

# **Eastern Ohio & Western Reserve Association**

## Ohio Conference

## **Associations General Minister**

**Profile approved: August 30, 2017**

### **Ohio Conference and Associations**

The Ohio Conference has a full range of the UCC's diverse history within our borders. When the Congregational Christian Churches and Evangelical and Reformed Church merged in 1957, Ohio had a strong presence of both denominations within the state. The E&R church had four strong synods, while the CC church had a strong statewide organization. In order to accommodate both systems, the Ohio Conference was organized in 1963, with strength in both settings. For that reason, we operate differently from most other conferences. Ohio has five associations, with Eastern Ohio and Western Reserve being two of the five. Each association operates autonomously in terms of budget, finances, staffing and governance, and cooperatively with the other associations in the common ministries of the conference. There is a covenantal and constitutional relationship that holds the five separate organizations into a common organization, the Ohio Conference, which calls the Conference Minister and other staff, and provides for Outdoor Ministries and shared mission and ministry.

Currently there is a team representing all the Associations of the Conference developing a proposal for changes to the structure of the Conference. The goal is to have a proposed concept for a vote by the delegates to the Conference gathering in the fall of 2017.

## Associations Overview

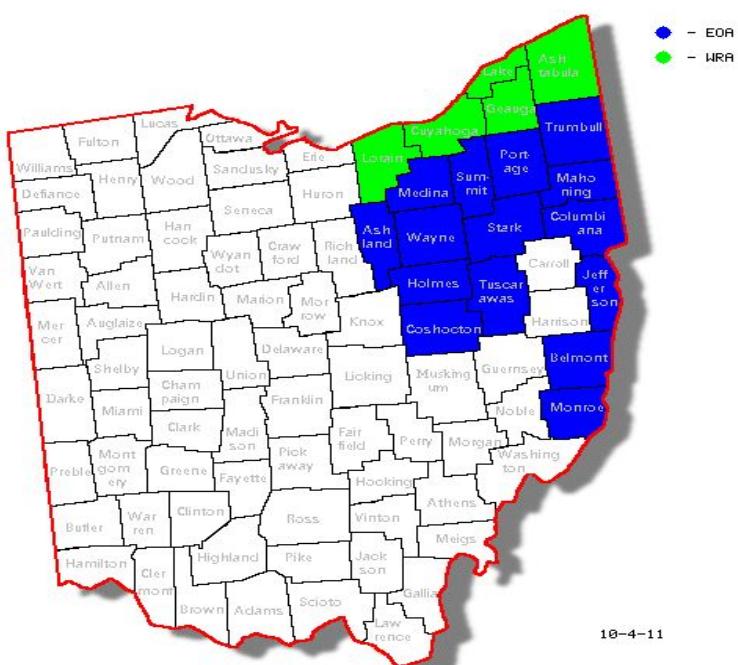
## The Eastern Ohio Association

From the beautiful rolling hills of the country's largest Amish region to the cities of Akron and Canton, the Eastern Ohio Association covers a region that is in the process of reinventing itself. Whatever you like to do, you'll find it in this diverse region: hiking and camping, boating and canoeing, shopping, dining out, enjoying museums and exploring the nooks and crannies of our rural areas. The Eastern Ohio Association is made up of 84 churches: large and small, urban, suburban and rural, well-established and new, and showing the broad spectrum of belief and practice that is the United Church of Christ.

## The Western Reserve Association

The Western Reserve Association comprises the 70 churches stretching across a five county area of Northeast Ohio. Never very far from the shores of Lake Erie, the area provides a lively urban center, quiet suburban communities and rural towns. We have three professional sports teams, excellent metro parks, major museums, world class health care, fine schools and colleges, the nation's second largest theater district, fertile farmland and a renowned orchestra. While heavily urban—including the cities of Lorain, Elyria and Cleveland—the churches of the Western Reserve span a broad spectrum. The mix of churches lends itself to a diversity of cultural traditions and new expressions—from historic African American congregations to Open and Affirming new church starts, small “emerging” congregations to large suburban complexes. Since the National Offices of the United Church of Christ are located in Cleveland, we are able to benefit from a close working relationship with all settings of the church. As we move into the future, our challenge and our fertile ground will be to support historic expressions while creating new and more collaborative ways to engage in ministry.

