howard Walter*

*May God Bless and Keep You and Yours,  
Shirley Asmussen*

Shirley's last day in the office at Mo-Val will be this Friday, January 15. We are finalizing conversations with an Interim

the pastors and churches of MMS  
this week introducing the Interim.



### **Celebrating Shirley's Ministry**

You are invited to an Open House in Shirley's honor at St. Peter's UCC, Washington, 3:30-7pm, on Sunday, January 31. (20 East Fifth Street, Washington, MO 63090)

You are invited to send letters of appreciation and memories of your work with Shirley and photographs to be included in a memory book for Shirley. In addition, you are invited to send contributions toward a cash gift for Shirley. We also suggest cards of congratulations and well wishes, which we will place in a basket and given to her as part of a gift in recognition of her ministry with us. **Send any or all of these to the Conference Office by January 28.**

## **OCWM**

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2009 is behind us - but the Conference is still receiving "Our Church's Wider Mission" contributions through Friday, January 15, 2010.

To all the churches who have so faithfully sent contributions, "Thank you!" Thank you for sharing in the wider mission of the church. Thank you for helping change lives through "Our Church's Wider Mission." Thank you for being covenant partners as we engage God's mission together.

Please note that Conference-wide receipts are \$102,800 behind last year. Please make certain that your congregation's giving is accurately reflected in [this report](#) and contact [Laura Errante](#) with any concerns.

## **Congo**

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In February, our Conference Minister Rev. Jeffrey Whitman will join a delegation of individuals from Disciples of Christ and UCC in a mission trip to the Democratic Republic of the Congo. The trip is led by Rev. Sandra Gourdet, Area Executive for Africa with Wider Church Ministries. During the two week trip, the delegation will visit with ecumenical partners in both the Democratic Republic of the Congo and the Republic of the Congo, including representatives of the Church of Christ in the Congo; the National Women's Department of the CCC; leaders of the Community of Disciples of Christ Church; and members of the Church of the Disciples of Christ in Congo.

The itinerary includes visits with two vibrant churches seeking to provide a holistic ministry. We anticipate visiting farm projects

will visit medical centers to see how they do so much with so very little; we will visit schools – from kindergarten to high school. We will visit a church seminary. We will travel to villages to interact with the people in the communities. We will journey on the mighty Congo River – one of the major means of transportation for people living in cities and towns along the river. [Read the complete itinerary here.](#)

While the group is in Mbandaka, Rev. Whitman is hoping to spend some time with Rev. Isidore Mbomba, district minister for the Bokungu district, to talk about our emerging partnership with the people of Bokungu.

We express our heartfelt thanks to the members of Immanuel UCC in Wright City, St. Paul's UCC in Defiance, St. Peter's UCC in New Haven, and First Congregational UCC in Webster Groves for their gifts to help cover the cost of this mission trip. If your congregation would like to make a special contribution to support this mission trip, please send your gift to the conference office and mark it Congo Trip.

Our Congo partnership is continuing to grow. Look for articles about the work of our church in the Democratic Republic of the Congo in future eCouriers. We invite you to consider joining the Congo partnership committee of our conference. Please contact the Rev. David Poe for information about the work of the committee and ways that you can become involved.

## Camp Mo-Val Trivia Night

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St. Peter's United Church of Christ in Washington, Missouri, will host a Trivia Night at 7pm on Saturday, February 20th. All profits from this festive evening will be used to help fund the operating budget for Camp Mo-Val in 2010. Read all about this event [here](#).

## Transitions

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Lynn Bohlmann will be ordained at Hope UCC in St. Louis on Sunday, February 28, 2010 at 4 pm.

Rev. Brad Urban, pastor of Carondolet UCC in St. Louis, will be installed on Sunday, March 14, 2010 at 3pm.

## Mission Moments

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**WELCOME CENTER WORK DAY at Camp Mo-Val** -- The next work day is scheduled for Saturday, January 30th. Projects include building storage shelves, installing fixtures and interior touch-up work. There will be tasks for both skilled and general

new heating system are working like a dream, so no need to be concerned about the elements. For more information, or to signal your interest in attending, contact George Conlee at (314) 822-4627.

The United Church of Christ Office Support Staff Network, a national organization of church administrators in the UCC, will hold their annual gathering April 8-10 in Cleveland. If you are interested in attending this gathering or in joining the UCCOSSN, please contact [Sharon Thomas](#).

## Staff Preaching

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**Jan. 10** Jack Seville preaching at Holy Trinity, Memphis  
**Jan. 17** Jeff Whitman at Evangelical, Webster Groves  
**Jan. 17** Jack Seville at Grace and Mount Tabor  
**Jan. 24** Jeff Whitman preaching at St. Lukes, Grand Pass  
**Jan. 31** Jeff Whitman at Country Club Cong, Kansas City  
**Jan. 31** Jack Seville preaching at Christ Church, Maplewood

## Community & Agencies Calendar

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Calendar also available on [MMS website](#).

**Jan. 13** St. Louis Ministerium at Parkway  
**Jan. 18** Conference office closed – Martin Luther King, Jr. Day  
**Jan. 22** Concert at St. Peter's UCC, Kansas City  
**Jan. 22 & 24** Amahl & the Night Visitors at First Cong, Clayton  
**Jan. 25** Play rehearsals begin at Friedens Peace in New Melle  
**Jan. 30** Welcome Center Workday at Camp Mo-Val

**Feb. 1 & 8** Autism Spectrum Disorders Workshop at St. Johns, Mehlville

**Feb. 2** Intentional Interim Meeting

**Feb. 10** St. Louis Ministerium Meeting

**Feb. 13-15** CYE – Conference Youth Event

**Feb. 14** Vows Renewal at Bethel, Kansas City

**Feb. 15** Conference office closed – Presidents Day

**Feb. 19** Yearbook Forms Due to Conference office

**Feb. 20** Camp Mo-Val Trivia Night at St. Peter's, Washington

**Feb. 27** Eastern Association Confirmation Retreat

**Feb. 28** Lynn Bohlmann's Ordination at Hope, St. Louis

**Mar. 10** St. Louis Ministerium

**Mar. 14** Brad Urban's Installation at Carondelet

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