

Our Church's Wider Mission
Covenanted Ministry
2017 Annual Report

OCWM originally was the acronym for Our Christian World Mission. Then the General Synod voted to change it to Our Church's Wider Mission. Regardless of the name, OCWM is about funding the mission that is ours through the United Church of Christ in all its settings.

80% of what local churches or individuals give to OCWM remains in the Missouri Mid-South Conference. 20% is forwarded to the National setting of our church for national and international mission work.

The work of the Covenanted Ministry is both informative and supportive of congregational efforts to fund the mission of our United Church of Christ.

As the Conference financial books closed for 2017, the final report was great news! We exceeded our 2017 OCWM budgeted amount! According to Conference Council member Ken Ulmer, for only the second time in the 51-year history of the Conference, we ended the year with total income of \$650,786 compared with a budget of \$594,631. The generosity of the members and churches of the Conference is truly amazing.

During 2017 the Covenanted Ministry did many things including:

- Contacted each church regarding their anticipated giving in 2017.
- Sought to have conversations with each church, near the end of the year, regarding the congregation's realistic expectation of reaching their own giving goal for OCWM.
- Found many ways to say "Thank You" to congregations for their generosity in 2017.
- Offered personal visits to congregations to talk about OCWM.
- Provided three free on-line seminars in August, September and October around stewardship and budgeting.
- Published financial reports through the eCourier and the all-church Conference mailing which is organized by the Communications Covenanted Ministry.
- Shared a number of stories in the eCourier about ways OCWM benefits churches and their members and fulfills the mission of Jesus Christ in our Conference.

- Provided personal presentation of 2017 OCWM and Five for Five Certificates to each congregation in worship or other local church settings during the spring of 2018.
- Sent individualized, hand-written thank-you notes to every church that gave to OCWM.
- Served as a resource for both conference leadership and congregations on OCWM giving and related questions.

It's been a good year. It's been a busy year. The Covenanted Ministry includes Nancy Litzinger of Ivy Chapel UCC in Chesterfield; Lorin Cope of St. Paul United Church of Christ in St. Louis; and David Mehl of Kirkwood UCC in Kirkwood along with wonderful resourcing by our Conference Minister, Ginny Brown Daniel...WoooHooo!

2018 is shaping up to be a challenging year. After the first four months, OCWM income is down when compared to this time last year. So, if you can, please urge your church leadership to forward their OCWM gifts as soon as possible to the Conference office. Can we have two years in a row where income is greater than the budget goal? That is the challenge before us now for the last half of 2018!

As always, the Committee is happy to meet with your congregation; church council; stewardship, mission or finance committee about your congregation's giving to Our Church's Wider Mission.

Thank you for your gifts and the work you are doing to support the mission of the United Church of Christ in all its settings.

Lorin Cope, convener and chair
OCWM Covenanted Ministry