

"A threefold cord is not quickly broken."

Ecclesiastes 4:12b (NRSV)



Regional Assembly

**Christian Church (Disciples of Christ)
of Mid-America
October 3, 2020**



An online Assembly experience for this time of pandemic.



VALUES

In keeping with Ephesians 4:11-12, Mid-America affirms the core values of true community (mutual support and accountability), deep Christian spirituality, and a passion for justice.

MISSION

The Mid-America Region's mission is to resource and support congregations, individually and collectively, as they seek to be more faithful, effective, and sustainable in the mission to which God calls us.

VISION

The Mid-America Region is envisioned as a continuously developing network of relationships that includes broader and deeper participation by congregations, ministers, and laity in congregational clusters, learning communities and shared missions and ministries.

A Virtual Assembly

Welcome to our virtual Assembly! From Kennett to Maryville, Joplin to Edwardsville, Canton to everywhere in-between we gather as Disciples. We are Disciples better together for our shared story of history, witness, mission, and future. Online today, we are connected to friends new and old, from city and rural places, big and small congregations, and indeed better TOGETHER!

Though we are unable to meet in person for Assembly this year, we know in the Spirit of God, we will recall times when we caught up with old friends, saw new faces, worshipped together. We also know, in the Spirit of God, these elements of an Assembly are with us even now in our listening, watching, singing, and praying -- being Disciples TOGETHER.

Even more, we are sorry for all of those who have had to face head-on the horrible reality of COVID-19. We continue to pray for all those who are sick, recovering, grieving the loss of a loved one, dealing with employment termination, suffering financial insecurity, or experiencing isolation and uncertainty. We are, indeed, the body of Christ, and we are in this TOGETHER.

We are grateful to be able to gather, however unconventionally, to pray for our hurting, to witness the good news, to stand as Anti-Racist/Pro-Reconciling people, to give thanks for our shared covenant, to review our ministries, to celebrate our successes, and to plan for our future TOGETHER.

Thank you for joining us in this Assembly of the Mid-America Region, where we are always BETTER TOGETHER!



Assembly Docket Contents

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Acknowledgements

We are grateful to **Lake Ozark Christian Church**, who had originally agreed to host an in-person event. We are in hopes to meet there for the next Assembly in 2022. Though disappointed, we are grateful to our Board for keeping the health and safety of all Mid-America Disciples a top priority as they made the decision to go digital.

Thank you to...

Regional Minister Paul Koch for his tireless efforts as chair of our planning group.

Rev. Seth Rash (FCC, Troy) for producing the virtual assembly broadcast.

All who contributed video, music, study and photo content to be a part of the program.

All who have served in **Regional Leadership** these past two years—the Regional Board, Regional Commission on the Ministry, cluster leaders, and constituency group leaders.

As **Jimmy Spear** moves to the Past Moderator position on the Regional Board, we thank him for his leadership during the many changes in the Region over the last two years, his efforts at communicating the current work of the Board to the Region, and his enthusiasm for sharing the strong story of Mid-America wherever needed. Thank you to **Rick Rollings** for serving four years as Board Secretary. His organization, expertise, and calm demeanor were vital in the Board's work. Thank you to outgoing Board Member **Mindy Kiepe** for stepping in to fill a vacancy and being a strong voice in times of personnel management.

The **Rickman Legacy Fund** for covering expenses so this virtual assembly can be free for all participants.

Welcome...

We welcome and thank our incoming board members for their willingness to serve. New Board members **Nancy Bouse**, **Madeline Haraway**, and **Hannah Ryan**; RCOM member **Michael Williams**.



Regional Assembly Program

Find the Assembly on our [Facebook page](#).

Here's what you can expect to see during our Assembly:

Musical Prelude and Slide Show from around Mid-America

Opening sequence by our staff and moderators

Welcome and Call to Order.. Rev. Jimmy Spear, Moderator, presiding

A message from our General Minister and President Rev. Terri Hord Owens

Special music by Rev. Emily Bowen-Marler of Brentwood Christian Church

Prayer by Mary Robison of FCC Burlington Junction & Pickering CC

Bible Study led by Rev. Derrick Perkins of Centennial Christian Church, featuring Rev. Dr.

Dietra Baker, Rev. Rhonda Aldridge, Minister Linda Tobias-Doss, & Minister Edvonia Scott

Welcome of new ministers since our last Assembly

State of the Region/Introduction of Business items by Rev. Jimmy Spear, Moderator

Treasurer's Report by Tom Wood, Treasurer

Special music by Blind Faith Praise Band of First Christian Church in Troy

Disciples Women's Ministry report by Rev. Jennifer Long, DW Coordinator

Disciples Care Team report by Rev. Lina Eddy, Disciples Care Team Chair

Outdoor Ministries report by Rev. Zane Whorton, Outdoor/Youth Ministries Coordinator

Commission on the Order of Ministry report by Rev. Katherine Kinnamon,

RCoM Coordinator

New Church reports by new church planters Rev. Christie Love, Rev. Rhonda Aldridge, and

Rev. Matt Limback

Visioning 2021 Task Force report by Rev. Dan Kercher, Chair

Mission Co-Worker reports from Larry & Debbie Colvin in Ghana and Elena Huegel in Mexico

Week of Compassion report

Communion service with our Moderator, Regional Ministers, and special music by Rev. Emily

Bowen-Marler

Benediction

After the voting closes at 11:30 and all of the votes have been tabulated,
the results will be posted on our [Facebook page](#).



A Sermon for Assembly

by Rev. Dr. Richard F. Ward

Philippians 2:1-13 (lectionary for September 27th)

"Better Together: But Being of the Same Mind?"

