

2024 Annual Report of the
Southwest Association,
Wisconsin Conference, United
Church of Christ



April 27, 2024
First Congregational Church
815 S. Concord Rd.
Oconomowoc, WI 53066

A combined day of worship and workshops with the Southeast Association,
Wisconsin Conference UCC

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2024 Southwest Wisconsin Association Annual Meeting Procedural Guide

(this proposal is based on the procedural guide of the Conference and approved by the Southwest Executive Committee on March 17, 2022)

1. Voting membership consists of
 - authorized ministers of the Conference and
 - two (2) lay delegates from each local church, plus one (1) for each additional 500 members or major fraction thereof, beyond the first 500.
2. This Procedural Guide will be emailed to all delegates along with the Annual Reports prior to the meeting.
3. A Quorum for an Association meeting shall be one-quarter (1/4) of the ministerial members and one-third (1/3) of churches as represented by lay delegates as stated in the Constitution.
4. Procedures shall follow Robert's Rules of Order, newly revised, except as modified by this Procedural Guide.
5. A simple majority is required for transaction of all business unless otherwise provided for in the Constitution.
6. Only registered members may vote. Proxy votes will not be accepted.
7. Subject to waiver by an affirmative vote of at least two-thirds of those present and entitled to vote, no resolution or other action, except elections, matters of procedures and amenities shall be voted upon unless a recommendation shall have been adopted by the Executive Committee.
8. Any other new motions or amendments must be sent to the Executive Committee at least 7 days before the Annual Meeting.
9. The names of persons you would like to nominate "from the floor" for any open position on a Board or Committee should be submitted to the SW Association email at: swaucc@gmail.com. The nominations will be forwarded to our Nominating Committee. Please ensure that the person or persons nominated have agreed to serve in the position for which they have been nominated. The deadline for receiving "from the floor" nominations is April 25.
10. Friendly motions and amendments to amendments are not permitted during the meeting.
11. Any questions or comments during the meeting will be handled by raising your hand.

2024 SWA Annual Business Meeting Agenda

1. Declaration of Quorum
2. Community Building: who are the siblings in Christ who have joined us at this meeting today?
 - A. Words from Rev. Franz Rigert, Conference Minister
 - B. Words from Rev. Rachel Bauman, Associate Conference Minister
 - C. Roll call of all congregations present at meeting.
 - D. Introduction to Members in Discernment (MIDS)
 - E. Introductions of people who are being nominated for committees and responsibilities.
 - F. Stay Connected! Sign up for Shalom and Conference Life newsletters!
3. Approve minutes from 2023 SWA Annual Meeting
4. Present 2025 SWA proposed budget
5. Election of Nominees
6. Adjourn Meeting
7. Installation of all elected

Clergy and Church Anniversaries

Clergy Anniversaries

1 Year Anniversaries

Rev. Katya Ouchakof
Rev. Christian Schoenwetter

5 Year Anniversaries

Rev. Jennifer Bloesch
Rev. Laura Kolden

15 Year Anniversaries

Rev. Ken Pennings
Rev. Julia Weaver

20 Year Anniversaries

Rev. Ruth Bradshaw
Rev. Brad Brookins
Rev. Kelly Volk

25 Year Anniversaries Rev.

Barbara Dunlap Wolfe Rev.
Tammy Martens
Rev. Margaret McClymont

30 Year Anniversaries

Rev. Lori Powell
Rev. Susan Schneider-Adams Rev.
Janet Summers

40 Year Anniversaries

Rev. Bryan Sirchio

45 Year Anniversaries
Rev. Robert Bates
Rev. Richard Runge

50 Year Anniversaries
Rev. Michael Bausch

Church Anniversaries

First United Church of Christ of Belleville 110 Years Immanuel
United Church of Christ of Darlington 115 Years Immanuel Marion
United Church of Christ 125 Years
Congregational United Church of Christ of Edgerton 165 Years First United
Church of Christ of Sauk City 165 Years
First Congregational United Church of Christ, Platteville 185 Years

Southwest Association Associate Conference Minister Report

April 2024

Associate Conference Minister Report

Southwest Association, Wisconsin Conference UCC

Dear Siblings in Christ,

Thank you for another wonderful year serving as one of your Associate Conference Ministers. As the rapid pace of change and transition within the church continues, I am inspired by your creativity, resilience, and commitment to being the Body of Christ in and for your communities.

