

**2023
ANNUAL MEETING REPORTS**



ANNUAL MEETING

**SOUTHWEST WISCONSIN ASSOCIATION
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

**Saturday, May 6, 2023
First Congregational United Church of Christ
54 S. Jackson Street
Janesville, WI 53548-3827
9:00am – 1:00pm**

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2023 Annual Meeting Agenda

Schedule

8:00 Registration

- Labyrinth Open for walkers
- Coffee/Tea and light refreshments
- SWA Art Gallery Open for Viewing

Location

Open Atrium Glass Doors Entry
Spiritual Arts Center, 2nd Floor
Fireside Room, 1st Floor
Spiritual Arts Center, 2nd Floor

9:00 Opening Music and Prayer

Prayer Rev. Rachel Bauman
Music will be provided by Janesville UCC

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9:15 Business Meeting

- Declaration of Quorum
- Approve minutes from 2022 SWA Annual meeting
- Present 2024 SWA Budget
- Nominations
- Adjourn meeting
- Installation of all elected

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9:45 Break

10:00- Worship Service Keynote Speaker

Sermon/Message "The Best Words, In the Best Order"
Dr. Merideth Hite Estevez

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10:50 Break

11:00 Workshop Session One

- **Collaborative Art Project**
Facilitator Eldonna Hazen, First Congregational UCC Madison
- **Creative Use of Arts in Worship**
*Facilitators Tanya Sadagopan, Janesville UCC
& Zayna Hart Thomley, Middleton Community Church*
- **"Creativity, Spirituality, and Belonging"**
Facilitator Dr. Merideth Hite Estevez

Seekers Room, Education Wing

Sanctuary

Spiritual Arts Center, 2nd Floor

11: 50 Break

12: 00 Workshop Session Two *See session listings above*

12:50 Break

1:00 A Communion Meal together (lunch)

Blessing new ACM Rev. Rachel Bauman

Spiritual Arts Center

2:00 Meeting ends

During Breaks and Before and After Our Meeting

- Bathrooms Open
- Labyrinth Open for walkers
- Coffee/Tea and light refreshments
- SWA Art Gallery Open for Viewing

Up the Steps/Elevator Education Wing
Spiritual Arts Center, 2nd Floor
Fireside Room, 1st Floor
Spiritual Arts Center, 2nd Floor

2023 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 White Book/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 participating in the electronic meeting 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 in the Zoom Q & A function, through the Chat, or by using the raised hand feature, as determined by the leaders.

History of Host Church



Janesville UCC is an Open and Affirming and Immigrant Welcoming congregation in the heart of downtown Janesville. We are a progressive, inclusive, and active church community that takes seriously our call to love extravagantly and to live our faith out loud in our communities. We are the **#LoveandJusticeChurch!**

Through inspiring worship and music, Christian education, and outreach opportunities we work to fill the spiritual lives of our people so that they are prepared and equipped to go out into the world and share that extravagant love of Christ with others. We practice this extravagant love by welcoming all into the full life and expression of our church and its leadership. We are known in Janesville for our PRIDE activities and our LGBTQIA

advocacy. Our Immigrant/Refugee Welcoming Committee is actively engaged at the local and state level supporting the urgent needs of immigrants and refugees who are relocating in our area.

We have added professional quality worship broadcasting which allows those who cannot attend and newcomers to participate in our meaningful services wherever they are. Every Sunday morning our pastor says, "Wherever you are on your spiritual journey, you are welcome here!" Now we can broadcast that inclusive message far beyond our unique blue doors. The gifts of many generous families allowed for us to renovate the oldest part of our church built in 1865 after a devastating fire took the first church structure. We created the *Spiritual Arts Center* as a place where the community can come and walk our labyrinth and see galleries of visual art, fabric displays, as well as artistic sculptures. This sacred space can be used to host special events such as weddings and receptions, as well as spiritual enrichment opportunities like meditation classes.

While our church is on the National Register of Historic places, it is the beauty of our sanctuary that people most remember. Within you will find eight two story gorgeous stained glass windows depicting scenes from the bible. Two windows installed recently were designed by our pastor featuring women of the bible—one featuring the Prophet Miriam and the second the Samaritan Woman at the Well with Jesus. The image of this Jesus is distinctively a person of color as he was a Palestinian Jew from the region of Galilee.



We are delighted to be hosting the 2023 SWA Annual Meeting of the Wisconsin United Church of Christ on May 6th. The theme of *Creativity, Art, and Spiritual Practices in Our Communities* fits well with our space and our commitment to partner with the community to deepen peoples' experiences of creativity and holy wonder.

Clergy and Church Anniversaries

2023 Clergy Anniversaries

Rev. John Jewell	60 years
Rev. Beryl Melcher	60 years
Rev. William Wineke	53 years
Rev. Timothy Kehl	50 years
Rev. Kendell Nordstrom	50 years
Rev. Jeanne Tyler	45 years
Rev. John Tyler	45 years
Rev. Carol Barth	45 years
Rev. Sue Stull Carr	40 years
Rev. Sharon Goss	35 years
Rev. Joan Sulser	35 years
Rev. Dr. David McDonald	30 years
Rev. Gail O'Neal	25 years
Rev. Leslie Schenk	15 years
Rev. Lois Rosko	15 years
Rev. Lora Whitten	15 years
Rev. Barbara Brakey	10 years
Rev. Lance Smith	10 years
Rev. Dr. Julia Burkey	10 years
Rev. Zayna Thomley	10 years
Rev. Karin Wells	5 years

