

ST. LUCAS UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
CHURCH COUNCIL MEETING MINUTES

June 23, 2020

Members present: Barb Coughlin, Joy Dressel, Ken Hamilton, Gregg Heutel, Dave Johnston, Randy Jurgensen, Don Lang, Al Lichtenstein, Skip Salomon, Joanne Scheidt, Lisa Slyman, and Carol Stelmach.

Debbie Ball and Mike Bohn were absent from the meeting.

PASTORS: Rev. Kelly Archer and Rev. Bill Smutz

GUESTS: Steve Kienzler. The meeting was held electronically via Zoom due to the Coronavirus situation.

The meeting was opened with a prayer by Rev. Archer.

Steve Kienzler asked to speak. **See Attached**

CONSENT AGENDA:

Building and Grounds: **See attached**

Membership and Evangelism: **See attached**

Preschool Board: **See attached.**

Barb made a motion to accept the consent agenda. Lisa seconded it. Motion passed.

CLERGY REPORT: Rev. Smutz was part of a discussion during Coffee Time with the Pastor. There was talk about Ollie Dressel and his life in our church. Rev. Smutz was reminded how important the faith community is and what a precious gift it is. This past month there was a lot of work on the Vespers service and working toward moving the services inside. Rev. Smutz is grateful for all the volunteers who have helped get everything ready for the Vespers services. It is going to take a lot of effort to get us back together. It's exciting to get back together, but it will be a challenge. Pastor Kelly has been working on how to have church in a safe way and what getting back together looks like. Worship planning continues. She was happy to preach a

couple of times. She is working with families....2 burials and a wedding this month. Bible study has become book study; participation has doubled. Caring Ministry is going to meet via Zoom.

The meeting went into a closed session at 6:20.

BUSINESS:

Special Presentation by Joy: **See attached.**

Report of Covid-19 Task Team by Dave/Bill: Thank you to Bill, Kelly, and Randy for all the work you have done to make the Vespers service a success! Thank you to Gregg for the golf cart. A number of people wanting to attend needed some assistance getting from the parking lot to the pavilion. Carol asked if there is any consideration for having the Vespers service on a Saturday night or earlier in the day on Sunday so families can get together at night and not have to miss church. Bill said there is only one more Vespers service scheduled so it will not be changed at this point. Bill will take this comment into consideration if other Vespers services are needed.

There are concerns about liability for people who attend services and contract Covid-19. Dave spoke to the insurance company. Church is well ahead of other churches in terms of what has been set up, how it has been set up, and what we have done. As long as we continue to do what we're doing, getting the word out verbally and in writing, we are covered by insurance if any cases come up.

Personnel Committee Report by Joanne: The part time AV coordinator role has been posted. There was not a lot of response. There was a paid post on LinkedIn. There are 2 qualified candidates. There will be a panel interview via Zoom. Our current budget gets us to \$24 per hour. We are right in line with the current average. Lauren and Joanne are screening on flexibility, desire to do part-time work, ability to work with volunteers, confidentiality. They are screening on lifestyle commitment...work flexibility. The panel who interviews would like to have interview questions. Joanne is going to get a script and a scoring matrix to the interview panel.

Finance Committee Report by Gregg: Supporting Solutions is working hard. They did not get financial statements to the committee last week like they hoped due to additional time needed to learn the ACS software. They sent a financial draft to Gregg. They are close to having numbers to report to the congregation. They suggested looking for upgrades and different options for ACS. We are down roughly \$67,000 through the month of May. Do we need to make cuts through the remainder of the year? The PPP should cover the first half of the year. Based on the giving we've seen, we won't cover the budget for the rest of the year. An audit report will be available at the November Congregational Meeting. Budget process for 2021 will be starting soon. Letters to committee heads will be going out in a couple weeks. Gregg will put a budget together for the August finance committee meeting. Final approval will be at the October meeting. The Preschool HVAC project is ready to begin at a total cost of

\$94,000. This is \$16,000 over the original budget which will be covered by funds from the Lorine Nolan Estate gift which was previously approved in the May 2020 Finance Committee meeting. Joanne asked what an upgrade to ACS will cost. The upgrade would make it more cloud based. We are using a VPN instead of cloud based. Gregg said we want to go to a new product instead of upgrading ACS. Thank you to Barb for working with Debbie and helping Supporting Solutions.