Much of my work involves accompanying pastors and congregations in and through the Search and Call process. Since April of last year, nearly 45% of the 47 congregations within the Southwest Association were involved in some stage of leadership transition:

- 21 congregations were engaged in Search and Call
- 10 pastors were newly called into settled pastorates and we celebrated 4 installations
- 22 congregations are, or were, served faithfully by interim, transitional and/or bridge pastors
- 9 congregations are experimenting with all kinds of models of shared ministry.

In addition, this year I was privileged to witness and support some of the ministry of our deeply gifted and committed clergy who are leaders in non-profit organizations working for justice and peace, offering spiritual support and care as chaplains in jails, hospitals, retirement centers or schools, and embarking on new and renewed expressions of “church,” such as Flicker Wild Church and Uptown Sanctuary.

Of course, there is so much more that could be mentioned and much of what is

most meaningful to me never makes the highlight reel: witnessing remarkable and inspiring lay leadership, honest conversations about the joys and challenges of life in ministry, grieving together over the loss of a loved one or the sale of a church building, celebrating new life after a painful church split, or listening together for how the Spirit is moving in and through us. I am grateful every day for the work I get to do. I am grateful for each of you and the ministry you offer. It is a privilege to serve among you.

Rev. Rachel Bauman

Associate Conference Minister

Registrar's Report Southwest Association Annual Meeting 2024

Unless otherwise noted, the information here is a snapshot as of March 31, 2024. Some individuals may overlap multiple categories, so double-counting is possible.

Churches		47
Membership		7564
 <u>In Our Midst:</u>		
<u>In Churches</u>		
[SWA]	Clergy (settled) serving churches	28
	Clergy (interim) serving churches	5
	Retired clergy (interim) serving churches	4
	Licensed pastors (other than interim) serving churches	4
	Licensed pastors (interim) serving churches	3
	Clergy from other denominations serving churches [not licensed in UCC]	1
	Persons serving churches w/o specific authorization [that we know of]	4
 <u>Chaplains</u>		
	Clergy serving as chaplains	7
 <u>Other Settings of Authorized Clergy</u>		
	Health/Welfare	1
	Supply clergy [<i>self-identified</i>]	2
	Campus Ministry	1
	Clergy: Unclassified	4
	Clergy: Other religious work	3
 <u>Status/Misc</u>		
	Seeking/Finalizing Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing	1
	Seeking/Finalizing Privilege of Call	1
 <u>Licensees (active)</u>		
	Kay Hallanger	Alan Timm
	Peter Morris [MID]	Gretchen Viney
	David Nerswick	Bill Whitford [MID]
	Pat Pluss	
 <u>Members in Discernment</u>		
	Valerie Behrens	Julie Ruegsegger
	Lisa Hart	Bill Whitford

<u>Actions Affecting Standing</u>		
Privilege of Call Granted		1
Resignations of Standing Accepted		2
Leave of Absence Granted		1
Ordinations following Ecclesiastical Councils		2
Transfers of Standing		9
To SWA	7	
From SWA	2	
Installations		6
<u>Deaths</u>	<i>None reported.</i>	

Respectfully submitted,

Gretchen Viney
Registrar

Words for today: Data is sometimes slippery.

2023 Southwest Association Moderator Report

“Don’t worry, Be Happy” from Bob Marley’s song seems like a good place to start. We are seeing changes, which seems to be a constant, in the Southwest Association. The feeling of concern for the loss of members and churches is present but is buffered by our joy in seeing how the spirit is continually working in our presence. Changes in our management structures will be needed.

Happily, we were able to support many outside projects, please refer to the Social Concerns report. We have a number of members in discernment, please see Division of Church and Ministry report. We were able to continue our support of UCCI and increase the allotment to campers and faith retreat participants. We also recognized the change of Lay Leadership education to the Damascus format in our budget designations. Also there was a change in the structure of the Bethlehem Partnership to “The Palestine Justice Working Group of the Wisconsin Conference of the United Church of Christ”, please look at their report. Though not directly involved, we did see the Wisconsin Conference office move from Deforest, in the SWA area, to Green Lake Daycholah Center. Their new beautiful location is just across the street from a Native American mound, a spiritual location for a long time. We will also be experiencing our first Joint Association meeting with the Southeast Association allowing us to save on finances and get to meet more folks in our Wisconsin United Church of Christ.

So many changes with more to come. So “Don’t worry, Be Happy” as we recognize the joy that the Spirit brings to us all.