2023 Church Anniversaries

First Congregational UCC of Milton	185 years
First Evangelical & Reformed UCC of Lowell	165 years
United Church of Christ of Windsor	165 years
St Paul's UCC of South Wayne	135 years
Plymouth Congregational UCC of Madison	120 years
Congregational UCC of Mineral Point	110 years
First Congregational UCC of Grand Marsh	110 years
Zwingli UCC of Paoli	110 years
Salem UCC of Verona	100 years
Lake Edge UCC of Madison	75 years
Community of Hope UCC of Madison	55 years

Report of the Associate Conference Minister

April 2023

Associate Conference Minister Report Wisconsin Conference UCC

Serving the Southwest and Burlington & Waukesha Districts of Southeast Association

Greetings siblings in Christ,

In his letter to the church in Philippi, the Apostle Paul wrote:

“Beloved, whatever is true, whatever is honorable, whatever is just, whatever is pure, whatever is pleasing, whatever is commendable, if there is any excellence and if there is anything worthy of praise, think about these things.” -Philippians 4:8

Friends, I have witnessed so much that is “commendable, excellent and praise worthy” in my first seven months serving as your Associate Conference Minister for the southern region of the Wisconsin Conference. In no particular order, here are a few highlights:

- The hope, vision, faithful dedication, hard work and resiliency of the congregations involved in Search & Call (22 churches within the Southwest and 10 churches within my districts of the Southeast are involved in various stages of searching for pastoral leadership.) The excitement and joy that comes with settled calls (five pastors have been newly called so far this year!) and subsequent installations.
- Being with you in worship, witnessing the embodied and diverse ways you love God, love each other and open to the Spirit’s movement within and among you.
- Working with and learning from the leadership teams of the Southwest and Southeast Associations. I am inspired by the wisdom, integrity and generosity of spirit I see in those who have said “yes” to serving on these teams.
- The creativity and boldness with which you are “being the church” in the world: caring for the earth, offering hospitality to refugees, providing food, clothing, shelter and advocacy for those in need.
- Learning about and connecting folks to the vast resources available within the Wisconsin Conference that support ministerial wellness and congregational vitality (e.g., The Damascus Project, Communities of Practice and Clergy Coaching networks, Clergy Retreats, Wisconsin Foundation and other Generosity Resources)
- Getting to know and accompany our Members in Discernment.
- Working with the Conference staff team. I am grateful every day for the grace it is to serve with these remarkably gifted, soulful, brave, visionary and hilarious humans.
- The many conversations I am privileged to have with you about how you are encountering the Sacred and discerning God’s call (individually and collectively) to be the church with boldness, faithfulness and love in this time and place.

There is so much more that could be added to this list! I look forward to all that is to come and all the “good ministry” we will do together. Thank you for the warm welcome you have

extended to me and the grace you have shown me during these first few months. It is an honor to serve among you.

As St. Paul writes in that same letter to the Philippians, “I thank God every time I think of you and pray with joy because of your sharing in the gospel from the first day until now.”

With gratitude and expectant hope,

Rachel Bauman

Registrar's Report

Registrar's Report

Southwest Association Annual Meeting 2023

Unless otherwise noted, the information here is a snapshot as of March 31, 2023.

Some individuals may overlap multiple categories, so double-counting is possible.

Churches	48	
Membership	7201	2021 data
<u>In Our Midst:</u>		
Churches		
Clergy (settled) serving parishes	26	
Clergy (interim) serving parishes	4	
Retired clergy (interim) serving parishes	6	
Licensed pastors serving parishes	4	
Licensed traditional MIDs serving parishes	3	
Clergy from other denominations serving parishes while seeking Privilege of Call.	2	
Persons serving parishes w/o specific authorization	3	<i>Registrar will follow-up with this category for 2023-24..</i>
Supply pastors	2	Self-identified
Campus Ministry	1	
Clergy: Unclassified	5	Self-identified
Other religious work	2	
Chaplains		
Clergy serving as chaplains	6	
MIDs serving as chaplain	1	
Others		
Health/Welfare	1	
Leave of Absence	1	
Retired	50	
Other	1	
<u>Status/Misc</u>		
Seeking/Finalizing Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing	2	
Seeking/Finalizing Privilege of Call	2	
Licensees	7	
(active)		
Kay Hallanger	Bill Whitford*	*denotes MID status
David Nerswick	Christina Schoenwetter*	
Alan Timm	Lisa Hart*	
Pat Pluss		

Members in		5
Discernment	Lisa Hart Katya Ouchakof Bill Whitford	Julie Ruegsegger Christina Schoenwetter

Transfers of Standing

To SWA	Susan Stull Carr from SE Richard Runge from NE Gayle Tucker from Chicago Metropolitan Steve Davis from SE Daniel Cooperrider from Addison Asso. (Vermont) Julia Burkey from Middlesex Asso. (Southern New England) Joan Sulser from Pacific NW Conference (Conference as Asso.) Gale Wolf from NW
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From SWA	Karsten Snitker to NW Ohio William Kapp to IL South Conf. (acting as Asso.) Delisa Buckingham-Taylor to Living Water Asso. (Ohio NE) Micah Schlobohm to NW Sonja Ingebritsen to Philadelphia Asso. (PA SE) Janet Summers to MN Conf. (acting as Asso.) Hannah Campbell Gustafson to MN Conf. (acting as Asso.) Joylynn Graham to Southeast Conf. (acting as Asso.)
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Installations

