

2017 Annual Report

St. Louis Association Committee on Ministry: Preparation

The Committee on Ministry, an Association committee granted authority in the United Church of Christ Constitution and Bylaws for authorization and oversight of clergy and churches, has been divided into two entities in the St. Louis Association for practical reasons. With Eden Seminary in our association, the number of student candidates for ministry is much greater than in most associations.

The Committee on Ministry: Preparation (COM:P) has responsibility for the preparation and authorization of Members in Discernment on behalf of the wider United Church of Christ. The COM:P meets monthly. When a candidate feels called to authorized ministry and has the support of their local congregation, they meet with the COM:P and then undergo a professional psychological evaluation.

Upon successful completion of this initial process, they then become a Member in Discernment (MID - formerly “In Care”). They are assigned an advisor from the COM:P, continue their formative relationship with their home church and pastor -- and continue to meet at least annually with COM:P until all the many requirements have been met. They have an ordination interview and are ‘approved for ordination pending a call’. They meet at least annually with the COM:P until a call is received. Then we have the privilege and joy of participating in a service of Ordination!

In addition to engaging in our ongoing relationships with our MIDs (see complete list below), during the past twelve months we have been:

- Partnering with Care and Counseling (St Louis) and Good Samaritan (Memphis) for psychological evaluation of MID candidates and follow-up counseling as needed
- Working with SLA Committee on Ministry: Oversight
- Updating and refining our many processes and practices
- Refining all of our official documents for the SLA section of our Conference website

- Participating in the Conference-wide Committee on Ministry Covenanted Ministry to better align our practices across all three associations of the MMS Conference
- Representing our committee on the St Louis Association Council
- Attending a 2-day retreat with colleagues from the other associations' COMs and the COM of the Kansas-Oklahoma Conference as we received and worked through the draft of the revised UCC *Manual on Ministry* to guide our work
- Having several conversations with the Ministerial Excellence, Support and Authorization (MESA) Team at the national offices of our UCC

Here is a recap of our SLA MIDS as of September 15, 2017...

Initial Interviews – MID Status Pending:

Hope Gunderson, Church of the Master UCC, Florissant

Valerie Jackson, First Congregational UCC, St Louis

Tanya Jeffcoat, Faith UCC, Little Rock, Arkansas

Current Members in Discernment (12):

Kelly Archer, Peace UCC, Webster Groves

Phil Barbier, Hope UCC, St Louis

Christopher Czarnecki, Christ Church UCC, Maplewood

Doni Driemeier-Showers, Samuel UCC, Clayton

Chuck Lindsey, First Congregational UCC, Memphis, Tennessee

Phyllis Long, First Congregational UCC, Memphis, Tennessee

Laura Oesterle, St. Peter's UCC, Ferguson

Cherie Stolze, Parkway UCC, St. Louis

Sonya Vann, Christ the King UCC, Florissant

Jacquelyne Tyler, Grace UCC, St Louis

Andy Wilson, Parkway UCC, St Louis

Bella Winters, Epiphany UCC, St. Louis

Approved for Ordination Pending A Call (2):

Chuck Lindsey, First Congregational UCC, Memphis, Tennessee

Jacquelyne Tyler, Grace UCC, St Louis

(Jackie has recently received a call to Zion UCC, Florissant – ordination date is being set up right now!)

Ordained in the last year:

Chance Beeler, Epiphany UCC, St. Louis

Julie Hawker, Mt. Tabor UCC, St. Louis

Holly Pederson, Holy Trinity UCC, Memphis, Tennessee

Respectfully Submitted,

Kevin Cameron and Karen Tylka, Co-chairs

Committee Members: John Allen, Kevin Cameron, John Gandy, Dorothy Gannon, Betsy Happel, Debby Harness, Ron Hill, Mary Lin Hudson, Carolyn Mulhall, Jack Nobles, Hannah Rice, Karen Tylka... and Ginny Brown Daniel