Peace,

David Mickle

Treasurer's Report for Calendar Year 2023

We are grateful for the support of our churches. We received \$37,795 from our churches in 2023, which was \$7,901 less than budget. Fortunately, in January 2024, we received an additional \$2,302 in 2023 dues, shrinking the 2023 dues shortfall to \$5,599.

We are happy that our Social Concerns grants continued at a high level. Our churches' giving to the association empowers feeding the hungry, helping prisoners successfully return to society, assisting new arrivals at our shores, and fuels the ministry to the poor and marginalized.

Our 2023 camp support increased from the 2022 level. This was a happy result.

2023 administrative costs were under excellent control.

During 2023, your Executive Council received three requests for Restricted Funds. After careful consideration, and finding that these requests were for purposes in accordance with each Restricted Fund's purpose, your Executive Council authorized dispersal of \$400 from General Synod Funds, \$200 from Lay Academy Funds, and \$700 from UEK Partnership Funds.

We finished the year with a healthy level of assets, which will allow us to support good works again in 2024.

You will see that the proposed budget for 2025 is similar to 2023's and 2024's.

Respectfully submitted, Donald

A. Taft, Treasurer

2023 Financial Reports

Southwest Wisconsin Association Simplified 2023 Income Statement

	2023 Actual	2023 Budget	Better or (Worse) Than Budget
Revenue			
Dues	\$ 37,795	\$ 45,696	\$ (7,901)
Association Meeting	1,020	1,200	(180)
Other	-	65	(65)
Total Revenue	38,815	46,961	(8,146)
Mission Spending			
Social Concerns Grants	11,200	13,000	1,800
Local Church Ministry	3,550	10,254	6,704
Church and Ministry	2,693	6,000	3,307
Wider Church Ministry			
General	250	1,400	1,150
General Synod Delegates	-	-	-
Bethlehem Partnership	-	-	-
UEK Partnership	-	-	-
Subtotal: Wider Church Ministry	250	1,400	1,150
Annual Meeting Expense	2,470	1,000	(1,470)
Subtotal, Mission Spending	20,163	31,650	11,487
Administrative Costs			
Common Services	9,520	9,520	-
Legal Expense	837	900	63
Salary & FICA	4,621	5,165	544
Other Administration	768	50	(718)
Subtotal: Administration Costs	15,746	15,635	(111)
Total Expenses	35,909	47,285	11,376

Net Surplus or (Deficit)	2,906	(324)	3,230
(also called Revenue-Expenses)			

**Southwest Association
Balance Sheet 31 December 2023**

Assets

Association Portion of Conference Checking Account	\$	54,282	
Total Assets		54,282	

Restricted Funds

General Synod Fund		-	
Lay Academy Fund		-	
Camp Scholarships		436	
Youth Fund		1,402	
UEK Partnership Fund		2,354	
Total Restricted Funds		4,192	

Unrestricted Funds

(also called Southwest Association Operating Fund)	\$	50,090	
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Total Liabilities & Funds	\$	54,282	
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SWA 2025 Proposed Budget	2023 Approved		2024 Approved		2025 Proposed	
	Budget	Notes	Budget	Notes	Budget	Notes
<u>Revenue</u>		7,616 mem-		7,039 mem-		6,837 mem-
Dues	45,696	bers @\$6	42,234	bers @\$6	41,022	bers @\$6
Annual Meeting Revenue	1,200		1,000		1,000	
Miscellaneous Revenue	65		65		-	
Total Revenue	46,961		43,299		42,022	
<u>Expenses</u>						
<u>Mission Spending</u>						
Social Concerns Grant Budget	13,000		13,000		9,000	
If we can receive more requests via our churches, we will increase our social concerns grants.						
Youth & Camp Scholarships	10,250		6,833		10,000	
Church and Ministry	6,000		6,000		6,000	
Meetings						
General						
Placement & Transition						
Ministerial Support						
Periodic Support						
Subtotal: Church and Ministry	6,000		6,000		6,000	
Wider Church Ministry						
General	650					
General Synod Delegates	250		500		1,000	
Palestine Justice Workgroup	250					
UEK Partnership	250					
Subtotal: Wider Church Ministry	1,400		500		1,000	