Julia Burkey, Orchard Ridge UCC (Madison)	May 2022
Zayna Thomley, Middleton Community UCC	October 2022
Craig Jan-McMahon, Windsor UCC	February 2023

Retirements	<i>Your new Registrar could not come up with names of clergy who flat-out retired this year. Most of our “retirees” moved into new church-related work. I promise I will do better next year in defining and keeping track of who is going where.</i>
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Deaths	Arthur W. (Chris) Christofersen 10/24/2022
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Respectfully submitted,
 Gretchen Viney, [Rookie] Registrar

Moderator's Report

This past year has been one of transition. We are all coming out of the COVID era with changed situations. Many churches have offered online services and will continue with hybrid services as we all transition back to "normal". Many churches have seen changes in membership through this time. We have a new Associate Conference Minister, Rachel Bauman. She is doing a great job of stepping into this time of transition for the Southwest and Southeast Associations and the entire Conference also. The Conference office is moving from Deforest to its new home at Green Lake, Wisconsin.

Throughout the year we at the Southwest Association have been grateful for your continued support of the wider church activities. Please read the report from our Division of Social Concerns for information on how some of the funds have been used. Their only wish is that they had more requests they could help with.

Reading through the Shalom newsletter it is obvious that the activities of our churches have been busy. "The Lord is still speaking" as evident with all the activity. The church camps are looking forward to opening up in full this summer and providing for all that enjoy the outdoors.

We have seen some changes on the Southwest committees. The committee on Clergy and Congregational Support was not seeing any activity so has been disbanded. We are appreciative of their support these last years.

We all look forward to the coming year of the new "normal" and all the opportunities it will present.

Peace,

David Mickle

Treasurer's Report for Calendar Year 2022

We are extremely grateful for the faithful and generous support of our churches. We received \$44,719 from our churches in 2022; more than 98% of our "ask." 46 of our 48 churches contributed. Thank you! Our churches' generosity is particularly moving in these challenging times.

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.

More young people attended camp in 2022 than in 2021, so our support for camp increased. This was a happy result.

Administrative costs were less than the budget amount in 2022.

We finished the year with a healthy level of assets, which will allow us to support good works again in 2023.

You will see that the proposed budget for 2024 is similar to 2022's and 2023's.

Respectfully submitted,

Donald A. Taft, Treasurer

2022 Financial Reports

Southwest Wisconsin Association Simplified 2022 Income Statement			Better or (Worse) Than Budget
	2022 Actual	2022 Budget	
Revenue			
Dues	\$ 44,719	\$ 47,112	\$ (2,393)
Association Meeting	-	1,200	(1,200)
Other	-	65	(65)
Total Revenue	44,719	48,377	(3,658)
Mission Spending			
Social Concerns Grants	13,100	13,000	(100)
Local Church Ministry	3,050	11,250	8,200
Church and Ministry	2,264	6,000	3,736
Wider Church Ministry			
General	-	1,100	1,100
General Synod Delegates	-	250	250
Bethlehem Partnership	-	250	250
UEK Partnership	-	250	250
Subtotal: Wider Church Ministry	-	1,850	1,850
Annual Meeting Expense	300	1,000	700
Subtotal, Mission Spending	18,714	33,100	14,386
Administrative Costs			
Common Services	9,490	9,815	325
Legal Expense	837	1,000	163
Salary & FICA	4,210	5,064	854
Other Administration	220	50	(170)
Subtotal: Administration Costs	14,757	15,929	1,172
Total Expenses	33,471	49,029	15,558
Net Surplus or (Deficit) (also called Revenue-Expenses)	11,248	(652)	11,900

Southwest Association
Balance Sheet 31 December 2022

Assets

Association Portion of Conference Checking Account	\$ 52,676
Total Assets	52,676

Restricted Funds

General Synod Fund	400
Lay Academy Fund	200
Camp Scholarships	436
Youth Fund	1,402
UEK Partnership Fund	3,054
Total Restricted Funds	5,492

Unrestricted Funds	\$ 47,184
(also called Southwest Association Operating Fund)	

Total Liabilities & Funds	\$ 52,676
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Proposed 2024 Budget

SWA 2024 Proposed Budget	2022 Approved		2023 Approved		2024 Proposed	
	Budget	Notes	Budget	Notes	Budget	Notes
<u>Revenue</u>		7,852 mem-		7,616 mem-		7,039 mem-
Dues	47,112	bers @\$6	45,696	bers @\$6	42,234	bers @\$6
Annual Meeting Revenue	1,200		1,200		1,000	
Miscellaneous Revenue	65		65		65	
Total Revenue	48,377		46,961		43,299	
<u>Expenses</u>						
<u>Mission Spending</u>						
Social Concerns Grant Budget	13,000		13,000		13,000	
Local Church Ministry Scholarships						
Youth	250		250		167	
Camp	11,000		10,000		6,667	
Subtotal: Local Church Ministry	11,250		10,250		6,833	
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	1,100		650			
General Synod Delegates	250		250		500	

Bethlehem Partnership	250		250			
UEK Partnership	250		250			
Subtotal: Wider Church Ministry	1,850		1,400		500	
Annual Meeting Expense	1,000		1,000		2,250	
Subtotal: Mission Spending	33,100		31,650		28,583	
<u>Administration Costs</u>		7,852 mem-		7,616 mem-		down 3%
Common Services	9,815	bers @\$1.25	9,520	bers @\$1.25	9,234	@\$1.25
Legal Expense	1,000	Note B	900			
Salary & FICA	5,064	2% raise	5,165	2% raise	5,535	5% raise
Executive Committee						
Other Administration	50		50		50	
Subtotal: Administration Costs	15,929		15,635		14,819	
Total Expenses	49,029		47,285		43,403	
<u>Net Surplus or (Deficit)</u>	(652)		(324)		(104)	
filename = Budget3yearsincl2024						

