

**Living Water ONE (Ohio NorthEast) Association
Committee on Ministry Annual Report 2020
Rev. Bentley deBardelaben-Phillips & Rev. Doris R. Powell, co-chairs**

The Committee on Ministry (CoM) met quarterly at Bath Church on December 5, 2019 and March 5, 2020 and via Zoom on June 4 & 25, 2020 and September 3, 2020.

A primary responsibility of these meetings is examining candidates for ordination. During 2019-2020, the following were enthusiastically approved for ordination:

- Brooke Baker – called as Senior Pastor, Church of the Redeemer UCC, Westlake
- Melody Ward – called as Chaplain at Interval Brotherhood Home Addiction Recovery Center, Akron
- Kim Nagy – called to serve as Director of Faith Formation, Kent UCC
- Andrew “Andy” Lang – continuing call as Executive Director of the UCC Opening and Affirming Coalition
- Halldór Elias Gudmundsson – approved pending call

At its September 3rd meeting the Committee had an in-depth conversation with the Rev. Dr. Renee C. Jackson, Minister for Ministerial Formation, UCC MESA Ministry Team regarding Multiple Paths to Ordination. Renee emphasized the criteria is competency (not excellence) in each of the eight Marks for Faithful and Effective Authorized Ministers, with multiple assessments performed during the MID process to discern growth. The process is tailored for each candidate due to their diversity of experience, education and training. The CoM plans to do training and study the documents for the process at the December meeting with guidance from MESA. As the Multiple Paths process is relatively new, the CoM is seeking to refine its process and apply it fairly.

Other responsibilities are carried out by three Working Groups which meet at least quarterly; some more frequently as needed. Their work during 2020 included:

DISCERNMENT OF CALL: Discernment and formation of those responding to God’s call to authorized ministry.

- Discerned with Members in Discernment (MIDs) that ordination was not needed for their ministries: Deborah Holzworth, Karen Adolphson
- Approved to prepare Plan of Formation: Laura Hodges who has completed her 2nd year at Vanderbilt Divinity School.
- Reviewed Plan of Formation and approved to write ordination papers: Antigone Lowrey (and reviewed her initial draft at the September meeting), Emily Culp Ashby, Christina Green (CoM will provide scholarship for her CPE)

- Guided Members in Discernment (MIDs) in writing ordination papers and completing formation tasks: Matthew Hogue-Smith, Leila Jindra
- Approved the ordination papers and recommended to the full Committee on Ministry for ordination: Andy Lang, Kim Nagy, Halldór Gudmundsson

The Working Group conducted a thorough review of current documents for those on the ordination path as the WG seeks to refine the Association's MID process. It identified a need for more guidance for their work in Multiple Paths to Ministry.

CREDENTIALING: Dealing with matters of standing and credentials for authorized ministers (ordained, commissioned and licensed) currently in the Association as well as those wishing to move their authorization to the UCC from other denominations.

- Approved: Jonathan Dodson for Governmental Chaplaincy Endorsement-Army, and Joel and Janis Montgomery for dual standing in the UCC serving Christ United, Olmstead Falls (federated Presbyterian/UCC church)
- Approved License for Authorized Licensed Ministerial standing for:
 - Robin Stanly, part-time pastor of Hartsgrove Community UCC, Rome, OH
 - Brian Saxe, pastor of Bainbridge Community UCC
 - Sharon Bauman, part-time pastor of Millheim UCC, Akron
 - Ray Banks, volunteer associate pastor at Mt. Zion Congregational, Cleveland
 - Edie Rasell, Archwood UCC, Cleveland, shepherds 3 part-time pastors
 - Jason Stitt, to St. Paul, Parma
 - Terri Reynolds 1-year for all 5 churches in Pioneer Larger Parish, Monroe Co
 - 1st-time licensure of Ginger Bakos as Minister of Faith Formation Bath, UCC
 - Jim Furry, to West Park UCC, Cleveland. Assists pastor as needed.
 - Dennis Coy, to First Congregational UCC, Canton

OVERSIGHT: Providing oversight for pastoral excellence by creating and offering professional development opportunities for all authorized ministers in required areas of Healthy Practices for Ministry, as well as assisting with ministry issues when asked.

- Offered three Healthy Practices events during 2020: 3/11 Mental Health and the Church (58 persons attend), 5/2 Politics and Faith in the Purple Zone (hosted 42), 10/1 Digital Church: implications + nuts and bolts (registration still open as of the 9/3 CoM meeting).
- Engaged in four Situational Support processes. Met with pastors and church leadership, followed up by letters of findings and recommendations. Two have been resolved. One seems to be on hold as church leaders and former pastor have declined further action. One has seen active steps taken by pastor and congregation which may resolve the issues.

Respectfully submitted, Rev. Doris R. Powell, co-chair