



Moderator's Report • June 2016

Dear Church,

I was honored to be called as the Ohio Conference Moderator last year. God is working through me, as well as all of us, as we have gathered to make tough decisions, listened to one another, cried at those tough decisions, and laughed together. We have begun to build community and have held each other accountable as the year has gone along. We have tried to be open and listen to what is happening in the world and in the church and act with compassion and care. I know that we have been faithful.

I believe that the Ohio Conference is a covenantal body that links the local churches with the wider church—the United Church of Christ. It is composed of local churches that form Associations where clergy hold their ordained ministerial standing. I believe in the local church and that the structure of the UCC is bound together with the local church. I understand that the connection that the local church has with the national setting comes through the Conference. I have lived and pastored in Ohio as well as other areas of the country. I know that Ohio was set up a bit differently as a compromise when the UCC was formed in 1957. Ohio had a strong background in Congregational Christian churches AND the Evangelical and Reformed church that caused the compromise.

I understand the Ohio Conference gives support and affirmation to things like grants, loans and nominations to the national boards and bodies, as other conferences do. The Ohio Conference is the body that oversees Outdoor Ministries. Our Conference Minister serves on behalf of our local churches on the Council of Conference Ministers, the Insurance Board, and other bodies to coordinate ministries. I believe that the Ohio Conference is tasked with maintaining ecumenical and interfaith relationships and dialogues, as well as maintaining scholarships and grants for Members in Discernment.

Your Board of Directors has gathered and worked tirelessly to be good stewards of the finances of the Ohio Conference. I appreciate the diligent work of Sam Buehrer, Conference Treasurer, along with the members of the Finance Committee. The other officers—Bob Tussing, Secretary; Tim Smith, Past Moderator and Cathy Green, Vice Moderator—have worked with care and compassion to do what God is calling them to do. Pam Brown has been amazing in her work with all she does for the Ohio Conference; Nicole Havelka has strived to connect us with networking and creativity, as she uses her gifts, what a blessing! Phil Hart has worked tirelessly as the Designated Ohio Conference Minister to challenge us, help us to move out of our comfort zones and be innovative in the ministries we engage in on behalf of the Ohio Conference. Late this summer, he will move to a new ministry to which he has been called. I want to thank him for the help as we continue to be the church in Ohio, West Virginia and Kentucky.

May we continue to listen and be called by God to be the church.

Mindy

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