Division on Church and Ministry Report

This year it feels as if the DCM has taken halting steps toward a “new normal” in the wake of the Covid-19 pandemic. In May of 2022 we held our first hybrid (in-person and Zoom) meeting in over 2 years. We continued to have hybrid meetings through the summer and fall, but then went to all Zoom for the winter. We are back to hybrid meetings this spring. Through it all, we remained committed to doing the work of support and oversight for Authorized Ministers, Members in Discernment and Local Congregations in the Southwest Association. Our goal is to foster both clergy and congregational health so that God’s love and justice can continue to grow in our communities and beyond.

Through the spring and summer of 2022, Bridge Associate Conference Minister Rev. Ted Drewsen continued to provide excellent staff support for the DCM as the settled ACM position remained open longer than expected. In September we gratefully welcomed Rev. Rachel Bauman as our new ACM. Both Ted and Rachel have provided invaluable wisdom and guidance as we negotiate the increasingly complex responsibilities of the DCM.

The Southwest Association celebrated the following installations: Rev. Julia Burkey at Orchard Ridge UCC on May 22, 2022; Rev. Zayna Thomley at Middleton Community UCC on October 9, 2022; Rev. Craig Jan-McMahon at Windsor UCC on February 19, 2023. As of this writing, we have installations scheduled for Rev. Lance Lackore at First Congregational UCC in Lake Mills on April 23, 2023 and Rev. Sara Rabe at First Congregational UCC in Fort Atkinson on April 30, 2023.

The DCM supported licensed ministers for 10 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 5 Members in Discernment (and an interview scheduled with one additional person seeking MID status) and we are working closely with the new 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 2 pastors who are seeking “Privilege of Call”, which means they have begun a process of moving their standing from another denomination to the UCC. We also support 2 pastors 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 have also had several retirements and transitions among Southwest Association clergy in the past year. The DCM continues to conduct exit interviews and to support our clergy as they make vocational changes.

We supported St. Stephen’s UCC – Juneau as it prepared to close after many decades of faithful service. As of this writing, the final worship service is scheduled for March 26, 2023.

And finally, the Southwest Association partnered with the Southeast Association to offer a Vocational Support Retreat for clergy at Daycholah Center in February.

It has been a privilege to work with DCM members, with co-chair Rev. Eldonna Hazen, and with our ACMs and other conference staff as 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 Concerns Division Report - 2022

Thanks to the generosity of our association congregations, the following churches and ministries received grants in 2022.

Prison Ministry/ Restorative Justice Project (First Congregational UCC, Madison): \$3000

Community Cafe-(Barneveld UCC): \$1000

Worker Justice Wisconsin, Solidarity Fund- support for striking workers & their families (Madison Christian Community): \$1000

Helping immigration and asylum seekers find emergency housing, apply for DACA renewal and passports for children born in US in partnership with the Immigration Affairs Office, Dane County Department of Human Services, working closely with the Dane Sanctuary Coalition (Plymouth UCC, Madison): \$2500

Alliance @4200 (Lake Edge UCC): \$2000

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

Regular readers of the annual report will note that the Social Concerns division has encountered a number of changes in the wake of the pandemic. First, we give thanks for the dedication of Rev. Carolyn Kennedy who departs the team for a new vocation, teaching English in Peru. Rev. Jessica Taft will serve as the representative to the SWA Board of Directors, and as convener for the division in 2023. A second, and more concerning change is a 3-year trend of diminishing applications. The committee's response to this has been two-fold: we are looking to improve communication with SWA congregations in 2023, to make sure the availability of these funds is widely known and accessed. The second has been to loosen our restrictions in terms of amounts given, and opening up the consideration of grant requests from congregations regardless of whether they received grant assistance in the previous year. In doing so, our commitment has been to get the money out to ministries that are making a difference in the lives of our communities now.

2022 UEK German Partnership Report

The UEK/UCC Partnership has been a part of the Southwest Association and Wisconsin Conference UCC life for 37 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 over these last couple of years. There had been hope for a possible youth trip to Germany, but this has not developed because of continued concern with the virus and other current world events. Additionally, the SWA's UEK Working Group has lost its enthusiastic leader, as Rev. Bill Kapp has accepted a new call in Illinois, and only a few committee members remain. Therefore, this currently is an inactive working group with no future plans. If you have an interest in participating in this group, please be in touch with Rev. Bob Mutton at 608.834.8992.

Bethlehem Partnership 2022-2023

The Bethlehem Partnership Committee maintains the goals of:

- *supporting the life and ministries Diyar Consortium through prayer and financial contributions
- *building relationships between UCC folk in Wisconsin and people in Bethlehem
- *inviting people to “come and see” in trips to the Holy Land, seeking to deepen relationships and understanding
- *increasing awareness of the humanitarian and political issues involved in the Israeli/Palestinian conflict
- *strengthening our faith as we live out our commitment to be disciples of Jesus Christ in the land of his birth.

The Bethlehem Partnership is active through the work of Bright Stars of Bethlehem. This is the US fund raising arm for Dar Al-Kalima University of Arts and Culture in Bethlehem.