Mid-year Congregations Meeting Report by Dave: The report is out. There is no clear path to having a full congregational meeting in person. This won't happen until we can get back into church and have the majority of the congregation available. Joy isn't happy with the negative tone of the President's report. She said we need to move forward instead of looking back at what has been done. Joy wants a more positive tone for future email blasts and correspondence.

Discussion: Vote- Suspend Payments to Association: Don has received a number of letters and phone calls wanting to know why we cut the SLA and not the conference. He said there are a number of people concerned with the spending rate and the amount of money coming in. Don wants us to keep our vote from last meeting. He will offer to fund monthly, as long as we suspend payments, the benevolences that the SLA supported. He offers a challenge to those who sent the notes to us to come up with \$140 per month to Unleashing Potential. Carol feels if we need to cut spending, we need Stewardship to come up with cuts across the board. Ken calls the people at Friendship Village. They are upset with what the SLA did to Kelly, but they are also upset that we cut their funding. Ken wants to go straight to corporate and let them know we are upset. Gregg agrees we need to look at our budget. We need numbers first though. Gregg feels people may quit giving to the church and give money to the SLA instead. Church received \$1000 last Sunday, \$500 went to the SLA. It was one check from one family. Barb said we need to make it a logical decision, not an emotional decision. Carol said a letter that demands a response would be better to express our anger than to cut funding to the SLA. We should look at numbers and then cut across the board. Joanne agrees with Carol. She didn't have a perspective on the payment that went to benevolences during our last meeting. She doesn't believe in cutting benevolences. We need a goal to support benevolences to our ability. Ken said we should send a letter to the Association with our displeasure on how the situation with Kelly was handled. Joy suggested having the Committee on Ministry co-chairs in a Zoom meeting to express our displeasures. Dave said he has requested information and asked questions, and the SLA won't respond. Dave is happy to draft a new letter to the Association with input from all of Council. We need to have more financial information before we make a decision. Dave suggested tabling this discussion until our next meeting when we can have more financial information. Joanne feels we need to get a message out to the congregation on what we are doing with our decision to defund the SLA; table this decision but with a message to the congregation on wanting to continue to support benevolences. Skip suggested giving directly to the particular charities. Joanne made a motion that the finance committee will undertake a comprehensive financial review of 2020 budgeted expenditures to

identify reductions based on current giving levels. As such, overall giving to the St Louis Association remains suspended with the exception of budgeted benevolences. During the review period, benevolences will continue to be funded by an anonymous donor. Ken seconded the motion. Joy pointed out that other expenses are program committees, book grants, seminary scholarships, sacred conversations on race. Carol said we aren't funding the Association so we're making a statement. She asked why we aren't addressing these issues. Vote: 8 for, 4 against. Motion passed. Dave said the other part as to why we are making a statement to the Association needs to be discussed at a later time since we're running short on time.

Open Forum:

Discussion "Imagining the Church after Covid-19" by Carol: This is added to next month's agenda. Carol wants us to move forward. We need to discuss how we're going to address the Association and how we're going to move forward.

Randy made a motion that we suspend hiring all new positions until we have a full budget review and can guarantee that we can pay these people for the entire year. No second. Motion died. Skip said he agrees with Randy, but we don't want to take that step tonight. No one will be hired until the next Council meeting. Dave thanked Randy for all the time he put in and all the money he saved the church by volunteering to be the AV person.

If a Council member responds to an email, make sure all Council members are included in the email.

Bill appreciates our conversations even though they are difficult. His prayer and urging is that we find the way forward together.

ADJOURNMENT: The meeting was adjourned at 8:12 with the Lord's Prayer.

Respectfully Submitted by Lisa Slyman

Steve Kienzler, Chairperson for the St. Lucas Mission and Outreach Team

I would like to address the recent Council decision to suspend our church's committed contributions to the St. Louis Association, one of our church's covenanted ministries. As part of the 2020 budgeting process, \$5,490 had been committed for 2020 to this Association. I'm disappointed about the decision to suspend the remainder of this payment as well as the process used for suspending these payments, since I'm not aware of there having been any discussion with the Mission Team or the Stewardship Committee in advance of the decision.