Dr. Ward explores how Paul spoke to the deep divides that were present in that congregation and called them to the unity in Christ Jesus. What does that unity look like today? We rehearse that unity when we come together at the table. How then does that play out when we disperse and find ourselves in a 'real world' that is fraught with deep social and political divisions? Let's come together to see what word for us may be from the 'mind of Christ Jesus'.

Find the sermon after the Assembly here:

<http://www.mid-americadisciples.org/regional-assembly-2020>.

Pastors are welcome to incorporate it into their congregational life however is helpful.

Richard F. Ward recently retired from Phillips Theological Seminary as the Fred B. Craddock (Emeritus) Professor of Homiletics and Worship where he served for 10 years. Prior to Phillips, Professor Ward served on the faculties of the Candler School of Theology (Emory University), Iliff School of Theology, and as the Clement-Muehl Associate Professor Communication Arts at Yale Divinity School. He brings insights from storytelling to the art and practice of preaching and loves to "bring a biblical text to life" through performed interpretations. Richard is husband to Amy and father to Dylan and loves to pick up a guitar in the evening and pick out a blues tune.



WORKSHOPS: *Better Together Thursdays*



A wonderful piece of our virtual Assembly format this year is not having to choose only two workshops to attend. You can attend them all! Our presenters graciously agreed to participate in our Better Together Thursdays workshop series, hosting Zoom sessions throughout the fall. All sessions are free, available to everyone, and recorded and posted on our [website](#) so that you can watch them any time!

Date	Time	Title/Presenter	Topic/Description
August 13	11:00 am	<p>Best Practices for Endowment Fund Trustees by Kirby Gould</p> <p>Kirby Gould is Vice-President with the Christian Church Foundation based in Kansas City and works with many congregations in Mid-America.</p>	<p>Is your church ready to receive a bequest? Are policies and documents in place which will guide and direct the congregation in managing, investing, and/or spending a bequest? Will a bequest cause the church to have its largest board meeting ever? The Christian Church Foundation works in the area of the stewardship of accumulated resources, helping churches develop policies, invest wisely, and encourage members to create an end-of-life gift upon their death. The Foundation's mission is to Move Money to Ministry.</p> <p>CCF Endowment Funds webpage CCF Endowment Funds Policies webpage Model Endowment Fund Policy Role of Endowment Fund Trustees brochure Kirby's slide presentation Handbook for Treasurers of Disciples Churches UCC Cornerstone Fund – United Church Funds Recording of presentation</p>
August 20	7:00 pm	<p>Caring for Your Pastor/ Yourself</p> <p>Rev. Coletta Eichenberger, Intentional Interim Minister and Rev. Dr. Bob Eichenberger, Licensed Professional Counselor</p>	<p><i>Instead of each person watching out for their own good, watch out for what is better for others. Philippians 2:4 Common English Bible(CEB)</i></p> <p>Your pastor is a human being with strengths, challenges, and needs like everyone else in the congregation. But unlike everyone else, pastors live out their seasons and challenges in full display to everyone. There is often an implicit expectation that the pastor is the most transformed person in the congregation. This may be an expectation the pastor puts on her/himself; or it is laid on them by some congregants. This pressure can lead to a sense of isolation and loneliness. Learning the signals that your pastor needs self-care, and encouraging her/him to seek that out, can make for a healthier leader and faith community.</p> <p>Watch the recording of their presentation.</p>
August 27	7:00 pm	<p>Meaningful Men's Ministry</p> <p>Rev. Dr. Alex Ruth, Associate Director of Disciples Men and pastor of Marshfield Christian Church</p> <p>Rev. Dr. Paul Koch, Regional Minister</p>	<p>It has been said countless times in the past months, these are undoubtedly uncertain and trying times. While that is true, a more profound and more abiding truth is God's promise to walk with us in the shadowy valleys of life. God promises never to leave or forsake us. Now, maybe more than ever, it is essential for all followers of Christ to work diligently to shape our lives by the example of Jesus. That is precisely the aim of the latest projects from the Office of Disciples Men. This year Disciples Men has made three new study curricula available for Disciples Men groups around the country. Each of these studies helps men live life The Jesus Way. During this workshop, Alex Ruth will provide an introduction to the Jesus Way materials, and offer opportunities to build and grow men's ministry in your church. He will also share exciting news about upcoming projects from the Office of Disciples Men and Disciples Home Missions. Paul Koch will provide updates on men's ministries in the region and share information on virtual connection opportunities regarding Mid-America Men and Friends.</p> <p>Watch the recording of this presentation.</p>

