A PAUSE ON THE JOURNEY

Getting Our Bearings For the Way Forward

• Where we’ve been...
• Where we are...
• Where we’re headed...
VISION
PROPOSAL
2018
Listening
Discerning
Reframing
Recommending
To create one nimble responsive judicatory faithful in mission and responsible in stewardship.
Perceived Advantages

- Focus on collaboration and unified purpose
- Build and develop partnerships
- Reduce overlapping tasks
- More efficient administration
- Specialists thrive
- Increased time for pastoral ministry
- Build on existing gifts and strengths
Possible Shared Practice
Focus Areas

- Church and Ministry
- Social Witness
- Faith Formation
- Wider Church Relationships
- Communications and Marketing
Responsible in Stewardship

- Collaboration in budgeting
- Alignment of financial management
- Clarity about endowments
- Growth in generosity as spiritual practice
- Stewardship that supports all settings of church
Implementation

"The work involved in moving the organization onward in its evolutionary process is daunting. …includes a commitment to strengthen covenantal relationships and trust among us, as we collaborate in ministry, as we discover the joy of working together in harmony, and as we shape the possibilities of what can be, trusting the guidance of the Holy Spirit."

-2018 Vision Plan
WHAT IS EVOLVING?

Key
First
Steps
Identified
And
Engaged
Select a non-exclusionary name

“Before moving to discussions of structural organization or shared ministries that are based in shared practices, the Vision Team realizes that it must unify the vision to which the title refers. That suggests a process of selecting the single, inclusive judicatory name.” -2018 Vision Plan
Select a non-exclusionary name

- New name approved
- Articles of Incorporation Updated
- Branding completed and now being implemented
- Ongoing goal is for brand to be used in ways that build awareness of Conference-wide covenantal collaboration centered in Christ.
Responsible in Stewardship

• Collaboration in budgeting now re-engaged with re-engaged Finance Committee

• Alignment of financial management – First steps taken with UCH accounting arrangement – still needing to get caught up from transition

• Clarity about endowments – work in process with Finance Committee

• Growth in generosity as spiritual practice – begun this process through webinars and Cultivating Generous Congregations training

• Stewardship that supports all settings of the church – already engaging sharing of resources across settings
“STRENGTHEN COVENANTAL RELATIONSHIPS AND TRUST”

-2018 VISION PLAN
Strengthen Covenantal Relationships and Trust

Leadership Roundtable

- Transitional Conference Minister and Association Ministers collaborating to bring varieties of gifts and opportunities to the shared table for discernment, planning and implementation.

- Nimble, responsive, accountable

- A table of peers built on growing relationships of trust, mutual support, respect and care.

- Meeting twice monthly.
Strengthen Covenantal Relationships and Trust

Executive Teams

• Building relationships across the full breadth of our life developing a deeper knowing of each other.
• Space to heal hurts of the past.
• Space to discern together God’s leading and envision a new way for the present and the future.
• Clarifying the need for the One Heart Working Group.
• Affirming the "Why", "Calling" and "Covenant" from the One Heart Working Group
• Going forward – listening, discernment, ministry prioritization, feedback/evaluation
• Meeting quarterly going forward
Strengthen Covenantal Relationships and Trust

**One Heart Working Group**

- Weekly and then monthly meetings to dig deep into the 2018 Vision plan and develop clarity about the evolution of shared ministry.
- Received the input of Executive Teams and then formed the key framing of the “Why”, “Calling”, and “Covenant” now under consideration in each setting.
- Its work completed, OHWG disbanded but will be available for annual reflection and review of ministry engagements as needed.
IN WHAT WAYS WILL THE TRINITY OF LOVE TAKE FORM IN OUR LIFE?

GOING FORWARD...
Together in Christ’s love, we collaborate to reconcile and restore all God’s creation.