The St. Louis Association exists primarily to provide financial assistance to charitable organizations in our community. 82% of the St. Louis Association's annual budget goes directly to missional outreach organizations, with a large majority of that going to Unleashing Potential, as well as other organizations supported by St. Lucas such as Lydia's House and Isaiah 58. These organizations rely on these contributions from the St. Louis Association to attempt to carry out their critical need work for our community. This need is only being amplified in our current COVID environment, where the needs for these organizations' services are increasing while their ability to fundraise is strained. Missional organizations have been reaching out recently to St. Lucas asking for additional assistance in these trying times. One of the ways we could support them would be to honor our funding commitment to the St. Louis Association for the remainder of 2020. I respectfully ask if Council would please consider reinstating our committed funding to the St. Louis Association for the remainder of 2020.

Thanks for allowing me the time to speak to the Council and for your consideration.

St. Lucas United Church of Christ
Building & Grounds Committee Minutes
May 27, 2020

Members present: Wendy Gaume, Skip Salomon, Karl Grattendick, and Karl Scheidt. Also present, Ken Hamilton, Dave Johnston, Gregg Heutel, Debbie Ball & Charlie Singler.

The meeting was called to order.

Sanctuary Ramp: Karl S. presented the timeline of events. Building & Grounds will need to provide an answer to Dave Johnston as to whether they will have an alternate proposal in lieu of the current approved ramp.

Minutes: The minutes from the 4/22/20 meeting were reviewed and approved.

Financial Report: No report. Unable to get financial reports. We have hired Supporting Strategies to address our financial reporting. We will get reports from January to the present.

Building Security: Karl S. shared out that all access codes and cards have been suspended and awaiting council direction to re-activate them when appropriate. Karl G. is coordinating the lockbox for the key.

Lower Parking Lot: Karl G. reported that the handicap parking area needs to be power washed so the striping can be refreshed. He will coordinate the power washing in June.

Sanctuary Windows: Karl G. reported that this will be completed in June.

Water Meter Box Replacement: Karl G. reported with Donovan will be pumping out the pit during the week.

Roof Leaks: Old World Roofing has revised their bid to capture all conditions.

Slate Repairs -	\$19,045
Slate Cleaning -	\$11,378
Sanctuary cleaning-	\$10,500
Office Repair-	\$2,089
Gutter Repairs-	\$68,518
Gutter Guards-	\$35,675

Preschool HVAC: Bids received by IFS and C &R. Clarification needed in the IFS bid. B & G will get the final bid recommendation to Finance Committee prior to 6/16.

Wheelchair Ramp: This project will go on list of unfunded projects.

Staff Report: Charlie reported all sump pumps are working. Supplies and chemicals are good. Called IFS to do changeover of HVAC. American Water to come after the changeover.

Council Report: No report.

Water Usage: No report.

Church Bells: Karl G. has a company coming next week to bid.

Parsonage Report: Karl G. shared that he will follow up with Debbie Heagle to find out if rent issues have been resolved before work will proceed in the Parsonage.

St. Lucas United Church of Christ
Building & Grounds Committee Minutes
May 27, 2020

Preschool Water Infiltration: Karl G. that all areas have remained dry. Charlie also confirmed. The question was raised to Karl G. when the floor in room 22 will be finished. He asked when it needs to be completed. Debbie Ball shared that Michelle desires to use that room for Sunday School.

Weatherization Request: Karl S. reported that no new information has come forward from CAASTLC or the tenant.

Sanctuary Roof Replacement: Old World Roofing has provided an opinion that the sanctuary roof has life left in it, and could be cleaned for approximately \$10,500.

List of Unfunded Maintenance Items: Committee has submitted list. Finance committee has added the Wheelchair ramp to the list.

Ball Fields: No report.

Water in Neighbor's Yard: No new information.

Neighbor's Request to Install Fence on Church Property: Documents from the Weis family were located. It was a one-way communication from the Weis family to the church. Concern about child safety. Karl G. will look at the space on Friday.

The next meeting will be Wednesday, June 24 at 6:30 pm.