Daily news from Palestine now reaches a wider U.S. audience, but sadly, the news is distressing as Israel expands settlements, increases its presence in the West Bank and Gaza, and tightens restrictions. Yet Dar Al-Kalima University of Arts and Culture, under the leadership and vision of the president, Rev. Dr. Mitri Raheb, continues to provide hope through higher education for Palestinians in the West Bank and Gaza.

Throughout the year, Bright Stars held on-line informational workshops with Rev Mitri Raheb, highlighting the work of Dar Al-Kalima students. In June, The Partnership and Bright Stars of Bethlehem sponsored his most recent book tour, THE POLITICS OF PERSECUTION, Middle Eastern Christians in an Age of Empire. The tour included events in Milwaukee and Madison, with attendance of over 90 people, many from UCC churches. All of these opportunities were advertised through the association and conference newsletters.

A fall national virtual Gala event called “Recipe for Hope” featured Rev. Mitri Raheb and culinary students. The national event raised awareness and funds for the college.

Since the pandemic, there have been no Partnership trips to Bethlehem, but the Bright Stars of Bethlehem website is now offering trips and will be advertised at the conference and association levels.

On a sad note, Ted Peterson, one of the original members of the Bethlehem Partnership Committee passed away February 18. He spent many of his later years studying the issues and sharing information. He was able to visit Bethlehem in 2005.

Respectfully submitted,

Nancy Baumgardner

Minutes of the 2022 Annual Meeting

Minutes of the 2022 Annual Meeting of the Southwest Association of the Wisconsin Conference UCC

Held via Zoom, Saturday, April 30, 2022

Ann Beaty opened the meeting with welcome to all at 9:00 AM. She noted that with the inclement weather, there would be a message on the First Congregational UCC FaceBook page if the power goes out. She reviewed the zoom protocols for a webinar.

After review of attendance, a Quorum was declared and meeting called to order at 9:07 AM. The agenda was approved via unanimous consent.

Franz Rigert led us in worship with music by Kelly and Steve Braumen of Zwingli UCC. Franz reminded us of the development of the idea of a Beloved Community, which we are now adopting to describe our UCC church communities in Wisconsin. Understanding ourselves as beloved of God as Jesus was, and the disciples and early church were. We are a covenant community of faith and around issues of justice. In this liminal time, we are called to listen to God's new word that, through the Holy Spirit, will lead the church forward.

Our meeting focus comes from the Supportive Ministries Team of the Conference. Adopt meeting procedures.

"A Quorum for an Association meeting shall be one-third of the ministerial members and one-third of churches as represented by lay delegates." This line from the Procedures is in conflict with the Constitution which says:

- 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.

Adjust written document to say one quarter of ministers and one third of churches in accord with the Constitution.

Procedures adopted without further dissent.

Financial reports: The Executive Committee moves approval of budget as proposed.

54 yes, 0 no, 0 abstentions

Nominations

Thanks to those who are going off boards and committees. Their service is well appreciated.

Bios of nominees are in the White book. The list of nominations was reviewed. The

Executive Committee offers a motion to accept unanimously. Any questions or concerns?

No questions. Unanimous approval.

An affirmation of service liturgy followed, installing all elected to their positions.

Ann Beaty led a prayer and followed with instructions for breakout sessions.

Sessions to begin at 11am -

The meeting regathered at 11:45 am.

ACM Lorraine Cenicerros closed with a reflection of hopeful words and prayer.

Meeting was adjourned at 11:55am.

Great thanks to all who designed, led, and supported this meeting!

Respectfully submitted,

Marlea Gilbert, Association Secretary

2023 Nominations Report

(Please see the next page for brief descriptions of 1st term nominated people.)

2023 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 (2023-2024) **David Mickle**, Plymouth UCC/Madison

Vice Moderator (2023-2024) **Rev. Tanya Sadagopan**, First Congregational UCC/Janesville

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

Rev. Lori Powell, 3rd term, Mt. Vernon Zwingli UCC/Verona

Janet Pugh, 3rd term, First Congregational United Church of Christ/Madison

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

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

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, Olivet Congregational UCC/Columbus

Rev. Eldonna Hazen, 2nd term, First Congregational UCC/Madison

Rev. Laura Kolden, 3rd term, First United Church of Christ/Belleville

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

Division on Social Concerns

Rev. Lex Liberatore, 3rd term, Lake Edge UCC/Madison

Carol Martell, 2nd term, Plymouth UCC/Madison

Rev. Jerrica Taft, 3rd term, First Congregational UCC/Madison

Ken Warren, 2nd term, Community of Hope UCC/Madison

Southwest Association General Synod Delegates

Already elected by the Conference)

Rev. Sonny Graves (2023)

Rev. Zayna Thomley, (2023)

Rev. Tanya Sadagopan, (2023)

Laura Stalder (2023)

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

Paul Karch, First Congregational UCC/Madison (2023)

Nandini Sadagopan, First Congregational UCC/Janesville (2023 & 2025)

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

Kenneth Forbeck, First Congregational UCC/Janesville (2023 & 2025)

2 ALTERNATES for 2023 & 2025

Board of Directors/SWA Representatives

Jacy Boldebuck, 2nd term, Memorial UCC/Fitchburg

Gayle Tucker, Plymouth Congregational UCC/Madison

George Adams, 1st term, Salem United Church of Christ/Verona

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

SW Association Nominations 2023

Board of Directors: Rev. Gayle Tucker

Rev. Tucker is an ordained pastor and teacher in the United Church of Christ, with ministerial standing in the SW WI Association of the UCC. She served as Pastor of the Congregational Church of Jefferson Park UCC, in Chicago from February 2010 to April 2021, and as Sabbatical Supply Pastor at Plymouth UCC in Madison during the summers of 2021 and 2022. She has an MDiv from United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities and an BA in Music Education from Luther College. She is happy to be home in southern Wisconsin with her three dogs.

