



When I arrived in Ohio nearly a year ago, I was teeming with energy for living my call as your Minister for Resourcing, Networking and Creativity. We knew we were doing a “Holy Experiment” in being wider church — becoming a more collaborative, connected and resourcing ministry than has been seen in Ohio or in any other wider church entity before. We did not know exactly how we would do this or what we would do. We had much hope and a lot of creative

Annual Report 2015

From Nicole Havelka,
Designated Minister for Resourcing, Networking and Creativity



Find the UCC news and events
from Ohio and beyond:

Facebook: [/ohioconference](#)

Twitter: [@ohioucc](#)

Website at www.ohioucc.org

ideas to try. We have tried many of them. Some have not worked out as we had hoped. Some have become even more than we imagined. I have been blessed to witness the creative and life-affirming ministries that you do in your local churches and communities every day. I have experienced your deep desire to be in relationship and collaboration with one another. I have seen the incredible generosity of our partner institutions in their support of local and wider church ministries. Here's a few examples of how I and our Ohio Conference Team have helped create space for connection, collaboration and resourcing in the past year:

- Offer monthly “Spotlight Ministry Lunches” via videoconference to offer resources and discussion about topics of interest.
- Collaborate with our outdoor ministry partner, United Camps, Conferences and Retreats, to provide our volunteers with the training and resources that help create a safe and faith-filled summer camping program.
- Partner with Heidelberg University to offer our first joint camp at that location focused on putting Youth at the center of designing youth ministry and camping programs.



Our Holy Experiments media outlets connect you to ideas, resources for your ministry:

Facebook: [/holyexperiments](#)

Pinterest: [/holyexperiments](#)

Twitter: [@holyexperiments](#)

Instagram: [@holyexperiments](#)

Blog: www.ohioucc.org



Email me!

nicoleh@ocucc.org

- Gather young(ish) clergy to cultivate a culture of creativity in local and wider church settings.
- Joining with the Disciples of Christ to offer a collaborative camp at Camp Christian.
- Partner with the Wisconsin Conference to extend the reach of their monthly Faith Formation Forum videoconference.
- Work with the national setting UCC to provide nearly \$60,000 in literacy grants to our local churches.
- Empowering passionate Ohio volunteers to host Fall Youth Event, Junior High Youth Event and a new offering — the Love is Love intergenerational, LGBT-friendly retreat.
- Utilize the resources of the Indiana-Kentucky and Ohio conferences to offer the monthly Spotlight resource eNewsletter that reaches roughly 5,000 people monthly.
- Connect hundreds of new people with top-notch ministry resources through our presence on social media.
- Offer discounted Faith Formation Training through a partnership with the Center For Progressive Renewal.

Perhaps the greatest collaboration of all comes in the form of a new way to share positions between related wider church entities. As of April 1, my position has been shared with the national setting's Faith Formation Team. That means that for the next year I am working simultaneously as the Curator for Youth and Young Adult Ministries for the national setting and as your Minister for Resourcing, Networking and Creativity. I welcome the challenge of living into these dual roles, learning just how many resources we can get into the hands of local churches when we step outside of perceived church boundaries and work together.

I have no doubt that there will be bumps in the road along the way, but I am committed to learning from them and sharing that knowledge gained with you. When I accepted this position, I believed firmly in the conviction that we could build dynamic, empowering and creative wider church ministries. The fruit of that conviction is beginning to blossom and ripen. I hope and pray that these experiments become a model of how we do wider church ministry in Ohio and beyond.

One of the greatest joys I know is working with our team — Pam Brown, Phil Hart and Carolyn Willis as well as our associations' staffs. I am blessed, honored and excited to serve you here in the Ohio Conference UCC in the coming year. Come, Holy Spirit, Come!

Rev. Nicole Havelka