WORKSHOPS: *Better Together Thursdays*



Date	Time	Title/Presenter	Topic/Description
September 3	11:00 am	<p>Aging in a Pandemic: Facing New Realities, Renewing Our Faith</p> <p>Rev Sally Robinson serves as Chaplain of Columbia Area Older Adult Ministry. Rev Craig Kirby-Grove pastors FCC in Maryville, sponsor of our NBA Older Adult Ministries grant. Jan Aerie is coordinator of our Older Adults Ministry</p>	<p>Amid the pandemic, we will explore new ideas and ways to cope and minister with others. All the while we will also be addressing some of the myths and realities of aging. Examine the maze of aging in this time of Covid-19, while discussing ways your congregation can better serve older adults in communities and facilities. Share in dialogue, brainstorming and planning for revitalizing your congregation's ministry and outreach with older adults! Watch the recording of this presentation.</p>
September 10			
September 17	11:00 am	<p>Ministering through Trauma & Moral Injury by Rev. Dr. Tommy Goode, Director of the Moral Injury Institute and pastor of Ozark CC.</p>	<p>Help your congregation become trauma-aware, both for those in the pulpit and those in the pew. We will define "moral injury" with information on the effects of moral injury among those who are military, veterans, and others, including ministers, who serve in care-giver roles. Watch the recording of this presentation. Slides from presentation.</p>
September 24	11:00 am	<p>Open: Exploring a Wide(r) Welcome</p> <p>Disciples LGBTQ+ Alliance</p> <p>& Mid-America O & A Team</p>	<p>As Disciples we share a radically wide table. As we celebrate our tradition of gathering at the table, join with other Disciples throughout Mid-America to hear and share stories of welcome. Church communities who are living into what it means to be Open & Affirming will share experiences of joy and struggle. Disciples LGBTQ+ Alliance Executive Director + Minister Rev. Melissa Guthrie Loy will provide relevant definitions and explanations as well as an overview of resources for the journey of welcome, for those who are beginning or re-engaging their welcome. A panel of Mid-America O&A Team Members will respond to questions. We know we are all in different places; join us at the table as we explore its wide welcome. When all are at the table, we are better together. Watch the Exploring a Wide(r) Welcome video. (49:01) Watch the video discussion video. (15:05) Download Building an Inclusive Church: A Welcoming Toolkit.</p>
October 1	11:00 am and 7:00 pm	<p>Discussion of Business Items</p>	<p>Board representatives will be available to discuss the business items, including the proposed changes to the bylaws and the Nominating Committee Report.</p>
October 8	11:00 am	<p>Getting You on the Road to Financial Wellness</p> <p>Sarah Renfro, Area Director with the Pension Fund of the Christian Church</p>	<p>Ministers' financial lives are complicated: salaries are modest, many have student loans, and ministers want to be generous as well as save for the future. We will explore elements of clergy compensation and share how Pension Fund is finding new ways to support clergy (and their congregations). Join us to cut through the confusion and learn about new resources that will help answer your toughest money questions so you can find your path to financial wellness.</p>
October 15	7:00 pm	<p>Faith Education for Leaders</p> <p>Leslie LeSieur, Director Phillips Center for Ministry and Lay Training</p>	<p>Jesus needs an educated church, full of well-formed and informed Christians, led by persons with sound educational foundations. A vital part of the educational options for individuals and congregations are the Center for Ministry and Lay Training and other programs at Phillips Theological Seminary offering quality, in-depth courses for laity and clergy. Men and women of all ages and occupations are responding to the call to serve their congregations and communities with these online offerings. Come learn more as we share how we can serve 'Better Together'.</p>

WORKSHOPS: *Better Together Thursdays*



Date	Time	Title/Presenter	Topic/Description
October 22	11:00 am	<p>Emerging your Church from Survival Mode to Thriving Mode / Cane Ridge Re-Vital</p> <p>Rev. Dr. Chad McMullin, Sr. Pastor of First Christian Church Sedalia and</p> <p>Rev. Ron Routledge, Regional Minister</p>	<p>Is your congregation just surviving? Would you like to be thriving? This workshop will explore the theological and methodological approaches to co-building with Christ a vibrant congregation. It is for Pastors and congregational leaders who desire to see Christ build his church and will provide spiritual and practical suggestions toward a healthy Body engaging fruitful ministry.</p>
October 29	11:00 am	<p>Kathryn Wilson, Minister of Mission and Outreach at South Joplin CC</p>	<p>Mission</p>
November 5	7:00 pm	<p>Affirming: Living Out the Ministry of Welcome</p> <p>Disciples LGBTQ+ Alliance</p> <p>Mid-America O&A Team</p>	<p>Stop being (just) a welcoming church. How do we move from a potentially passive practice of welcome to active ministry that includes all, particularly those who have historically felt excluded from church life and practice? Living into the call to practice welcome and embody radical hospitality requires new tools and intentional conversations. Join with the Open & Affirming Team of Mid-America as we draw upon scripture to shape practices for expanding and deepening welcome within and beyond our churches. This conversation is shaped for those who are familiar with the Open & Affirming process, ready to take next steps to become O&A, or who have been living it and need new tools to continue this work.</p>
November 12	11:00 am	<p>Leading During These Trying Times</p> <p>Angela Whitenhill-Shields and/or Hector Hernandez of National Benevolent Association</p>	<p>With all that is swirling around for clergy as they navigate the demands of pandemic culture, technology, and societal tensions, it is often hard to take a moment to pause, process, and find clarity for the path moving forward. This workshop was created to give clergy a space to breathe, process, and engage intentional conversations with others facing the same stressors to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • help process their own stress and confusion while leading during these trying times • share helpful resources • create space for collaborative problem solving and brainstorming ideas for moving forward

Regional Assembly Business Agenda

The Christian Church in Mid-America

October 3, 2020

Items of BUSINESS:

Election and Installation of Slate of Board and RCOM Members and Leaders

By-Law Changes: Recommendation from the Regional Board to the Regional Assembly

Article III, Section 1 shall now read:

The Regional Board shall be composed of the following voting members: Moderator, the Moderator-Elect, the Past Moderator, the Secretary, the Treasurer, and the Directors.

All members of the Regional Minister Team shall be non-voting ex-officio members of the Regional Board.

Article VI, Section 1, part d shall now read:

The Past Moderator. The Past Moderator shall be an ex-officio voting member of the Personnel Committee, assist the Moderator and Moderator-Elect in presiding at the business sessions of the Assembly and the Regional Board, and assume such other responsibilities as may be assigned by these bodies.

Article VI, Section 1, part e shall now read: “A Regional Minister Team Member shall serve as corporate president, to be renewed each year.”

In Article IV, Section 5, part d, the references to “office of the Regional Minister Team Leader” shall be changed to “one of the offices of the Regional Minister Team”.

In Article IV, Section 6, the reference to “the Regional Minister Team Leader” shall be changed to “a member of the Regional Minister Team”.