Executive Committee, Member-at-Large: Kay Hallanger

Kay Hallanger has been a member of First Congregational UCC in Baraboo since 1999. She has served on Diaconate, Christian Education Board, and Nominations Committee. After completing four years of Lay Academy she began offering adult faith formation programs and a summer Faith and Film series. She completed three years of graduate courses in theology at Lakeland College. After several years of pulpit supply to Trinity UCC in Portage, she was called and licensed to serve as pastor and later called to also serve Trinity UCC in Endeavor. She is active with Habitat for Humanity for Wisconsin River Area. Her daughter, Joanna, is a graduate student in Public Health at UW-Madison.

Executive Committee, Member-at-Large: Rev. Bev Davis

Rev. Bev Davis is an avid “observer of life,” a graduate of McCormick Theological Seminary and an ordained pastor in the United Church of Christ. Bev has served a small UCC congregation in North Central Wisconsin and served as a hospice chaplain in Milwaukee and Madison. Most recently Bev was serving as Interim Pastor to Peace UCC Brillion and First Congregational UCC De Pere, Wisconsin. An author of a series of “children’s books for all ages,” which address bullying and marginalization as we journey through the life of “Great Gray,” an Indian elephant, born a little less than perfect. Bevdavisauthor.com In addition, Davis has been developing a worship plan entitled, “The Power of Parables.” This interactive program is tailored to the Alzheimer’s/Dementia community, Wisconsin Conference facilities and church communities. As a parish intern, Bev designed a program entitled, “Consider the Lilies,” a church wide study of plants, gardens and flowers in the Bible. This fruitful program culminates in the planning and planting a meaningful Memory Garden. Bev’s Creation Station is also available to congregations that want to CREATE! A former interior designer, Bev is a true believer in the importance involving the senses in a worship and everyday life. “Creators Must Create”

2021 Eleven-Year Reports – Southwest Association and Wisconsin Conference



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST ELEVEN YEAR CONFERENCE PROFILE BASED ON DATA REPORTED IN UCC YEARBOOKS

Conference: Wisconsin

Association: Southwest

YEAR	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	CONFIRMATION	CONFESSION	TRANSFER OR REAFFIRM	DEATHS OR TRANS OUT	OTHER LOSSES	NET MEMBS ADDS-REMOVED
2011	10403	3799	2042	140	52	232	298	308	-182
2012	10122	3843	2056	115	77	177	247	362	-240
2013	9905	3696	1900	144	45	189	251	367	-240
2014	9405	3638	2266	86	31	133	237	461	-448
2015	8978	3298	2207	100	13	136	219	428	-398
2016	8604	3172	2172	101	35	143	234	381	-336
2017	8327	3126	2196	117	48	163	240	356	-268
2018	8070	2890	1954	95	46	118	237	278	-256
2019	7851	2828	1715	82	13	138	192	274	-233
2020	7584	2415	1488	85	12	72	200	46	-77
2021	7201	1655	1189	44	22	43	210	261	-352

YEAR	CURRENT EXPENSES	CAPITAL PAYMENTS	BASIC SUPPORT	TOT OTHER UCC GIVING	TOTAL OCWM	OTHER GIFTS	WIDER MISSION	BASIC SUPPLY CURR LOCAL	TOTAL EXPEND	PLEDGES AND OFFERINGS
2011	\$7,112,798	\$1,514,489	\$450,007	\$138,434	\$688,441	\$295,998	\$884,439	6.33	\$9,511,726	\$6,676,730
2012	\$7,022,553	\$1,339,699	\$454,312	\$137,999	\$592,311	\$236,570	\$828,881	6.47	\$9,191,133	\$6,724,801
2013	\$7,123,122	\$947,758	\$412,467	\$129,753	\$542,220	\$327,233	\$869,463	5.79	\$8,940,333	\$6,236,869
2014	\$6,594,465	\$943,080	\$408,238	\$230,321	\$638,559	\$341,637	\$980,196	6.19	\$8,517,741	\$5,415,922
2015	\$7,042,423	\$594,980	\$416,149	\$205,814	\$621,963	\$215,438	\$837,401	5.91	\$8,474,804	\$5,607,697
2016	\$7,178,184	\$383,335	\$400,568	\$310,517	\$711,175	\$252,222	\$963,397	5.58	\$8,524,916	\$5,650,162
2017	\$7,327,134	\$400,720	\$394,332	\$265,457	\$659,789	\$316,614	\$976,403	5.38	\$8,303,537	\$5,833,036
2018	\$7,110,766	\$387,181	\$387,610	\$246,864	\$634,474	\$343,717	\$978,191	5.45	\$8,088,957	\$5,826,328
2019	\$7,615,397	\$465,498	\$387,568	\$199,941	\$687,499	\$234,478	\$821,977	5.09	\$8,437,374	\$5,930,139
2020	\$7,206,715	\$620,690	\$358,711	\$152,861	\$511,572	\$290,598	\$802,170	4.98	\$8,008,865	\$5,967,866
2021	\$6,913,162	\$345,585	\$351,190	\$132,745	\$483,935	\$324,631	\$808,566	5.08	\$7,721,728	\$5,542,943