Annual Meeting Expense	1,000		2,250		2,500	
Subtotal: Mission Spending	31,650		28,583		28,500	
<u>Administration Costs</u>		7,616 mem-				6,837 mem-
Common Services	9,520	bers @\$1.25	9,234	@\$1.25	8,546	bers @\$1.25
Legal Expense	900					
Salary & FICA	5,165	2% raise	5,535	5% raise	5,701	3% raise
Executive Committee						
Other Administration	50		50		50	
Subtotal: Administration Costs	15,635		14,819		14,297	
<u>Total Expenses</u>	47,285		43,402		42,797	
<u>Net Surplus or (Deficit)</u>	(324)		(103)		(775)	
filename = Budget3yearsincl2025						

Division of Church and Ministry 2023 Report

The Division of Church and Ministry (DCM) continues its work of providing support and oversight for Authorized Ministers, Members in Discernment and Local Congregations in the Southwest Association. As the church continues to change, we are seeking creative ways to help both clergy and congregations discern God's call and grow in faith as they live into their vocation.

The Southwest Association held two Ecclesiastical Councils. Christina Schoenwetter was approved for ordination on June 4, 2023. Katya Ouchakof was approved for a reaffirmation of ordination into the United Church of Christ on September 17, 2023.

The Southwest Association celebrated two ordinations. Rev. Christina Schoenwetter was ordained October 22, 2023 at First Congregational UCC in Madison. Rev. Katya Ouchakof had a celebration of reaffirmation of ordination into the United Church of Christ on November 5, 2023 at Memorial UCC in Fitchburg.

The Southwest Association celebrated the following installations: Rev. Phil Hobson on September 24, 2023 at Salem UCC in Verona and Christina Schoenwetter on November 19, 2023 at St. John's UCC in Monroe. As of this writing, we have installations scheduled for Rev. Jennifer Seaich on March 3, 2023 at Plymouth UCC in Dodgeville; Rev. Kate Mackey on March 17, 2023 at Orchard Ridge UCC in Madison; Rev. Jen Particca Bloesch on April 14, 2023 at Community of Hope in Madison.

The DCM supports licensed ministers for 7 of our congregations. In some cases this is an on- going commitment – in other cases, it is more short-term. Each licensed minister has a clergy mentor and also meets with the DCM more or less annually. We are very grateful for the work of our licensed ministers as they serve our congregations.

We have 4 Members in Discernment (MIDs) and we are working closely with the Unified Member in Discernment Assessment Team to help each MID develop a learning plan that will prepare and equip them for ministry. Each MID has both a mentor and advisor to help support and guide them through the process.

We continue to support 1 pastor who is seeking "Privilege of Call", which

means they have begun a process of moving their standing from another denomination to the UCC. We also support 1 pastor seeking Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing, which means they can search or serve within the UCC while maintaining their standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

We accepted a voluntary resignation of standing (without bias) for Rev. Shaun Drehfel.

We accepted a resignation of standing (with bias) from Rev. David McDonald following the initiation of a Fitness Review by the Unified Fitness Review Team of the Wisconsin Conference. Per the Manual on Ministry, once a resignation of standing is received a Fitness Review must end. Prior to any consideration of reinstatement of standing at a later date, the incomplete Fitness Review must be addressed to the Association where the person resigned standing. Reinstatement of standing requires completion of the Fitness Review process.

It continues to be a privilege to work with DCM members, with DCM co-chair Rev. Eldonna Hazen, and with ACM Rev. Rachel Bauman and other conference staff. Together we seek to nurture faithful and effective leaders and to support the health of our local churches, the Southwest Association and the Wisconsin Conference of the United Church of Christ.

Respectfully,

Rev. Ruth Wagner Bradshaw, Co-chair

Social Justice Report 2023

Thanks to the generosity of our association congregations, the following churches and ministries received grants in 2023.

“Nothing to Hide” (Salem UCC, Verona): \$500- for mental health awareness initiative, including photo exhibit and speaker series open to public

Julia Weaver (Alliance @ 4200): \$750 - for continuing ed opportunity with Diné weavers related to repudiation of Doctrine of Discovery work ongoing throughout association. Learning will be brought back to association and shared through presentations and community art.

\$3350 Prison Ministry/ Restorative Justice Project (First Congregational UCC, Madison):

\$600 MOSES interfaith organization with focus on ending mass incarceration:

Speaker Mark Charles, weekend of events centered around repudiation of the Doctrine of Discovery (McFarland UCC): \$2000*

**a link to the video of the presentation can be found at mcfarlanducc.org

*money not needed and returned to the committee, will be reported in 2024 budget

Conflict/ Connection Workshop Initiative (Plymouth UCC, Dodgeville UCC)

\$2000- event planned for 2024

**materials from the workshop will be shared to SWA churches

Thanks to all who fund, engage in and support these crucial ministries!