Treasurer’s Financial Report (see page 12)

Moderator’s State of the Region Report

Explanation and Context of By-Law Changes:

Over the past two years the Regional Minister Team has changed dramatically. In the midst of these staff changes the Regional Board took seriously concerns about the ethos of the “Team” approach to the Regional Minister Team. In an effort to avoid an unhealthy hierarchy, the Board has eliminated the position of Regional Minister Team Leader. Regional Ministers will share leadership of the team. All Regional Ministers will be a part of the Executive Committee without vote.

It has become clear that in order for the Personnel Committee to function effectively it will need leadership of more than a two year term. A Board member will be named chair and have a four year term to give the needed leadership to an important task of the Board. The Immediate Past Moderator will bring institutional knowledge to the process ex-officio.

*-Jimmy Spear, Moderator*Due to the nature of this year’s Regional Assembly and the lack of in-person ability to respond to these Business Items, a special **“Better Together Thursday ZOOM” will be held on Thursday, Oct 1, at 11:00 am and again at 7:00 pm** for the purpose of answering questions related to the Regional Assembly Business Items.*

The [link](#) is on the Upcoming Events page of www.mid-americadisciples.org.



Christian Church in Mid-America Leadership: Nominations 2020

[Name, Clergy (C)/Laity (L), Church, City/Town]

Bolding indicates will be voted on at this Assembly

Regional Board

Executive Committee (2 year term)

Moderator	Dan Kercher, (C), First Christian Church, Plattsburg
Moderator-Elect	Madeline Haraway (L), Compton Heights Christian Church, St. Louis
Past Moderator	Jimmy Spear, (C), First Christian Church, Columbia
Secretary	Nancy Bouse, (L), First Christian Church, Sedalia
Treasurer	Tom Wood, (L), Webster Groves Christian Church, St. Louis (3rd term)

At-large Executive Committee Representative: **Paula Holliday, (L), Second Christian Church, New London**

Representative to the General Board CC(DOC): **Paula Holliday, (L), Second Christian Church, New London**

Directors (Class of 2024):

Hannah Ryan, (C), Olivet Christian Church, Columbia
Paula Holliday, (L), Second Christian Church, New London (2nd term)
Brian Kirk, (C), First Christian Church, St. Joseph (2nd term)
Phil Snider, (C), Brentwood Christian Church, Springfield (2nd term)
Kathryn Wilson, (C), South Joplin Christian Church, Joplin (2nd term)

Directors (Class of 2022):

Lee Young, (C), First Christian Church, Republic
Katrude Palmer, (L) Centennial Christian Church, St. Louis
Jeff T. Moore, (C), First Christian Church, Troy
Charles Williams, (L), First Christian Church, Fulton

Regional Commission on the Order of Ministry

(SW southwest, SE southeast, NW northwest, NE northeast – general designations of location)

Class of 2020 now 2022

Teresa Gentry, (L) NE, Hannibal
Michael Williams, (C) SE, Dexter
Derrick Perkins, (C) SE, St. Louis
Juli Nelson, (C) SW, Springfield

Class of 2022 now 2024

Terry Robison, (C) NW, Burlington Junction
Alex Ruth, (C) SW, Marshfield
Rhonda Aldridge, (C) SE, St. Louis
Candy Weems, (L) NE, Hannibal

Class of 2024 now 2026

Vacancy

Lillie Gardner, (L) NE, Columbia
Sarah Klaassen, (C), NE, Columbia, RCOM Chairperson
Cindy Summers, (L) SW, Springfield



2018 Regional Assembly Minutes

Friday, May 18, 2018 3:46 PM

Business Meeting - April 21, 2018

Moderator Vickie Sowers called the meeting to order at 9:34am.

Report on Registration: The Credentials Committee certified:
278 Registered Attendees
244 Attendees in Attendance
136 Voting Delegates

Pursuant to Article IV, Section 8 of the Bylaws, a quorum consisted of 55 Voting Delegates. Moderator Vickie Sowers announced the presence of a quorum.

Roll Call: Paula Holliday and LeWanda Jackson, African-America Convocation Coordinators, conducted the Roll Call.

Standing Rules for Business Items: The Standing Rules for Business Items for the Regional Assembly were included on page 17 of the Assembly Packet.

Motion:	The Assembly voted to approve the Standing Rules for Business Items.
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Minutes from the October 2016 Regional Assembly Business Meeting: The Minutes from the October 2016 Regional Assembly Business Meeting were included on pages 18 and 19 of the Assembly Packet.

Motion:	The Assembly voted to approve the Minutes from the October 2016 Regional Assembly Business Meeting.
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Financial Reports/Annual Fund: The Financial Reports were included on pages 20 through 27 of the Assembly Packet. Tom Wood explained that Regional Support has decreased since the reorganization and merger of the Areas. Regional income has decreased approximately \$22,000 since 2016. The Region requests that each congregation prayerfully consider its financial support of the Region. A small increase by each congregation would significantly help.

A 2018 Annual Fund Campaign letter was also included in the Assembly Packet at pages 28 and 29. The Annual Fund raised \$9,000 from one mailing in November 2017. Contributions to the Annual Fund support all the ministries of the Region. Contribution envelopes were distributed.

Regional Minister Team Report: Rev. Dr. Penny Ross-Corona -- The General Board Report was included in the Assembly Packet at pages 30 through 32. Rev. Dr. Mike Weinman retired in December 2017. Rev. Dr. Paul Koch and Rev. Katrina Palan have now joined the Regional Minister Team on a permanent basis. Rev. Dr.

Larry Colvin is leaving in September to serve with Global Ministries in Ghana. A search for a fourth Regional Minister Team Member is in progress. Information regarding the search was included in the Assembly Packet at pages 35 and 36. Rev. Mini Smith has been added to the Search Committee.