% CHANGE	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	TOTAL ADDITIONS	TOTAL REMOVALS	CURR LOCAL EXPENSES	TOTAL OCWM	TOTAL EXPENDITURE
2016-2021	-16.31	-47.82	-45.26	-60.93	-23.41	-3.69	-31.95	-9.42
2011-2021	-30.78	-56.44	-41.77	-74.29	-22.28	-2.81	-17.76	-18.82

Please note: Data may not be identical to UCC Yearbook totals for every year. Schedule 1 and 2 churches are not included in these totals. Christian Education/Faith Formation refers to Church School Enrollment for all figures before 20

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
ELEVEN YEAR CONFERENCE PROFILE BASED ON DATA REPORTED IN UCC YEARBOOKS



Conference: Wisconsin

Association: (Any)

YEAR	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	CONFIRMATION	CONFESSION	TRANSFER OR REAFFIRM	DEATHS OR TRANS OUT	OTHER LOSSES	NET MEMBS ADDS-REMOVED
2011	50159	19355	10149	572	247	967	1279	1868	-1371
2012	48782	18855	10173	525	329	901	1119	1719	-1083
2013	47065	18055	10004	529	374	773	1149	2260	-1733
2014	45376	17557	10138	558	277	758	1112	2439	-1958
2015	43181	16448	9477	477	212	675	1118	2363	-2117
2016	41576	15550	9142	503	213	730	1131	1806	-1491
2017	40468	15197	9063	499	235	669	1048	1452	-1097
2018	39735	14372	8966	550	247	589	1018	947	-579
2019	38793	13713	8576	352	189	549	936	1039	-885
2020	37304	10935	7055	344	80	264	1135	852	-1299
2021	35496	8181	5495	253	113	300	993	1282	-1599

YEAR	CURRENT EXPENSES	CAPITAL PAYMENTS	BASIC SUPPORT	TOT OTHER UCC GIVING	TOTAL OCMW	OTHER GIFTS	WIDER MISSION	BASIC SUPPL% CURR LOCAL	TOTAL EXPEND	PLEDGES AND OFFERINGS
2011	\$31,160,157	\$3,577,576	\$1,799,083	\$561,158	\$2,360,241	\$1,310,453	\$3,670,694	5.77	\$38,408,427	\$25,483,025
2012	\$31,130,242	\$3,158,533	\$1,753,043	\$497,232	\$2,250,275	\$1,127,990	\$3,378,265	5.63	\$37,667,040	\$25,314,641
2013	\$31,230,930	\$3,573,183	\$1,682,299	\$506,068	\$2,188,357	\$1,313,448	\$3,501,805	5.39	\$38,305,918	\$26,743,825
2014	\$31,082,594	\$2,940,363	\$1,629,961	\$1,119,249	\$2,749,230	\$1,046,675	\$3,795,905	5.24	\$37,818,862	\$25,714,124
2015	\$31,260,224	\$3,205,758	\$1,629,045	\$1,262,372	\$2,891,417	\$1,116,528	\$4,007,945	5.21	\$38,473,927	\$25,536,793
2016	\$31,509,587	\$2,335,761	\$1,579,872	\$1,371,239	\$2,951,111	\$919,315	\$3,870,426	5.01	\$37,715,774	\$25,493,265
2017	\$31,712,356	\$4,961,576	\$1,603,028	\$961,247	\$2,564,275	\$1,295,174	\$3,859,449	5.05	\$36,571,805	\$26,220,424
2018	\$31,623,418	\$2,867,079	\$1,579,663	\$914,310	\$2,493,973	\$1,139,225	\$3,633,198	5.00	\$35,256,616	\$25,767,382
2019	\$32,531,863	\$2,190,328	\$1,567,005	\$837,075	\$2,404,080	\$1,040,933	\$3,445,013	4.82	\$35,976,876	\$25,754,971
2020	\$30,350,139	\$1,810,476	\$1,485,864	\$805,925	\$2,291,789	\$1,187,573	\$3,479,362	4.90	\$33,829,501	\$26,356,627
2021	\$30,439,336	\$2,281,062	\$1,455,747	\$742,641	\$2,209,388	\$1,160,567	\$3,369,955	4.82	\$33,809,291	\$25,133,357

% CHANGE	MEMBERS	AVG WEEKLY ATTENDANCE	CHR ED/ FAITH FORM	TOTAL ADDITIONS	TOTAL REMOVALS	TOTAL CURR LOCAL EXPENSES	TOTAL OCMW	TOTAL EXPENDITURE
2016-2021	-14.62	-47.39	-39.89	-53.25	-22.54	-3.40	-25.13	-10.36
2011-2021	-29.23	-57.73	-45.86	-61.94	-27.71	-2.31	-6.39	-11.97

Please note: Data may not be identical to UCC Yearbook totals for every year. Schedule 1 and 2 churches are not included in these totals. Christian Education/Faith Formation refers to Church School Enrollment for all figures before 20

Wisconsin Foundation UCC Annual Report



The Wisconsin Conference UCC founded the Wisconsin Foundation UCC in 2019 to strengthen the financial and fundraising capacity of congregations and the Conference. More than 20 congregations, organizations or initiatives hold \$3.5 million in the foundation; an additional \$10.5 million belongs to the Conference, associations and foundation itself. (Total assets were \$14 million at the end of 2022.) By working together in the foundation, we strengthen the United Church of Christ in Wisconsin.

