



## Staffing Update Report

The Regional Board met on March 26 and finalized updated staffing configurations following the retirement of Rev. Ron Routledge as co-regional minister. They have spent the past three months in prayerful discernment, listening to staff, pastors, and congregations, and looking at finances and mission contributions carefully with our regional treasurer. We are thankful for the Board's dedication, discernment and vision. We are excited to share this information with you. We thank the board and our entire Regional Minister Team (RMT) for their dedication to our ongoing vital work.

Associate Regional Minister (ARM) David Woodard was approved by a special committee of Regional Commission on the Order of Ministry (RCOM) to become our full RMT coordinator for RCOM. This includes the full complement of hours and compensation that his predecessor had. David is dedicating 30 hours per week to region for RCOM and shepherding our St. Louis and Southeast congregations, agencies, and pastors. Rev. Woodard is also pastor of Affton Christian Church in St. Louis.

ARM Jennifer Long, who had been contracted in a limited capacity for Disciples Women, has been given a full contract for 15 hours a week. Continuing with Disciples Women, her contributions will expand with the Woman-to-Woman network, adding oversight of the Rural Ministry Network and shepherding pastors and congregations covering three clergy cluster groups in west central Missouri. Rev. Long is also pastor of Faith Christian Church in Buffalo.

Rev. Angela Williams, who was hired through an open search process last year to be our region's ARPRJM coordinator has been elevated to becoming Associate Regional Minister, at 15 hours a week. She will continue guiding ARPRJM oversight and add being the direct RMT partner with our African American Convocation leaders Paula Holliday and LeWanda Jackson. She will shepherd the clusters, pastors, and congregations formerly served by Regional Minister Paul Koch in the Northeast. Rev. Williams is pastor of Willow Street Christian Church in Hannibal and lives in Columbia.

Rev. Zane Wharton continues as our region's Outdoor Ministries, Youth, Camps and Conferences Coordinator. He will expand his ministry to including "Super Cluster" or pocket regional events, seminars and programs across the region based on interests and needs. Please reach out to him if you have any ideas for your area.

Sara Bright continues as our Camps Registrar and will expand her ministry to become the NEOLA Camps Administrator.

Jan Aerie continues as our Older Adult Ministries Coordinator. As this ministry is expanding exponentially across our wider church, we look forward to seeing Jan work in greater collaboration with General Ministries and other regions.

Susan Moore and Rebekah Routledge are owed a debt of gratitude for being steadfast anchors in their respective ministries. Each also feels an increase of workload in our transition. With Rev. Dr. Phil Snider stepping down as ARM for the Springfield area, Rebekah has graciously agreed to help her fellow pastors, people, and congregations in the southwest portion of our region be put in touch with the RM and ARMs for help, in addition to the great care she provides personally.

The ARM position that serves Springfield and the southwest is presently vacant. The Board has retained in the budget monies to hire a person in this capacity fully as before. An open hiring process will begin, in conjunction with a new relationship endeavor that is moving forward as well. Southwest congregations are asked to contact Regional Minister Paul Koch if you have any needs. We appreciate your patience in this transition!!! We thank Rebekah, Rev. Jennifer Long, and Rev. Tommy Goode who are helping in particular ways during this interim period.

Lastly, Regional Minister Paul Koch will continue as Regional Minister and President in a sole capacity. In his tenth year of service, he has seen the RMT go from four to three to two to one regional ministers. A decade of transition, but valuable in bringing us to this present reality of leadership that mirrors every other region in our denomination. As Paul actually lives just 25 miles from where Ron Routledge lives, he will concentrate on building relationships and serving congregations in the Northwest particularly. He will also add to his responsibilities working with the New Church Start team, Administration, Budget and Personnel. His present portfolio responsibilities of Leadership

Development, Disciples Men, Ecumenical Relations continue. He will continue serving the wider denomination as sitting on the College of Regional Ministers (elders of the church), the CRM executive team as Secretary, chair of the Clergy Misconduct Task Force, executive team of DHM's Disciples Men, and other assigned roles.

We thank the Mid-America Region for your partnership, patience, and perspectives as we grow into our new calling. The past ten years have been remarkable and necessary for us to live into our full identity since restructuring in 2015. We thank those who served ably in regional capacities during this time especially those no longer serving: Penny Ross-Corona, Mike Weinman, Bill Rose-Heim, Kris Tenny-Brittian, Larry Colvin, Ron Routledge, Katrina Palin, Christine Chenoweth, Katherine Kinnamon, and Phil Snider.

Rev. Dr. Paul Koch  
Regional Minister & President  
Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) of Mid-America  
April 2, 2025