Rev. Katrina Palan -- Report regarding the Regional Commission on the Order of Ministry. There are currently 26 congregations in the search and call process.

The Mid-America Center for Ministry closed at the end of 2017 and transferred their Certificate of Pastoral Ministry Program to Phillips Theological Seminary.

During 2018, four Rural Church Summits will take place in the four corners of Mid-America.

Rev. Dr. Paul Koch -- Contract and support staff were recognized and thanked. The Rickman Center Legacy Fund continues to fund Leadership Development. First time attendees to the Annual Persons in Ministry Retreat are free. There are upcoming workshops on ministering to seniors. A report was also provided regarding the Disciples Care Team.

Moment of Appreciation: Rev. Dr. Penny Ross-Corona made a presentation to Vickie Sowers in appreciation for her service as Regional Board Moderator.

Nominating Committee Report: The Nominating Committee Report was included in the Assembly Packet at page 37.

Motion:	The Assembly voted to approve the Nominating Committee Report and elect the officers, directors, and other elected representatives listed in the Report.
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Installation of New Regional Board: Rev. Dr. Penny Ross-Corona conducted the installation of the Regional Board Officers and Directors.

The Business Meeting was adjourned.

Additional Assembly Business:

Rev. Dr. Paul Koch and Rev. Katrina Palan were installed as members of the Regional Minister Team during the closing worship service.

An offering was collected to support Larry and Debbie Colvin's service with Global Ministries at the Evangelical Presbyterian Church, Ghana in the total amount of \$1,268.36.

Respectfully submitted,
Rick Rollings, Secretary

Christian Church of Mid-America – Report to the General Board of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) in the United States and Canada Submitted by Penny Ross-Corona, January 10, 2020

Values In keeping with Ephesians 4:11-12, Mid-America Disciples affirm the core values of true community (mutual support and accountability), deep Christian spirituality, and passion for justice.

Mission The Mid-America Region’s mission is to resource and support congregations, individually and collectively, as they seek to be more faithful, effective, and sustainable in the mission to which God calls us.

Vision The Mid-America Region is envisioned as a continuously developing network of relationships that includes broader and deeper participation by congregations, ministers, and laity in congregational clusters, learning communities, and shared mission and ministries.

During the Oct. 24, 2015 Regional Assembly in Columbia, the decision was made for the four Areas and the Region to merge together to become one Region with one board and one budget, effective Jan. 1, 2016. We have just completed our fourth year in this new model. The Christian Church of Mid-America is a Missouri benevolent corporation duly organized, existing, and in good standing.

During the past four years, the Region has been staffed by four Co-Regional Ministers, who each have shared responsibility for pastoral care of congregations and clergy, as well as for search and call. Each Co-Regional Minister has also carried an additional portfolio. **The Rev. Dr. Paul Koch** continues to carry in his portfolio youth and outdoor ministries, leader development, senior adult ministries, men’s ministries, and Reconciliation ministries. **The Rev. Ronald Routledge** continues to carry in his portfolio new church, rural church, and vital church. He also provides staff support for our Disciples Care Team, Global Ministries, disaster preparation, and volunteers in mission. **The Rev. Katrina Palan** resigned in September, and to date, that position is vacant. The other three Co-Regional Ministers have been covering her portfolio, which includes the Regional Commission on the Order of Ministry and standing for our clergy, along with Disciples Women’s ministries. The Regional Board is planning to employ an interim Co-Regional Minister in the near future. **The Rev. Dr. Penny Ross-Corona** has carried in her portfolio administrative, property, and financial oversight and also served as a liaison to the Wider Church. She officially retired at the end of December (after 16 years of service), but provided half time work during the month of January to help with the transition. The Regional Board plans to divide her responsibilities among the other three Co-Regional Ministers during the transition period, as it evaluates staffing needs for the future. We have two office managers, one in Springfield and one in St. Louis. In addition, Mid-America continues to also employ part time contract staff for our African-American Convocation, youth and outdoor ministries, and communications. Please visit our website at: www.mid-america-disciples.org

Mid-America is comprised of 236 congregations. Our clergy are organized into 23 clusters, which are continuing to be supported and strengthened. We also continue to work toward insuring that every congregation in our Region is assigned a Disciples Care Team member (much like Regional Elders).

Mid-America is a Global Missions Region. Our congregations are raising new money in partnership with Global Ministries to help support the Rev. Dr. Larry and Debbie Colvin, who are serving in Ghana. We hope to schedule an adult people-to-people trip to Ghana in 2021.



Regional Assemblies are planned for every two years, our next one being scheduled for October 1, 2, and 3, 2020 at the Lake of the Ozarks. The theme is: “Better Together: Local, Regional & General Church – a strong 3-fold cord” based on Eccles. 4:12b. The Assembly will take place at Lake Ozark Christian Church in Lake Ozark, MO on Oct. 1-3, 2020. In between Regional Assemblies, a 15 member Regional Board conducts Mid-America’s business.

Common Mission Priorities Progress Report

New Church:

Mid-America currently has three congregations in formation. Each continues to grow in average worship attendance and outreach:

1. The Chuukese Christian Church (St. Joseph) – Pastor Nerleb Likisap
2. New Hope Community Christian Church (North St. Louis County) – Pastor Rhonda Aldridge.
3. Oasis (Corder) – Pastor Matt Limback. This is our newest church start, which launched Oct. 6, 2019.

Transforming Congregations:

During 2019, the Mid-America Region found a new way to help our congregations connect with each other and their communities. Regional Minister Ron Routledge hosted six “Cane Ridge Re-Vital” events for congregations across Missouri. At each event, congregation leaders worshipped together and shared how they serve their communities. The theme scripture was 2 Corinthians 3:18, and speakers reflected on the 1801 Cane Ridge Revival.