And our “Calling”

Empowered by the Holy Spirit we are called to connect, equip and support our faith communities to grow as faithful disciples and responsible stewards, following Jesus’ call to extravagantly love all God’s children and creation.
“COLLABORATE IN MINISTRY” - 2018 VISION PLAN
Collaborate in Ministry = Networks

Network Learnings So Far (not exhaustive)

• Relationships are key
• Staffing in the early going is helpful in many but maybe not all cases, though mechanisms of connection will otherwise need to be determined.
• Core leadership team (5-6 people) is necessary
• Serve to strengthen those in the network and beyond the network (varies depending on the network)
• Still learning if there is a “critical mass" of numbers of people needed for network viability. May vary based on focus of the network.
Networks currently formed or in process

- Faith Formation Network
- Interim Ministry Network
- Anti-Racism Network
- Communications
- Generosity Network
- Committee On Ministry (COM) Network
- Disaster Response Network
- Westphalian Partnership Network
- Lantern Fellowship
- Sharing America’s Resources Abroad (SARA)
Possible Networks on the horizon

- Accessibility/Inclusion Network
- LGBTQ Network
- Global Mission Network
- Opioid Addiction Network
- Worship and Technology Network
- Creation Care Network
- Chaplain Network
- Spiritual Director Network

*Ideas that have been broached from various settings in our life*
Additional Conference Committees

• Executive Committee
• Finance and Investment Committee
• Human Resources (Formerly Personnel) Committee
• Annual Gathering Planning Committee
• Designated Ministry Partner Committee
• Racial/Ethnic Empowerment Committee*
• Church Development Committee*
• Division of Outdoor Ministries*

*not currently active
Unique Collaboration – Outdoor Ministries

Templed Hills Camp and Conference Center

- Re-engaged site management
- Post COVID 19 programming navigation and in-person re-engagement strategies
- New Registration System
- Ongoing Volunteer Leadership Development
- New program development
- Hills Are Alive Capital Campaign
- Capital Improvements plan
- Development of Support Teams to assist Outdoor Ministry Executive
STRUCTURE AND OTHER CONSIDERATIONS FOR THE WAY AHEAD
• One unified setting – uniform sub-structures
• Leadership Board
• 3 support settings/physical offices
• Staffing Configuration
  • “Area Ministers” COM/Search and Call/Mutual support/Carry a specialty
  • “Executive Minister” assure collaboration, supervise area service staff, represent in ecumenical and national UCC settings, carry at least one specialty.
• Additional short or long-term specialists
• Administrative, financial, and support persons as needed, managed centrally, but may be dispersed physically – hired by area ministers.
One unified “Why, Calling, and Covenant” honoring the particular gifts of each setting uniquely expressed in collaboration.

Moving towards an integrated Conference board structure with representatives from Association governing boards serving on the conference board for deepened awareness and mutual collaboration across our whole life.

Leadership Roundtable Meetings, Executive Teams Meetings, and One Heart Working Group provide nimble and intentional ministry visioning and engagement.

Now have 3 physical offices and two virtual offices engaging responsible stewardship.

**Staffing Configuration**

Association Ministers COM, Search and Call, mutual support, carry a specialty, supervise association staff.

Conference Minister nurtures collaboration through Network oversight; hosts Leadership Roundtable as a peer, supervises conference staff, represents in ecumenical and national UCC settings, carries at least one specialty.

Additional short or long-term specialists – currently have part-time communications coordinator.

Administrative, financial, and support persons as needed, in each setting, living into shared financial staffing with UCH.
QUESTIONS, CONSIDERATIONS AND NEXT STEPS

AN EVOLVING BRAINSTORM...

• What needs further clarification?

• Care will need to be taken to be sure folks from each Association board are nominated to the Conference Board.

• A constitutional review and assessment of current standing committees needs to be engaged.

• Staffing configurations affirmed and clarified.

• Continued development, refinement and engagement of networks.

• Continued development of conference-wide stewardship initiatives that strengthen every setting and build transparency and trust.

• Consideration of Capital Campaign inclusive of Associations and Conference for strengthening of the whole body for the long term.

• Development of listening practices that continue that build connection beyond the leadership circles in ways responsive to the needs of the local church and other settings of ministry.

• Development of a process for clarifying the key questions we need to be asking so that we remain open to the Spirit’s leading as discovered in voices across our whole life.