Helping to Raise the Next Dollar

The Wisconsin Foundation UCC helps its partner organizations raise new contributions for their endowments. This help ranges from facilitating gifts of stock and consulting on gift opportunities to guidance on endowment-building campaigns. Over the past three years, the foundation helped raise an average of \$300,000 a year in new contributions. Although the amounts raised by any one congregation vary widely, the ability to help churches occurs because we cooperate together in the foundation.

Assisting as Churches Adapt

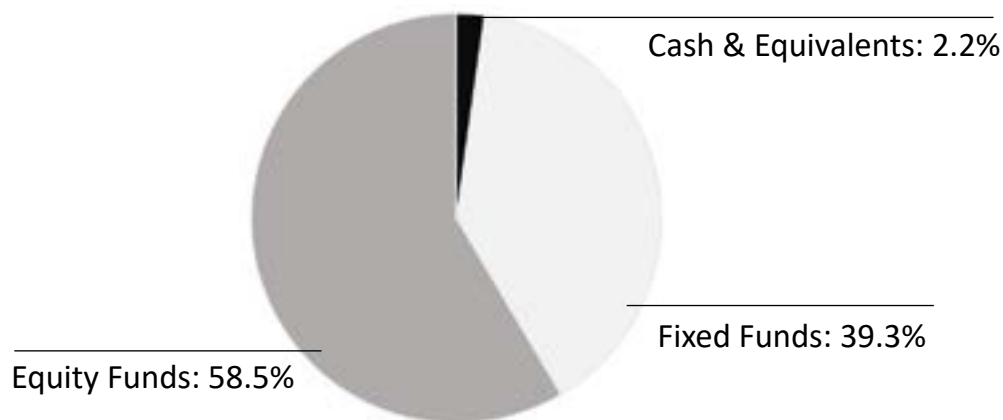
The council of Trinity UCC of Portage, below left, decided to sell their church building and relocate to rented space in the community. The move freed up financial resources for ministry. Because of the Wisconsin Foundation, Trinity could offer seller financing to the new congregation that wanted to purchase the building. The foundation tracks mortgage payments for Trinity and manages their invested funds so the council can concentrate on ministry in their community. “I was very happy with all Andrew’s work in making this transition happen,” said council President Joy Morse, referring to the Rev. Andrew Warner, director of development for the Wisconsin Conference and president of the foundation. “It was not an easy thing to do but we were all in agreement that it was time because of our declining membership. Our new location has been so accommodating and we actually have a new person coming on Sundays.”



Pastor Kay Hallanger, reflecting on what the congregation learned about generosity through the process, said: “Andrew gave us suggestions on being generous with what was in the building. As a result, we gifted our local museum as well as two state museums with church records of great historical value, some going back

to the early 20th century and in German. Our sister church in Endeavor received furniture and many other items, which they are putting to good use. We gifted Bibles and hymnals to a residential facility and another UCC church. We plan to gift a significant portion of the proceeds from the sale of our building to local community groups which could benefit. As we continue through this process, we have come to realize generosity comes in many forms. The sale of our building will benefit others in ways we had not foreseen but certainly have come to appreciate and be forever grateful.”

Investment Distribution - Dec. 31, 2022



The foundation diversifies its 10 million dollar investment pool

Diversified Investments Include Camp

The Investment Committee of the Wisconsin Foundation UCC works with our investment manager to ensure a well-diversified investment pool. In general, we aim to invest 65 percent of our funds in equity and 35 into into fixed-income assets (primarily bonds), but the investment manager can vary this by up to 10 percent in either direction based on market conditions.

Unique to the Wisconsin Foundation UCC as an investment option, our fixed income assets include a significant loan to United Church Camps, Inc. The loan reduced the interest rate paid by the camps but exceeded the 5-year average return on bonds for the foundation—a win-win.

Contact Rev. Andrew Warner to learn how your congregation can invest through the Wisconsin Foundation UCC.

awarner@wcucc.org

414-758-6233



The Rev. Jim Schlieff, executive director of UCCI, spoke to the impact of this loan on outdoor ministry. “The low-interest loan meant UCCI could restructure and reposition the organization for continued operation so that we can provide outdoor ministry opportunities to the local congregations of the Wisconsin Conference UCC and community partners,” he said. “This has been a lifeline allowing UCCI to continue operation.”

Investing Together Benefits Every Church

As more and more congregations join the foundation, the fees everyone pays continue to go down. The foundation began in 2020 with annual fees of 1.25 percent, but this declined every quarter as we grew. At the end of 2022, the investment management and administrative fee was under 1 percent. As congregations continue to move into the foundation, the cost for quality investment and fundraising support will continue to decline.

Generating Resources for Ministry

The past year proved to be a challenging investment environment as world events and concerns about inflation affected equity and bond performance. The investment manager for the foundation reduced our exposure by holding some funds in cash or cash equivalents. Overall, our investments outperformed the market as a whole.

2022 Investment Pool Performance	
Foundation Returns	-13.58%
Benchmark Returns	-16.02%

Investing for Good

The Wisconsin Foundation UCC practices faith-informed investing, meaning we seek out opportunities to make investments or use our shareholder votes to encourage corporate action aligned with our UCC values. The foundation works with an interfaith coalition of shareholders to press companies to change their internal policies and practices. On climate change, current shareholder activism involves a push for Bank of America, Citigroup, Goldman Sachs, JPMorgan Chase, Morgan Stanley and Wells Fargo to phase out the financing of new fossil fuel exploration. This is combined with bond investments in sustainable energy production. Together, these actions are part of the reason global investment in clean energy matched fossil fuel investments for the first time in 2022.