As applications have been down over the past few years the committee adopted a couple of changes this year aimed at reducing obstacles and raising awareness. First, with help from Denise Jones, we updated our page on the website to reflect our current membership, guidelines and information. A postcard was sent to all SWA churches in October 2023 to raise awareness of available funds. Plans are also being made for a presentation at the annual meeting, and we are looking into

the possibility of offering a cohort group through the Damascus project for supporting those writing grant applications.

Gail Holmes

Carol Martell

Ken Warren

Rev. Lex Liberatore

Rev. Jessica Taft

The UEK/UCC Partnership

The UEK/UCC Partnership has been a part of the Southwest Association and Wisconsin Conference UCC life for 38 years. This partnership with the Evangelical Church of the Rhineland Moers district in Germany began over conversations regarding the threat of nuclear war, and it has grown into a fruitful partnership. Throughout the years there have been numerous adult and youth exchanges, theological roundtables, connecting at national church meetings such as Kirchentag and General Synod, and doing mission work together around the world.

COVID-19 put a pause in our connecting for several years, and while plans were underway for a youth trip to Germany, this did not occur because of continued concern with the virus, and other world events. During that time, the SWA's UEK Working Group said farewell to its enthusiastic leader, as Rev. Bill Kapp began a new call in Illinois, and at the same time several committee members resigned. As a result, this currently is an inactive working group with no future plans. In 2023, we donated \$700 from our treasury to the Conference's German Partnership to help them bring 7 Hondurans to Wisconsin for the Trialogue. If you have an interest in participating in this group, please be in touch with Rev. Bob Mutton at 608.834.8992.

The Bethlehem Partnership and The Palestine Justice Working Group

In the fall of 2023, with blessings of committee members, the Bethlehem Partnership ended its activity. The focus of Bright Stars of Bethlehem had narrowed to financial support for Dar Al-Kalima University of Arts and Culture. Simultaneously, a conference-wide group with a passion to connect Wisconsin churches to the UCC synod resolution was developing. This group is “The Palestine Justice Working Group of the Wisconsin Conference of the United Church of Christ”.

There is a line item in the Southwest Association budget for Bright Stars of Bethlehem (Bethlehem Partnership). The board members of the Southwest Association changed the name of that line item so funds could be used by The Palestine Justice Working Group (Palestine Justice Workgroup). The board recommended that the group seek additional funding support from other associations, as it is a conference-wide effort.

A member of The Palestine Justice Working Group is also a Bright Stars of Bethlehem representative, so the work of Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb and Dar Al-Kalima University will continue to be represented.

The mission for this working group is below. It meets monthly by zoom and welcomes all who are interested. Contact:

Lisa Hart, Associate Conference Minister for Faith Formation and Justice Ministries, and Executive Associate to the Conference Minister lhart@wcucc.org

Respectfully submitted,
Nancy Baumgardner

Palestine Justice Working Group of the Wisconsin Conference of the United Church of Christ

Mission Statement Adopted September 25, 2023

The Palestine Justice Working Group of the Wisconsin Conference serves Wisconsin UCC congregations by providing educational and advocacy resources and programs in support of justice for Palestinians.

We promote continued learning about realities in Palestine and share insights regarding advocacy initiatives within and beyond the UCC. We bring together UCC churches within our state, so churches don't have to work in isolation, and we can work together with a united front. We work with ecumenical, interfaith and justice organizations that join us in nonviolent efforts toward a just and genuine peace for Palestine and Israel.

We are called to action by UCC General Synod resolutions¹, UCC mission co-workers², recommendations from Global Ministries Mission Partners³, as well as the *Kairos Palestine* document⁴ and other calls from a Palestinian society which for decades has suffered under military occupation and legal structures enforcing ethnic/religious discrimination. We embrace the challenge named in our UCC Statement of Faith: to accept the cost and joy of Christian discipleship, resist the powers of evil, and place our trust in God to grant courage in the struggle for justice and peace.

Footnotes

¹ www.globalministries.org/mee_resolutions

² www.globalministries.org/mission-coworkers

³ www.globalministries.org/regions/mee/mee-partners (scroll down to Israel/Palestine)

⁴ There are two *Kairos-Palestine* documents. Both are meaningful for our mission:

- *Kairos Palestine 2009: A moment of truth, A word of faith, hope and love from the heart of Palestinian suffering*,
www.kairospalestine.ps/index.php/about-kairos/kairos-palestine-document
- *Kairos Palestine 2020: Cry for Hope: A call to decisive action*

www.cryforhope.org/media/attachments/2020/06/30/cry-for-hope-english.pdf

2024 Southwest Association UCC Annual Meeting Report of the Nominating Committee

Names in **bold type** indicate re-nomination to a 2nd or 3rd term, or new nomination to a Division/Committee. Terms are 2 years with the possibility of 3 terms.