Respectfully submitted,
Karl Scheidt

Membership & Evangelism - ZOOM | Tuesday, 6.2.20, 6:30 pm

In Attendance: Ken Bentlage, Kathy Herron, Cynthia Rosfeld, Sue Simmons, Barbara Smith, Pat Stephens and Cathy Viehman

Opening Prayer - Cathy

- New Member Prospects - no change
- New Member Tracking - no change
- Financial Report - no change
- Council met Tuesday, May 26th
 - Council minutes should be posted online by the weekend for review
- Our YouTube subscriptions have increased to 83
- Soft Start to church services will begin Sunday, 6.14.20 at 7:00 pm with a Vespers service at the pavillion
 - Grass will be marked to allow proper social distancing
 - BYOS - Bring your own Stuff - blanket, chair, beverage, bug spray, etc.
- M & E needs to be conscious of how we re-engage with the congregation once pandemic restrictions are lifted
 - Our technology has been forced to grow and evolve during these months; it's not likely we'll go back to former procedures.
 - St. Lucas has the individual components needed to live stream on FaceBook
 - Randy J. has been researching this in order to connect/use those factors
 - The approved AV position is needed now more than ever
- We also need to be thinking about how we can provide better communication with our members not "wired" to the internet
 - How can M & E connect with the congregation/public more effectively now that pandemic actions have been presented to us
 - Is there something this committee can promote to help bridge the conflict in our church
 - Ideas are welcome, please email the group
- Ken continues to research the production of an online/electronic member directory
 - *(It's been over 5 years since our last published copy)*
- Cathy advised our next Blood Drive is tentatively scheduled for Mon., July 13th
 - Provider will be Mississippi Valley

7:30 pm - the meeting closed with The Lord's Prayer - Cathy

Respectfully submitted,
Barbara Smith

St. Lucas
1173



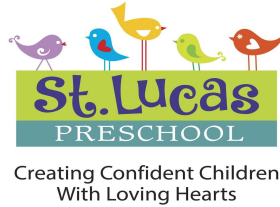
Christ
13126

Preschool Board

Meeting, May 12, 2020

Board Members Present: Stan Burcham (Chairperson), Karen Papin (Vice-Chairperson), Monica Knobloch (Secretary), Ken Graesser (Financial Officer), Ted Ball, Karen Eckert, Darin Hoggatt, Kristi Kienzler, Susan Giesing

Council Board Member: Joy Dressel



Board Members Absent:

Preschool Director/Teachers Present: Lynda Klosterman, Director

Call to Order and Opening Prayer

The St. Lucas United Church of Christ Preschool Board Video (Zoom) meeting was called to order by Stan Burcham at 6:30 pm, Tues, May 12, 2020, with an opening prayer by Stan Burcham.

Review of March Preschool Board Meeting Minutes

The March 10, 2020 Preschool Board meeting minutes were reviewed. A motion was made by Ted Ball seconded by Ken Graesser to approve the March 10, 2020 Preschool Board meeting minutes as corrected. Motion approved.

Teacher's Report

There were no teachers present at the May 12th meeting; therefore, there was no teacher's report.

Director's Report – Lynda Klosterman

Lynda reviewed the following items with the St. Lucas Preschool Board members:

- Enrollment and Staffing
 - Registration for 2020-2021 – there are currently 128 children enrolled to date.
 - M/W/F Full Day Preschool – 39
 - M/W/F Half Day Preschool – 30
 - Lunch Bunch (13), Before Care (17), After Care (70), Afternoon Adventures TTH (5)
- Fundraising
 - Donations \$4050.00 in honor of Miles Meyers
- Upcoming
 - End of the Year Reverse Parade May 13 and 14 at 10:00 a.m.
 - Parents picking up their tuition refunds during the parade as well as some mailed.

Council Report ~

Joy Dressel reported that the council has been dealing with financials for the church. A temporary accounting firm will be looking into the books to help with church business. The Payroll Protection Plan (PPP) loan was approved and will be coming in to offset expenses. The April confirmation class has asked for temporary status to be able to vote at future meetings. The Corona Task Force is continuing work towards opening St. Lucas.

Old Business

Reimbursements of tuition - \$37,587.29 total reimbursements will be made. There were two or three families who have waived the refund of preschool fees.

Staff Payroll was paid out in March. Regarding temporary positions, March employees were paid but the calendar was not complete at that time so two temporary employees were not paid for April and May. It is currently being addressed. After discussion, a motion was made, by Ken Graesser and seconded by Ted Ball, to honor the contracts and pay teachers and staff salaries through the remainder of the school year. The motion was carried.

New Business

Lindbergh Preschool has decided to create a group including directors in the area to help keep all schools in communication, meeting monthly. Lynda Klosterman will share information with the St. Lucus preschool board.

Contracts for teachers for 2020-2021 school year will include a disclaimer for school closure due to pandemic.

Hiring of a new teacher for the 2020-2021 school year.. Lynda Klosterman is looking for one teacher at this time to fill two positions.

