

### John 13:12-15

When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and returned to his place.  
“Do you understand what I have done for you?” he asked them. “You call me ‘Teacher’ and ‘Lord,’ and rightly so, for that is what I am. Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another’s feet.  
I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you.

### Report of the Leadership Development Committee

June 2014

The Leadership Development Committee of the Missouri Mid-South Conference is largely charged with: cultivating and nurturing Conference leadership; ensuring the Conference fulfills its covenantal leadership obligations, including with other church ministries; and promoting the Conference's relationship with the church's historically related Seminaries, etc.

The committee, pursuant to the Bylaws and working with the Associations, local churches and via the *eCourier*, solicited and identified qualified candidates and officers for election to the Conference Council and as Delegates to the General Synod. The names of those elected at the Conference Annual Gathering in June 2013 can be found in the minutes of that meeting and, separately, those being proposed for election in June 2014. The committee was also charged with identifying the Search Committee for the Designated Conference Minister. In all cases, considerable time has been spent on identifying potential leaders, with particular attention on reflecting the diversity and demographic (and geographic) base of our congregations and their membership. The committee has also sought to add members to the Conference Council with a wide-range of expertise which might be beneficial in fulfilling the legal and fiduciary duties, and accountability practices of the conference. We are thankful for the breadth of leadership experience available in our congregants and their willingness to serve.

The Missouri Mid-South Conference Deacon program also continues to be a focus of the committee. The program is one where time is the essential commitment - and then it is only required several times a year. But, the Deacon program is fundamental in providing leadership to the nurturing of the relationships with the Conference, by creating a rapport between congregations and individuals (rather than congregation connections solely with Conference staff). Conference Deacons serve because of their spiritual, emotional and ecclesial maturity and willingness to act as “connectors” within the body.

A brief summary of the program is in order: the Conference Deacon Program's aim is to recruit and commission more than 60 individuals—both lay people and clergy (retired and clergy who are not currently serving in parish positions)— who, working in teams of two, visit each assigned church twice a year in order to:

- bring greetings on behalf of the Conference;
- offer a word of thanks for OCWM participation, and encourage continued OCWM giving and to the special offerings of the UCC ; and most importantly
- build relationships and strengthen the connection between the local and wider church.

**Won't YOU serve?** Training and ongoing support is provided. Contact Joyce Bathke ([joyce.bathke@redcross.org](mailto:joyce.bathke@redcross.org))

Cultivating leadership for the Conference is an ongoing task of the Leadership Development Committee. The committee is in the early stages of creating a Conference-wide data base of lay leadership experience and skills. But we could use help in identifying software or programs that can manage this task. If you have any suggestions or are willing to serve on a task force setting this program up please contact Laura Dierberg Ayers ([LJDAyers@aol.com](mailto:LJDAyers@aol.com)). Likewise, we trying to identify ways we can leverage technology, especially

video-conferencing. With our conference so geographically wide-spread we are seeking tools that can make us more accessible and meet in more efficient and effective ways. Again, if you have experience in utilizing video-conferencing or other ways to leverage technology, we could use your input.

**THIS IS OUR CHALLENGE TO YOU:** It is important we each share in the work of the ministry of the Missouri Mid-South Conference. Focus on what you do uniquely. Consider your abilities and talents. There are people working hard in our Conference but are in need of relief, or at a minimum, your support. Look for ways to get involved. A shared ministry is a strong ministry! And a strong conference.

**Are YOU willing to accept the joy of serving?** Please feel free to contact any of us:

Laura Dierberg Ayers, Chair  
Jerry Cundiff  
Wesley Hurt, Moderator  
Rev. Laura Mignerone  
Joyce Bathke, Vice-Moderator  
Rev. Alan Gatewood  
Rev. David Mehl  
Jack Wendleton