### Eastern Ohio & Western Reserve Associations



## **Sharing Resources**

The next years will bring changes to our Associations as well as the United Church of Christ in all of its settings. The proposed recommendations will allow us to adapt to the changing landscape while still maintaining our core values and maximizing our service to local congregations. The top priority is to continue and expand our support of local church ministry and mission, to facilitate networking of churches by geographical area, demographics or mutual ministry, and to represent our local churches in covenant with other settings of the church. Furthermore, we are committed to taking an active role in promoting peace and justice in our society, environmental responsibility, and giving a voice to those who might otherwise be silenced.

The Eastern Ohio and Western Reserve Association Councils gathered in August 2016 to collate and reflect on the listening session responses to help us discern top areas of progress, challenge and opportunity related to the shared work of our Associations.

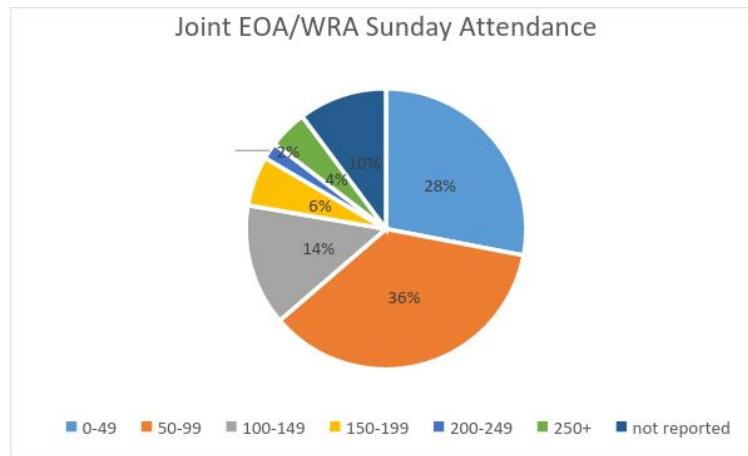
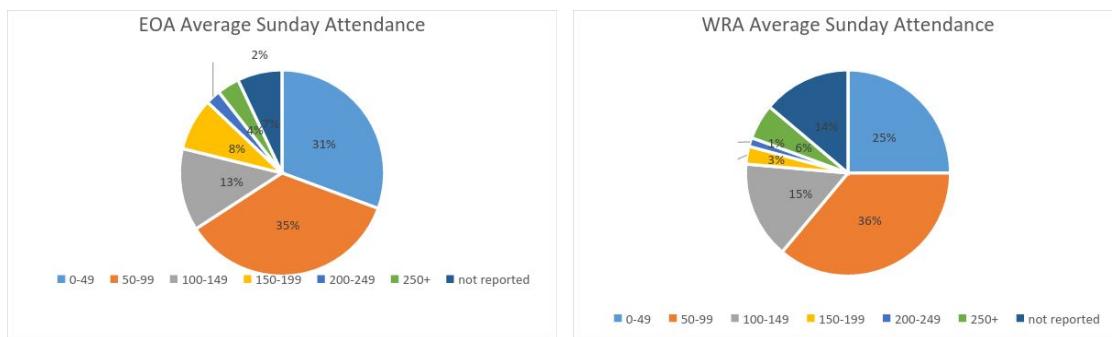
Our specific recommendations were:

1. Establishing one Association Council and one Committee on Ministry to serve both associations. Each body would determine how their work can best be accomplished.
2. Bringing the governing documents of the two Associations in line with each other to streamline their administrative and collaborative work. Engaging in conversation about stewardship of financial resources.
3. Exploring the feasibility of combining into one body.
4. Doing our best to overcome the distance between our settings through more effective use of technology, choosing centrally-located meeting places, and finding creative ways to communicate.
5. Fostering connections among people, churches and those with common interests for mission and ministry.
6. Living into our covenant with all settings of the church, being faithful stewards of the resources entrusted to us, and creating new funding streams. This includes taking part in the conversations about the future of the UCC in Ohio.
7. Making Faith Formation and Youth a priority focus to encourage the next generation of leaders.
8. Seeking in all ways to improve communication with sensitivity to those who do not use electronic communication.