A motion was made by Monica Knobloch and seconded by Karen Papin to accept the resignation letters from Christy Steele and Kelly Blessing, motion carried.

Summer Camp: Week 1: July 6-10 Week 2: July 13-17 July 20-24.

Summer Camp staffing: Kathy week 3, Gwyn week 1 and 2, Kelly week 1, Isabelle week 2 and 3, with Tina as a hallway assistant week 3.

Discussion: How can we ensure the safety of the children and the staff and what materials would we need to make that happen? Discussion regarding whether to have Summer Camp. A motion by Karen Eckert and seconded by Ted Ball to cancel Summer Camp for 2020 school year. The motion carries.

Talking Points that pertain to us from the Missouri Department of Health:

- Child care classes should include the same group each day and the same caregivers
- Stagger playground times and keep groups separate for special activities such as music
- Staggering arrival and drop off times and/or have caregivers come outside the facility to pick up the children as they arrive
- Routinely clean, sanitize and disinfect surfaces and objects - supplies needed
- Consider setting up hand hygiene stations at the entrance of the facility so children may wash hands before entering
- Do not share toys with other groups of children - gym, music, church
- Screening children at drop off - thermometers, gloves, masks
- Wearing masks

Discussions will continue to address all talking points. We may need to halt enrollment in order to stay within the parameters received from the Missouri Department of Health. Tabled for continued discussion.

Re-Opening in the fall

If so: Tote bags and tshirts need to be ordered

Supply orders

Add a policy statement to handbook concerning future school closures due to health epidemics

Letters of Intent for teachers

Add a statement in teacher contracts concerning future school closures due to health epidemics

Personnel

Lynda Klosterman reported that Kelly Blessing and Christy Steele resigned. Carol Huster would like to move to a hallway assistant position.

Evaluation reports are as follows: All of the teachers are ranked as effective or highly effective. Each teacher has two goals to work on next year as well as one given by Lynda Klosterman.

Financial

Ken Graesser reviewed the following financial reports with the St. Lucas Board members:

Regarding the Projection of Available Cash Balances prepared; Projected Total Available Cash as of April 30, 2020 is \$69,071. Actual Total Available Cash at April 30 is \$11,905, which is \$42,834 more than what was projected. The main reason for this difference is Tuition. We assumed no tuition would be received after March 19, and we actually received \$6,270. We also assumed that we would refund \$25,006 during the period March 20 through April 30, and we have not yet refunded any tuition. The total of these two items represents \$31,276 of the \$42,934 difference.

We will be sending out tuition refunds of approximately \$37,000 next week. This amount is about \$1,000 less than the amount used in the projection.

Balance Sheets (comparing - April 30, 2020 vs. April 30, 2019)

- Checking Account – decreased approx. \$11,000
- Money Market Account - increased approx. \$22,000
- Total Assets - increased approx. \$10,580
- Total Liabilities - decreased approximately \$6,000
- St. Lucas Preschool Equity - increased approx. \$14,000
- Current Year Net Income - increased approx. \$2,000
- Total Fund Principal - increased approx. \$16,600

Actual Detail Comparison April 30, 2020 vs. April 30, 2019

- Donations to St. Lucas increased approximately \$10,000
- Revenue Tuition - increased approx. \$17,500
- Total Tuition - increased approx. \$5,900
- Total Revenue - increased approx. \$5,000
- Total Teachers - increased approx. \$8,700
- Total Salaries & Benefits - increased approx. \$7,000
- Capital Campaign - down \$5,000
- Donation to St. Lucas - \$10,000
- Equipment - decreased \$6,000
- Total Expenses - increased approx. \$3,000
- Net Profit (Loss) - increased \$2,000

Note: We are not making payments in April and May for maintenance to St. Lucas.

A motion was made by Ted Ball and seconded by Karen Eckert to accept the March 2020 financial reports. Motion approved.

For the Good of the Order

- Thank you Karen Papin for reminding Stan Burcham that Karen Eckert, Monica Knobloch and Darin Hoggatt were scheduled to go off the board as of July. They have agreed to stay on the board and continue to help our preschool and church. Karen Papin also thanked Lynda Klosterman for the exceptional work as the director of St. Lucas Preschool.