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE

SWA Officers

Moderator (2024-2026) **Lori Powell** ,

Vice Moderator (2024-2026) **Rev. Jennifer Seaich**, Plymouth Congregational UCC/Dodgeville

Secretary (2023-2025) Rev. Marlea Gilbert, 3rd term, First Congregational UCC/Baraboo

Treasurer (2023-2025) Donald Taft, 3rd term, First Congregational UCC/Madison

Members-at-Large

Gail Holmes, 1st term, Plymouth Congregational UCC/Madison

Rev. Bev Davis, 1st term, Orchard Ridge UCC/Madison

Kay Hallanger, 1st term, First Congregational UCC/Baraboo

Rev. Phil Hobson, 1st term, Salem UCC, Verona

Representatives from the Division on Church & Ministry, and Social Concerns also serve on the Executive Committee. They are chosen by those divisions.

Division on Church & Ministry

Rev. Ruth Bradshaw, 3rd term, Delavan United Church of Christ

Jamie Dieckhoff, 1st term,

Ann Dolan, 2nd term, First Congregational UCC Platteville

Todd Hackman, 3rd term, St. John's United Church of Christ,

Monroe Rev. Eldonna Hazen, 2nd term, First Congregational

UCC/Madison Rev. Laura Kolden, 3rd term, First United Church of Christ/Belleville **Jim Neuman, 2nd term**,

Wayne Shannon, 2nd term, First Congregational Madison/Chaplain Oakwood Prairie Ridge Madison

Shawn Stapleton, 1st term, Congregational United Church of Christ, Brodhead

Gretchen Viney, 2nd term, First Congregational UCC/Baraboo

Kelly Volk, 2nd term,

Division on Social Concerns

Gail Holmes, 1st term, Plymouth Congregational UCC/Madison
Rev. Lex Liberatore, 3rd term, First Congregational UCC
Platteville Carol Martell, 2nd term, Plymouth UCC/Madison
Rev. Jessica Taft, 3rd term, First Congregational UCC/Madison
Ken Warren, 2nd term, Community of Hope UCC/Madison

Southwest Association General Synod Delegates

(elected by the Conference)

Wayne Shannon, First Congregational UCC/Madison(Chaplain Oakwood Prairie
Ridge/Madison) (2023 & 2025)

(to be nominated by the Association and elected by the Conference)

Gail Holmes (2025)

Rev. Kerri Parker (2025)

Rev. Jessica Taft (alternate)

Board of Directors/SWA Representatives

Ann Beaty, 1st term, 1st Congregational UCC/Madison

Gayle Tucker, 1st term, Plymouth Congregational UCC/Madison

George Adams, 2nd term, Salem UCC

Rev. Sara Rabe, 1st term, First Congregational UCC/Fort Atkinson

Biographies

Ann Beaty has been the full-time Associate Minister at First Congregational UCC/Madison for the past 7 years. During those years she has served the wider church as the Vice Moderator and Moderator of the Southwest Association and has been trained as a member of the Fitness Review Team. As a believer in the power of the good that we can do together through our wider church ministries, she is honored to join the Wisconsin BOD.

Phil Hobson (he/they) came to serve Salem UCC in Verona in June of 2023. He has previously served churches on Long Island, NY, Charlotte, MI and Dallas, TX. He likes Chicago Theological Seminary so much he graduated from there twice. He is a husband and a father, and also wrangles a dog and two cats. When not engaging in ministry he likes games of all kinds, as well as trying to learn musical instruments.

Gail L. Holmes: I'm a member of Plymouth UCC in Madison, currently serve as Worship Team chair, member of Christian Education, Outdoor Ministry coordinator, and sing in the choir. As a member my entire life, I've served on almost every committee, task force and elected office.

Prior service to the UCC: For the Association, served on the Executive Committee and several divisions related to commissions. For the Conference, served as chair of Stewardship & Mission, on Evangelism and Christian Education Commissions, budget and annual meeting planning committees, General Synod delegate. Graduated from the Lay Academy. Member of United Church Camps, Inc. Board of Directors. For the national UCC, was elected to the General Synod Nominating Committee.