Leader Development:

The Mid-America Commission on the Order of Ministry (in partnership with congregations) works with/nurtures ordination candidates. Currently, there are (18) eighteen candidates under care, who are preparing for ordination. In addition, (4) four geographically deployed Commissioning Ministry teams work with/nurture commissioned ministers on behalf of the Commission. There are currently 61 commissioned ministers serving in ministry across Mid-America. All active ministers with standing in our Region are required to complete a minimum of 15 clock hours of continuing education annually. This includes boundary training and PR/AR training.

Mid-America also continues to offer training to congregations for senior adult ministries through gerontologist, Jan Aerie.

Mid-America partners with the MO Mid-South Conference of the UCC in providing an annual “Persons in Ministry” Retreat. The 2019 presenter was Valerie Tutson, and the program entitled “The God Who Sings Over us” was on storytelling.

Our youth and outdoor ministries continue to flourish. Last summer, we offered 22 camps with 8 different programs. 600 campers and adult volunteer leaders participated.

Pro-reconciling/Anti-racism initiatives:

Each of our Regional Board meetings are opened with a PR/AR moment.

The Mid-America Pro-reconciling/Anti-racism/Justice Ministries Team offers awareness and organizing training to our congregations. The Regional Commission on the Order of Ministry requires that training for all Mid-America clergy.

Also during 2019, the Region sponsored a Civil Rights History Pilgrimage to the deep South. We are hoping to continue to provide similar annual opportunities for Disciples in Mid-America.



MID-AMERICA AFRICAN AMERICAN CONVOCATION
Regional Assembly Report
October 3, 2020

Brief History: The African American Convocation begin in Mid-America when the late Dr. Earnest Newborn was Assistant Regional Minister. This event has continued through the years under the direction of Rev. Jack Sullivan, late Rev. Hannah Toomey, Rev. Vickie Bundy, and Rev. M. Faye Vaughn who coordinated for 23 years. While the exact date is unknown, we believe the Convocation to be at least 40 years old.

The mission of the Convocation: To keep alive our culture and heritage in the whole church and celebrate how God has revealed to our leadership on all levels that we are to be one as Jesus prayed so the world would believe that God sent Him. John 17:21

The Mid-America African American Convocation is an annual gathering of African American congregations. The Convocation is planned via a committee consisting of representative from each of our churches. The committee generally meet in the fall to plan the event for the upcoming spring. Topically event activities include workshops, keynoter speaker, theme, and youth activities. The keynote speaker is usually a pastor or leader from the Office of General Minister and President or General Ministries of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). Our choice of keynote speakers is intended to introduce disciple leaders to our members who may not have an opportunity to meet them if not able to attend General Assembly, Regional Assembly or National Convocation.

Unfortunately, due to the COVID-19 pandemic we were not able to meet for 2020, but we are planning to have a Convocation in 2021. The tentative date will be April 17 or 24.

The 2019 Convocation theme was “Lest We Forget” inspired by Scripture Text: Deuteronomy 8:11. The Second Christian Church of Jefferson City, Missouri hosted the event held on Saturday, April 27. The hosting pastors were Revs. Vernell and Penny Weston. Some of the highlights from Convocation were as follows:

- Roll Call of Churches and Banners
- Greeting from Dr. Paul Koch, Co-Regional Minister Team
- State of Our Region by our Moderator Jimmy Spear
- Stewardship presented by Rev. Cedric Harris, Second Christian Church, Fulton, MO
- African American Disciples Heritage and History: Convention, Merger & Convocation was presented by Rev. Dr. Reginald W. Calhoun, Sr., Executive for Evangelism and Congregational Transformation in Indianapolis, IN
- Justice Workshop
- Youth workshop –
 - “How to Get Along with The System” by Rev. Vernell Weston, pastor of Second Christian, Jefferson City, MO. Rev. Weston has a Jail House Ministry.
 - Elder Aaron Williams and Minister Angela Williams (Fifth Street, Columbia) lead the Youth activities.
- Liturgical Dance by Sis. Re’Nayjah Burton, Second Christian Church, (DOC), New London



- Keynote Speaker: Rev. Bernard “Chris” Dorsey, President of Higher Education & Leadership Ministries of the Christian Church Disciples of Christ
- Installation Service for Rev. Ronald Routledge, Co-Regional Minister Team was performed by Rev. Teresa Dulyea-Parker.

Others who participated were Rev. Charles Blackmon, Bro. Harold Palmer, Rev. Robin Terrell and Rev. M. Faye Vaughn. There were approximately 75 attendees.

2019 Planning Committee Members
 Rev. LeWanda Jackson, Co-Coordinator
 Elder Paula J. Holliday, Co-Coordinator
 Rev. Minnie Smith*Stella Campbell*
 Rev. M. Faye Vaughn*Nicki Mathews*Rev. Vernell Weston

Our African American churches:

Centennial, St. Louis, Fifth Street, Columbia, New Hope Community Christian Church, St. Louis, Reformation Christian Community, Centreville, IL, Second Christian Church, Fulton, Second Christian Church, Jefferson City, Second Christian Church, New London
 Second Christian Church, Vandalia, Willow Street, Hannibal

Respectfully Submitted,
 Rev. LeWanda Jackson and Elder Paula J. Holliday
 Co-Coordinators



Visioning Task Force Report

In May of 2020, Christian Church Mid-America formed a Visioning 2021 task force. I am honored to serve as chair of the task force. We began via a Zoom meeting in June, asking ourselves these three questions:

1. Why does the CCMA exist?
2. What does it do?
3. How does it do it?

Too often, when organizations are looking at themselves, they jump to the second and third questions and skip the first, but the first is the most important because it drives the answers to questions 2 & 3.

