

Committee on Ministry, Ecclesiastical Oversight Annual Report for 2016-2017

Pastors Interviewed and Installed

Eric Moeller and St. Lucas
Audrey Alexander and Hope (Desoto)

Transfer of Standing In

Linda Reynolds from Illinois South
Lev Reynolds from Illinois South
Audrey Alexander from Indiana Kentucky
Eric Moeller from Eastern Association

Transfer of Standing Out

Stephanie Delong to Easter Association
Mark Roberts to Penn North of Penn South East Conference
Adrian McLean to Florida Conference
Sally Ketterer to Eastern Association
Robert Molsberry to Iowa Conference
Ann Molsberry to Iowa Conference
Amy Seat to New Jersey Association
Charlene Raitt to Florida Conference
K'Lynne Mckinley to Michigan Conference (pending)

Established Three or Four Way Covenants

With Cliff Aerie and First Congregational church (Webster Groves)
With Ellen Hiatt, Barnes Jewish Hospital and 1st Congregational (Wydown)
With Nicole Torbitsky, Lindenwood College and St. Johns (Manchester)
With Laurel Koepf Taylor, Eden Seminary and Peace UCC
With Christopher Grundy, Eden Seminary and Peace UCC
With Kara Reece, Barnes Jewish Hospital and St. John's Church (Grand)

Conducted Exit Interviews

Hope (Desoto) and Nichole Torbitsky
St. Martins (High Ridge) and Adrian McLean
Peace and Al Schon
St. Philips and Lorissa Forsythe
1st Congregational (Wydown) and Jake DeNap
1st Congregational (Wydown) and Heather Arcovitch
Emmaus Homes and Sharon Maddox
St. Johns (Manchester) and Janet Pillman

Participated in Leave Taking Liturgies

Hope and Nichole Torbitsky
St. Martins (High Ridge) and Adrian McLean
Peace and Al Schon
St. Philips and Lorissa Forsythe
1st Congregational and Jake DeNap
1st Congregational and Heather Arcovitch
Emmaus Homes and Sharon Maddox
St. Johns (Manchester) and Janet Pillman

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Granted Licensure

Chance Beeler for Pilgrim (3 months)
Julie Hawker for Zion (1 month)
Sonya Vann and 1st Congregational of Webster Groves (3 months)
Parish Nurse Linda Stoecklin and Immanuel (Ferguson) annual renewal
Jacquelyne Tyler (through ordination)

Granted Full Partnership Standing

Rebecca Turner for Christ (Maplewood)

Granted Endorsement for Association of Professional Chaplains

Kara Reece

Interims Serving Churches

Bill Smutz with St. John's Chesterfield
Coletta Eichenberger with Pilgrim
Allen Fluent with St. Philips
David Beebe with Epiphany
Terry Minchow-Proffitt with St. Martin (High Ridge)
Sheldon Culver Bridge Pastor with First UCC (Wydown)

Granted Full Ministerial Standing

Bishop Wyatt Greenlee

The St. Louis Association has two requirements for clergy to maintain their standing: A yearly Informational Review and Boundary Awareness Training. Soon, a third requirement will most likely be added - Anti-Racism Training. 12 members of the association received that training recently through the Disciples of Christ. It is often like pulling teeth to get clergy to return Informational Reviews and get their required training. Please, authorized ministers, take responsibility and return information promptly.

Our member, Alan Stephenson, has stepped up to maintain the Informational Review materials, keep track of responses and make certain concerns are taken care of. In the interim period, without a Conference Office Manager, Alan has learned and brought up to date the Data Hub of the United Church of Christ which tracks important information about UCC clergy. The committee cannot thank Alan enough for this time-consuming work.

Mark Robinson is heading the Boundary Awareness team for both the Conference and the St. Louis Association. He and his team mates across the Conference have listened to concerns and are making relevant new presentations of ever changing boundaries. One only needs listen to the news to discover the importance of clergy maintaining boundaries in their settings, especially in social media and in times of position change or retirement.

The United Church of Christ is urging all clergy to have a three or four-way covenant. Three Way Covenants involve the pastor, local congregation and the Association. A Four Way Covenant adds a fourth dimension: an educational, healthcare or care-based agency that covenants with the minister, local congregation and the Association to carry on ministry. Ann Wilson has worked to help clergy and their covenantal partners come to an agreement of shared responsibilities and mutual support.

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Mary Morgan and Karen Safe have been working on our Association ministerial files, information that must be kept for standing. This is especially important when clergy are moving to other Associations and need essential information to be sent to insure the transfer of their ministerial standing. These files have been terribly out of date and lacking in materials. We are especially aware of this issue because pastors, seeking standing in our Association, often lack necessary information in their files from a previous Association(s). A new system is being set up so that files can be kept electronically.

The committee engaged in several different fitness reviews during the last year. Among all of the things that we do, this is by far the most time consuming and difficult. One review was carried out in another association and resulted in the censure of that person. The second was conducted by our association and resulted in the suspension of ministerial standing for that person. A program of growth has been created with the hope that the serious concerns raised will be resolved. Special thanks to David Gerth and Vicki Hampton for serving as our “experts” on fitness and to Mark Robinson who is working with the suspended clergy during the program of growth.

The committee and its’ chairs have been consulted when concerns and conflicts have arisen between clergy, their congregations and/or individual members. In some cases, we have been able to help clergy and/or their congregations reflect on important issues before they become crisis moments.

One of the highlights of the year came as the committee interviewed and got to know Bishop Wyatt Greenlee, Jr. and the amazing ministry he carries on with Glory to Glory Christian Church UCC and the wider United Church of Christ. That process was completed with the Celebration of Bishop Greenlee’s Ministerial standing on September 10.

Karen Safe reviews applications for Pulpit Supply, a list of clergy available to preach in churches when their pastor is away. She checks credentials, ministerial standing and consults with the entire committee.

Leon Sharpe serves on a cultural diversity team that is looking at Anti-racism training.

Vicki Hampton. Is available to look at call agreements and contracts with clergy who are pursuing a call within the Association.

The chairs are grateful for each and every member of the committee who share in this important work. Their wisdom is amazing. They step up to be present in worship in local congregations, to take on special assignments, to conduct exit interviews and so much more. With the advent of less conference staffing, the work of the committee takes on more and more volunteer work. As co-chairs, we couldn’t even begin to do all that comes before the committee without sharing those responsibilities with a full team of amazing, thoughtful members.

Ann Asper Wilson and Keith A. Karau
Co-Chairs

To be introduced:

Audrey Alexander, pastor
Lev and Linda Reynolds, retired
Coletta Eichenberger, Interim
Sheldon Culver, Bridge Pastor
Jacquelyne Tyler, Pastor

Eric Moeller, associate pastor
Rebecca Turner, Partnership Standing
Terry Minchow-Proffitt, interim
David Beebe, interim