In the community, am a member of the Board of Directors for Personal Essential Pantries (PEP) Partnership and for the Friendship Force of Wisconsin. Volunteer at Second Harvest Food Bank.

Retired from University of Wisconsin Law School. World traveler to all seven continents and 70 countries. Enjoy volunteering, singing, reading, camping, flower gardening, cultural events, travel, and meeting and making international friends.

Lori Powell has served three congregations during in Wisconsin. She has also worked for Just Dane. She has been a member of the Executive Committee of the Southwest Association for the past five years. She is passionate about church

renewal, contemplative prayer, creation care and inclusive/welcoming/accessible congregations. She and her family live on the east side of Madison.

Jennifer Seaich is the new pastor of Plymouth UCC in Dodgeville. Previously, Jennifer served as solo pastor at Beavercreek UCC in Beavercreek, OR- an OnA, Earthwise, Just Peace rural church near Portland. She was on the Central Pacific Conference board of directors as the chair of the Local Church Ministry. Jennifer's ministerial passions are social justice, contemplative spirituality, and community.

She is also inspired by showing unchurched or church-wary people that Christians don't have to be mean and judgmental (and are not supposed to be) and that God is also not mean and judgmental. She loves reading all sorts of books, cooking and baking, walks in beautiful places, travel, trees and gardens, mountains, lakes. She, husband Brett, and dog Fergus live in Mineral Point.



The Wisconsin Foundation UCC serves as a community foundation for UCC congregations and closely related organizations in Wisconsin. The foundation exists as a subsidiary of the conference – meaning that every congregation in the conference “owns” the foundation. The foundation can provide sound investment opportunities, fundraising assistance, and capacity building because of the growing number of congregations investing through the foundation. When a congregation partners with the foundation, they help make all our congregations stronger.

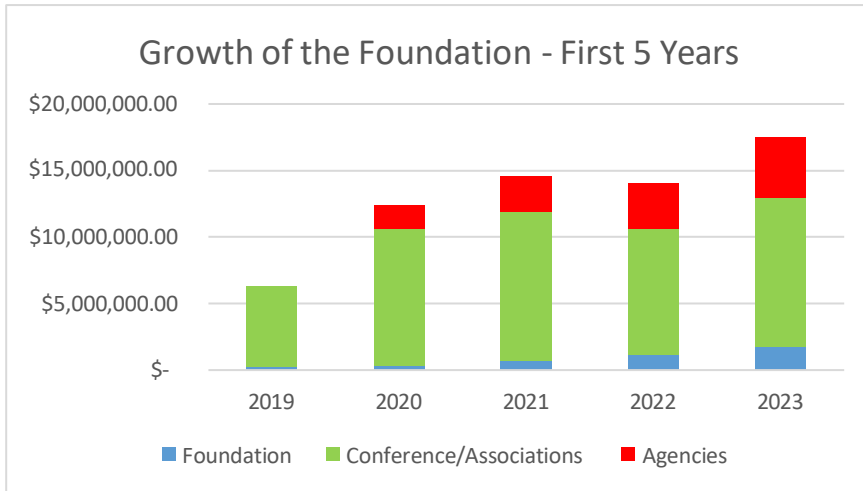
Fifth Anniversary

The conference started the foundation in 2019. The foundation invests on behalf of agencies (primarily congregations), the conference, and its own funds. Investing together ensures access to good investment management at a better fee than any one organization could get on its own.

The foundation’s investment pool allowed the foundation to make a programmatic investment in United Church Camps, Inc., at a crucial time in the camps’ history. The loan from the foundation – interest only for five years – supported the camps as they navigated the Covid-19 Pandemic. Every congregation invested in the foundation helped make this important support available to the camps while also earning a solid return on the investment.

The funds invested through the foundation more than doubled since its inception (see graph). In addition to the loan to UCCI, the Pension Boards manages the remaining investments. The foundation’s investment pool earned a 14.12% return in 2023.

Churches invested pay approximately 1.05% in investment and administrative fees. These fees allow the foundation to provide guidance and support to agencies. A portion



of the fees come back to the conference in the form of “Common Service” revenue in the conference budget; \$30,000 in 2023.

The foundation aids agencies (including churches) in raising new dollars for mission and ministry. From 2020, the foundation raised an

average of \$273,794 annually for agencies invested in the foundation.