In our first call we felt like we were able to adequately answer those questions. Now we move forward with three more questions:

1. Vision through Prayer: What is God's leading/ vision/ direction for our Region?
2. Mutuality of Covenant: How can we more fully live into our shared Covenant?
3. New Wine of Structure: What structural changes can we implement to link us more closely together--Regional Leaders, Pastors, Congregations and Ministries?

Our Visioning 2021 task force is seeking input from the entire region to provide answers to those questions. After all, we are “Better Together” as a region.

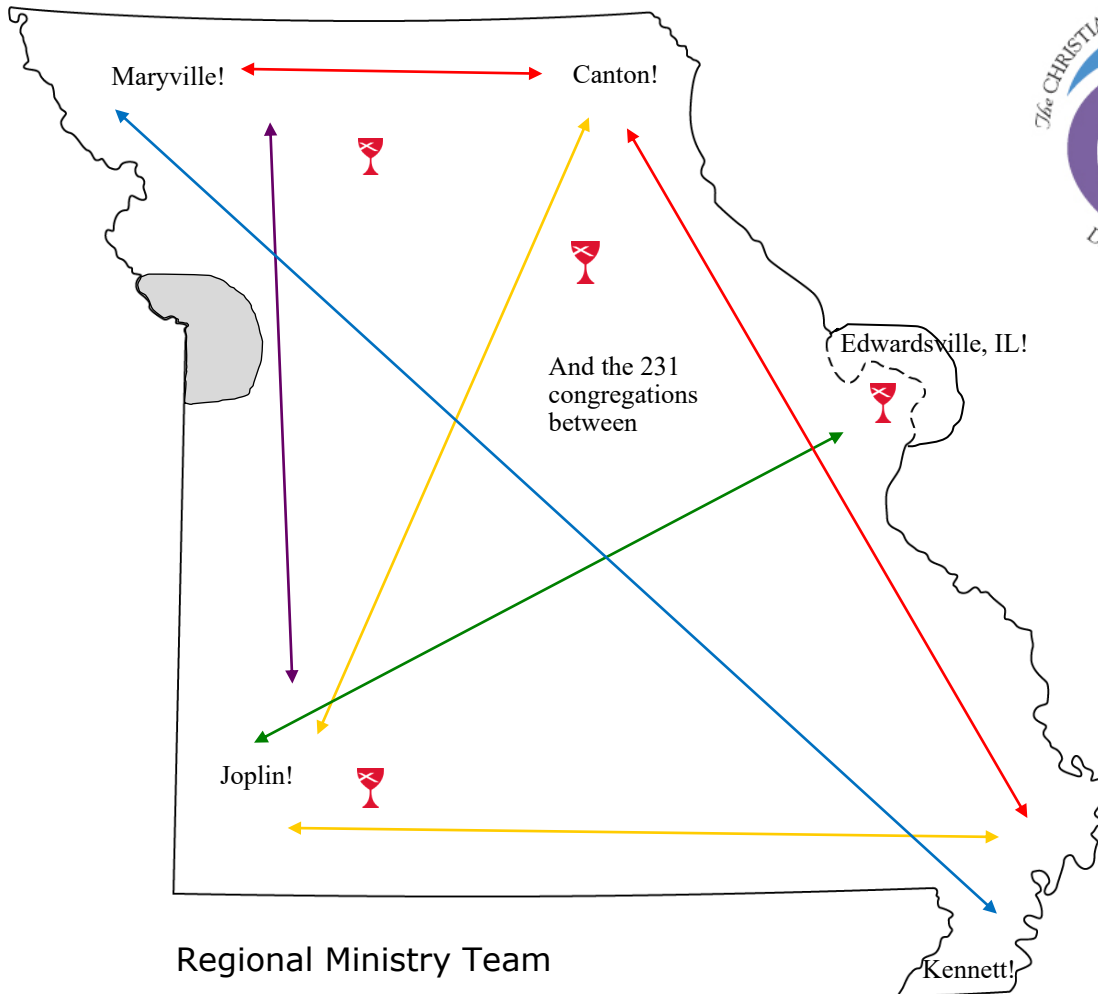
This is where you come in to make us “Better Together”. Through clergy clusters, congregational meetings, informal gatherings, and phone contact, please give us your feedback. Help us address these three questions as we move forward with visioning. More details will be coming out in the Update Newsletter. If you do not receive the Update Newsletter, please subscribe using this link: <http://www.mid-americadisciples.org/newsletter-signup>

I hope to hear from you as we prayerfully enter a covenant which continues to make us “Better Together.” You can reach me at dksuper1@yahoo.com.

Dan Kercher,
Chair Visioning 2021 Task Force.

The Christian Church of Mid-America

Within the fellowship of The Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Mid-America is a regional church body consisting of 236 congregations, 4 colleges, 3 denominational units. These Disciples are found in cities, county seat towns, small towns, small cities, big towns, and the rural countryside between. Four Co-Regional Ministers organize, provide care, and connect the wide variety of ministries in the Region to each other.