## Structure of the Associations

The joint Association Council provides oversight and direction for the ministry of the Eastern Ohio and Western Reserve Associations. At the 2016 Annual Meeting, our two associations voted to be served by one combined council. At present, working groups from the council are reviewing our governing documents, processes, and structure to complete the transition from the full membership, including duplicative officers, of the former councils to one smaller body.

There are 84 churches in the Eastern Ohio Association and 70 in the Western Reserve Association.



## **Job Summary**

The Associations General Minister (AGM) provides the executive and visionary leadership for the Western Reserve (WRA) and Eastern Ohio Associations (EOA) of the Ohio Conference, United Church of Christ (UCC). The AGM will enhance congregational vitality and mission through a ministry of presence, staff development and oversight, encouraging the networking, collaboration and cooperation of congregations and leadership.

### **Essential Functions**

- Articulate, implement and embody a vision for how the Associations can empower local congregations for vital, effective mission and ministry.
- Define, recruit, implement and oversee staff structure, in consultation and collaboration with Associations' leadership.

### **Additional Essential Functions**

- Maintain Administrative accountability for the operations of the WRA and EOA, as defined in their constitutions and bylaws.
- Develop and direct a process for fostering and inspiring stewardship growth of/in the Associations.
- Provide for the needs of local congregations and leadership in such areas as programming, conflict resolution and pastoral care through appropriate staffing and a peer networking approach.
- Facilitate and oversee ministerial authorization, search and call.
- Encourage and support leadership development and the pursuit of excellence in all ministry opportunities.
- Honor and promote the commitment of the UCC to justice, including peace, diversity and extravagant welcome within and among our congregations.
- Encourage faith formation, youth, young adult and family ministries in our local congregations and in the association settings.
- Encourage development of new church starts and renewal of existing congregations.
- Foster communication links between congregations and other settings of the Church.

### **Other Responsibilities**

- Participate in leadership of Associations Councils, Departments, Committees and called meetings.

- Serve as a conduit for resources among churches and in wider denominational and ecumenical settings.
- Meet regularly with Ohio Conference staff and work collaboratively as part of the Ohio Conference team.

### **Minimum Qualifications**

- Authorized minister with good standing in the UCC
- Demonstrated leadership skills and mature judgment.
- Experience with search and call and authorization process in the UCC.

### **Core Competencies**

- Visionary leadership
- Adaptive (transformational) problem solving skills
- Team building skills
- Collaborative leadership
- Theological and scriptural grounding
- Entrepreneurial spirit and evangelical passion
- Mission ownership – understands what it means to be church in this time and place: UCC ethos and linkages (Local, Association, Conference and National)
- Ecumenical mindedness
- Spiritual maturity
- Interpersonal sensitivities and conflict management skills
- Practice and promote self-care

**Compensation: Total package: Up to \$120,868**

- o salary & housing
- o Social Security offset and Annuity
- o family health and dental insurance
- o vision insurance is available
- o life and disability insurance
- o four weeks of vacation per year
- o two weeks continuing education per year
- o sabbatical available after 5 years

**Expenses:**

- travel
- moving cost
- continuing education
- professional expense

## How to Apply

You've read all about the position of Associations General Minister for the Eastern Ohio and Western Reserve Associations. Now we want to get to know you! Here's what we need:

1. Your Profile
2. Your answers to the following 3 questions. Address question **a** in a 5-7 minute video, and questions **b** and **c** in essays no longer than one typed page each.
  - a. Share an experience when you found common ground with someone whose theological perspective was at odds with yours. (video of 5-7 minutes)
  - b. Diverse perspectives (theological, political, cultural) are present within our local churches and the associations. How would you minister to this diverse community?
  - c. How do you envision the UCC as a voice in the universal church?

### **Send Correspondence to:**

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