Tools for Congregations

Many congregations struggle to promote gifts in wills or to receive gifts from stocks. The foundation partnered with the Pension Boards to bring new tools to help congregations. A new bequest site allows donors to make a gift in their will to any Wisconsin Conference congregation, the conference, the camps, and national ministries. A “smart giving” site helps donors make gifts from a Donor Advised Fund (DAF), an IRA account, appreciated stocks or crypto. Finally, the foundation released a Together for Tomorrow Planned Giving Manual to help congregations make the most of these tools and other opportunities for planned gifts. Promoting planned giving will be an increased focus for the foundation in the coming year.



Legacy Congregations

The foundation assists congregations on the threshold of closure. The leadership of Ebenezer UCC in Stratford, WI (NWA), realized their increasingly small congregation could not continue. “Our current council leaders have long served in their roles and cannot continue indefinitely doing this work,” Moderator Sue Vick said. “While we tried to recruit new people as volunteers, we do not see people stepping forward to volunteer.” The Council worked with Andrew Warner of the Wisconsin Foundation UCC to develop a legacy plan designed to create a new future for the 4-acre cemetery that sits beside the church building. The Council recruited new people to form a cemetery association, and Andrew advised the new board on its incorporation.



Ebenezer sold the church building and adjacent forest acreage to create funds in the foundation to support the on-going care of the cemetery and to provide annual gifts in honor of the church's legacy in the community. "Andrew's advice and financial expertise was invaluable to me and the Council as we worked through the legacy process," Sue Vick said. It is always hard for a congregation to close, but the Foundation helped Ebenezer extend its

legacy into the future.

Partnering Together

The logo of the foundation features two hands holding a tender plant. It symbolizes the way all the congregations and other agencies of the foundation partner together to care for the Church. By working together, we all benefit. You can learn more about partnering with the foundation at www.wcucc.org/foundation.



Our History

1841

In the town of Summit, 10 pioneers with the help of Rev. Stephen Peet, became The First Presbyterian Church of Summit, meeting in each other's homes.

1845

Both churches decided to divide. Summit resumed their original name and governance. Oconomowoc continued as Congregationalists which gave us our present name. It consisted of 31 members.

1863

The Oconomowoc and Summit church came together again as one church.



1961

It was voted and approved to accept the Constitution of the United Church of Christ. Many families dropped membership and pursued a lawsuit with the church. It was one of several test-cases nationally which was eventually won by the church.

1977

The Long-Range Planning Committee agreed to recommend "constructing a new building on a new site." It took 7 years to reach an agreement to let go of "Little White, New-England Meeting House" to purchase 22 acres in the city.

1843

With people traveling from Oconomowoc, they decided to form a separate church in Oconomowoc adopting the Congregational form of government and changed the name to First Congregational Church of Summit and Oconomowoc.



1852

Rev. Sidney Barteau accepted the call as pastor after 4 years of the church not having a pastor and worshipping with the Methodists. The first church was built, a little white New-England style on the corner of Church St. and South St.

1885

New Year's morning the new church was first dedicated.

1967

Rev. Charles Lowder accepted a call to our church.

A new Constitution was adopted, new boards and committees were created to help get things done within the church. The church was busier than ever.



1983

The first woman, Deborah Howland was ordained to the ministry in First Congregational UCC, Oconomowoc.

1984

Approval for a new church building was granted and they broke ground in September.



1988

Rev. Stephen Welch was called as our Senior Pastor.



1994

Building began on what was called the new "office pod."

2002

Thanks to a very generous donation, a new covered entrance and bell tower was constructed to house the hold church bell which would once again be rung from it's new home high above the ground.



2006

A new addition of the Sanctuary was added.



2015

Rev. David Schnepf was called as our new Senior Pastor.

1985

A formal dedication of the new church took place.

1987

Rev. Charles Lowder announced his retirement after 20 years.

1992

Building Fund Campaign was kicked off to build a new church office, music room, additional classrooms and elevator access between floors.

1998

"Ignite the Spirit, Burn the Mortgage" kicked off to become debt free to utilize the former mortgage payments to be used in more meaningful ways in the life of the church.

HEARTS & HANDS
Celebrating ALL of God's Children

2004

Our Hearts and Hands Preschool began to be operated within our church.

2005

"Building With Faith... For All the People" campaign began for an expansion of our sanctuary.

2013

Rev. Stephen Welch announced his retirement after 25 years.

2023

Rev. Matthew Schneider-Adams was called as our new Senior Pastor.