Regional Ministry Team

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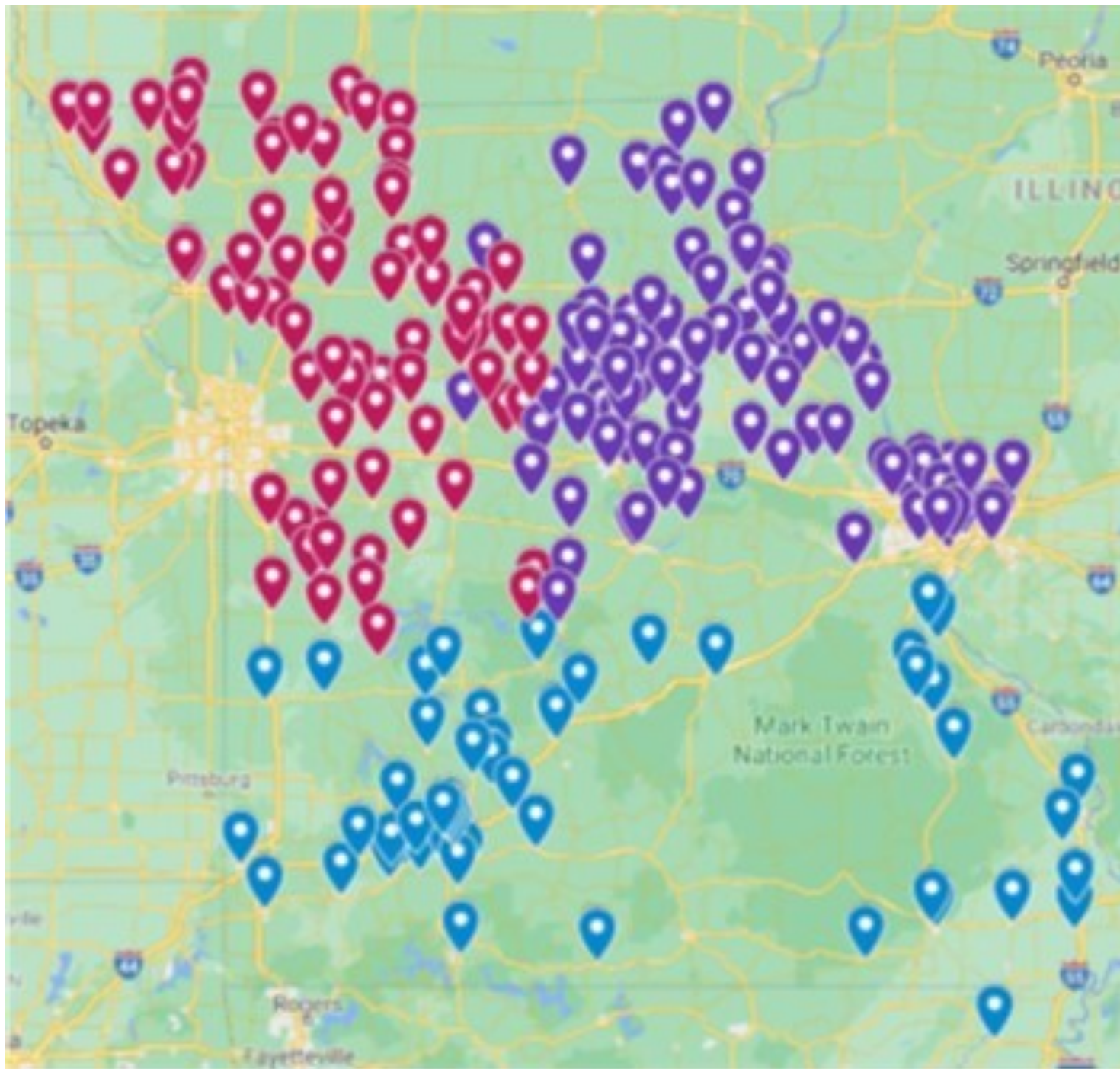
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 Commission on the Order of Ministry
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Our Mid-America Congregations



-  Congregations in the **west** part of the Region will work with Regional Minister **Ron Routledge**.
-  Congregations in the **east** part of the Region will work with Regional Minister **Paul Koch**.
-  Congregations in the **south** part of the Region will work with Transitional Regional Minister **Christine K. Chenoweth**.



*A service of communion to be shared at home.
Find a place — space to sit. Pick a view, be comfortable. Light a candle.
Gather a Chalice Hymnal if you have one.
Gather communion—any beverage and cracker will do! Be in the spirit of the Holy!*

A Service of Communion

Opening: Jimmy Spear

(the people respond by reading the bold)

You, my beloved, once an alien, are now a citizen of heaven:
once a stranger, are now brought home to the family of God.

You have owned my Lord as your Lord, my people as your people.

**Under Jesus the Messiah we are one. Mutually embraced in the everlasting arms,
I embrace you in mine: your sorrows shall be my sorrows, and your joys my joys.**

Joint debtors to the favor of God and the love of Jesus,
we shall jointly suffer with him, that we may jointly reign with him.

**Let us, then, renew our strength, remember our God,
and hold fast our boasted hope unshaken to the end.**

Alexander Campbell, 19th-century Disciples forebear

Hymn: *When You Do This Remember Me*

Adapter: David L. Edwards (1988); Author: Alexander Campbell (19th century)

Tune: LORETTO (Edwards) Chalice Hymnal #400

Meditation on the Bread: Christine K. Chenoweth

Meditation on the Cup: Paul Koch

Prayer of Thanksgiving: Ron Routledge

Assembly Benediction: Regional Minister Team



Evaluation and Thanks

What did you think about this virtual/digital regional assembly?

What worked? What didn't?

If we do a virtual/digital gathering again, what would be helpful to make it a better experience?

Please remember to share your experience with our regional staff, our Regional Ministers, cluster gatherings and Board members.

If you are a VOTER at this Regional Assembly, you are reminded to vote via the email you received.

If you registered to vote, but did not receive the email ballot, please email Susan Moore at smoore@eden.edu.

Voting is open until 11:30am.

Use Dr. Ward's sermon at your church.

It will be [posted](#) after Assembly.

Thank you for joining us today.

We are Better Together for having shared with you.





