

2019 MMS UCC Heritage Covenanted Ministry Report

The Heritage Committee became a Covenanted Ministry in 2017. Its charge is to assist the Missouri Mid-South Conference and its local churches and other UCC entities in connecting with their historical roots in the United Church of Christ and its predecessor denominations.

The responsibilities of HCM include:

- a. Preserve the history of the Missouri Mid-South Conference of the UCC and its predecessors;
- b. Encourage local churches and pastors and other UCC entities within the Conference to have an awareness of the Conference's history and its relevance (including connections to the predecessor denominations of the UCC, the broader history of the UCC, and the history of Christian churches and religious bodies in the United States);
- c. Encourage local churches and other UCC entities similarly to value, preserve, and celebrate their histories;
- d. Assist the Conference to relate to the various organizations concerned with the history of the United Church of Christ (e.g., the Evangelical Archives at Eden Seminary; the E&R Historical Society; the UCC Historical Council and its related repositories);
- e. Help the Conference celebrate historical milestones of its local churches and pastors and other UCC entities.

HCM members

Joy Dressel, Chair and Liaison to Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society

John Bracke, Vice Chair and Liaison to MMS UCC Conference Council

David Beebe, Secretary, and Liaison to UCC Historical Council

Michael Boddy, Consultant and Liaison to Eden Archives

Steve Buchholz

Marie Haupt, Historian

Scott Holl, Eden Archivist and member of UCC Historical Council

Janet Kies

William Schwab

HCM Activities of the Past Year

A large focus of HCM has been recognizing churches and clergy with significant anniversaries each year at CAG. We have a large number of honorees again for 2018: Ten churches celebrating anniversaries from their 75th to their 175th and two clergy celebrating their 50th anniversary of ordination. These anniversaries will be celebrated via a display in the vendor area as well as in the Friday afternoon worship service at CAG instead of during a CAG banquet.

We published 13 eCourier articles highlighting the churches and clergy that celebrated large anniversaries in 2018.

HCM helped plan the Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society annual meeting in the St. Louis area in the fall. Presentations and tours were held at Eden Seminary and its archives, at the Deaconess Foundation and at St. Johns Evangelical UCC in Mehlville. In addition to a tour of the Evangelical Archives, there were several presentations related to the Evangelical (1840 – 1934) and Evangelical and Reformed (1934-1957) roots of our denomination and the agencies that were born out of those predecessor denominations. These included a history of Eden Seminary, the history of the Evangelical Synod, and a panel discussion on the history and evolution of several health and human service agencies. The meeting is normally held in Lancaster, PA.

HCM stays informed of the activities of UCC Historical Council, the Evangelical and Reformed Historical Society, and the Evangelical Archives at Eden Seminary. The members of HCM share with each other the knowledge of church history that they have learned through research and study or their first-person experiences.

HCM Plans for the Future

HCM is working to collect a list of the church historians in our churches. Every church should have one or more people designated as church historian to preserve the records and memories. We plan to help empower church historians by providing suggestions and guidelines for their work in the form of eCourier articles and a workshop or video on the topic.

We will submit articles to the eCourier highlighting significant 2019 anniversaries of churches and clergy as well as articles related to MMS history and its preservation.

We would like to help closing churches with some congregational estate planning to preserve their histories and celebrate their legacies.

We would be happy to welcome new members to HCM. We have daytime meetings and have started to make it easier to have geographic diversity of members. Meetings of the past had been at Eden Seminary in Webster Groves, but our recent meetings have been at Friedens UCC in Warrenton and at our individual homes since we have started using Zoom technology to allow members to participate from home.

Respectfully submitted,

Joy Dressel, Chair of Heritage Covenanted Ministry