A motion was made by Karen Papin and seconded by Ted Ball to adjourn the meeting. Motion approved. The meeting was adjourned at 8:15 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,

Monica Knobloch

Monica Knobloch
Secretary

The next meeting will be Tuesday, June 9, 2020, 6:30 pm

I want to correct something I said in last month's meeting when I was listing specifics of what the St. Louis Association does. I was listing things that the *Conference* does instead. What I should have said is:

The Association helps seminary students prepare to become pastors. It oversees the faithfulness and integrity of pastors of the churches. It distributes grant money to our local mission partners that request grants. The Association also organizes two meetings each year for members of all of the churches of the Association to gather for networking, sharing, learning and worshipping together.

Presentation - Basic things to know about the St. Louis Association, plus a bit about the wider church

- Within the Missouri Mid-South Conference, there are three Associations: Western, Eastern and St. Louis. (~138 churches in the Conference)
- The **St. Louis Association (SLA)** is an association of the UCC churches in the St. Louis area, plus Memphis, TN, and Little Rock, AR. The geographic area includes places like Arnold and Imperial, but does not include St. Charles County. We are in covenant with the approx. 43 churches in our Association and with the other entities of the UCC, including our mission partners.
- The **St. Louis Association (SLA)** is NOT a corporate office for St. Lucas or for any other UCC churches in St. Louis. SLA doesn't even have an office. The *only* person that receives any financial compensation for work done is the very part-time bookkeeper that earns a stipend of less than \$150 a month.
- **SLA** has a council made up of clergy and lay leaders. The Bylaws call for four standing committees, which consist of both clergy and lay members:
 - Mission and Outreach Committee
 - Nominating Committee
 - Committee on Ministry: Preparation
 - Committee on Ministry: Oversight
- The "services" that the Association provides are things like
 - two meetings a year at which people from the churches can worship together and learn things and interact with each other and
 - the Committee on Ministry: Oversight that helps keep integrity among the clergy by investigating criminal or ethical issues that clergy members might be accused of having and
 - the Committee on Ministry: Preparation that mentors seminary students through the process of becoming ordained ministers in the UCC and
 - the Mission and Outreach Committee that provides grants to our local mission partners.
- **SLA** helps support a number of charitable organizations and activities through grants. There is a long history behind this that goes back to Louis Nollau, the organizer of the "German Evangelical Church Society of the West" in 1840. Thanks to Nollau and other early German Evangelicals, our Association has more benevolent agencies than any other UCC Association in the country, except maybe Boston. There are over 70 UCC Council on Human Health and Service Ministries (CHHSM) organizations in all of the country. 19 of them are headquartered in the Missouri Mid-

South Conference. 13 of those are in the St. Louis Association. Some of the other Conferences have only 1 or 2. The Kansas-Oklahoma Conference, for instance, has 2.

- Out of its 2020 budget, \$85,000 is to go towards grants and \$12,200 to towards everything else, including scholarships for seminary students.
 - The Committee on Ministry: Oversight is budgeted to receive a whole \$200, just like last year.
 - The organizations that receive grants are ones like Unleashing Potential (includes Caroline Mission), Lydia's House, Isaiah 58, the summer program Freedom Schools, etc.
 - Michele Ottinger, by the way, is on the board of Unleashing Potential, the organization that receives the greatest share of the SLA funds.

- **Conferences** coordinate programs, aid and counsel churches and clergy, help in placement of clergy and provide services such as workshops and provide camping programs. The Conference minister is the minister for the ministers. The Conference is self-governing. Each church within it has the opportunity to send lay delegates to the annual meeting. Pastors also have voting privileges.

- **The UCC has a unique polity – a dynamic partnership covenant!**
 - **Administrative side is Episcopal** – Conference ministers are “called” and authorized to act on behalf of the church for some things. They provide leadership to churches in their mission and ministry, guide policy formation and develop and implement programs.
 - **Legislative side is Presbyterian** – Some decisions are made by representatives in meetings of associations, Conferences and General Synod. Decisions relate to how the parts of the church will engage in mission and ministry and how they will order their lives together. They strive to discern the mind of Christ – WWJD, led by the Holy Spirit.
 - **Judicial side is Congregational** – The local church does not relinquish its own authority to decide about its own life.
 - **Partnership covenant** – The different parts of the church are bound to listen to one another, to take each other seriously and to be open to being influenced by one another
 - **People in the news media don't always understand the UCC polity**, so they make statements, such as, “The UCC says...” or “The UCC does...”. They *should say*, “The 32nd General Synod of the UCC decided...” or the Missouri Mid-South Conference of the UCC decided...”.