

Unified Committee on Ministry

South Central Conference of the United Church of Christ

Summary

Over the past several years, various conversations have taken place across the life of our Associations about how best to handle the complex work of the Committee on Ministry (COM). This work of authorization and oversight is assigned to the Associations by the UCC Constitution. However, it is increasingly common throughout the UCC for the Conference to “act as the Association” in this particular work. The main reasons for this change are to build consistency, better manage the training required for the wide variety of work, and recruit volunteers more equitably.

Process

While disconnected conversations have been ongoing for some time, our intentional attention to this matter began last fall.

1. The current COM chairs met to discuss with Rev. Molly and each other the advantages and disadvantages, as well as the likely stumbling blocks involved with moving toward a unified COM.
2. Rev. Molly brought a proposal for moving to a unified COM to all four Association fall meetings (2025) and facilitated conversations asking a) What do you like about this proposal? b) What makes you nervous about this proposal? and c) What do you need to feel comfortable with us moving forward?
 - a. Several concerns were raised, including the concern about loss of personal relationships, fair representation from all Associations, future role of Associations, and several points regarding how we get from here to there.
 - b. The overwhelming primary concern about moving forward was open communication.
3. In January 2026, Rev. Molly convened a working retreat in Houston for all current members of all Association COMs. 19 people attended. Rev. Melanie Oommen from the national staff facilitated our time together.
 - a. Every concern from the Association meetings was discussed and discerned.
 - b. New concerns from those currently doing the work were discussed.
 - c. A variety of models for a unified COM were explored.