

## **Creating Community Core Ministry Team**

The Creating Community Core Ministry Team's goal is to bring people together, embrace relationship, recognize commonality and diversity, and grow into the Beloved Community.

We do this by:

- Organizing and participating in events and activities for fellowship, faith formation, and education, including Conference Annual Gathering (CAG), Association meetings, cluster gatherings, Conference Youth Events (CYE), General Synod, and CHHSM (Council for Health and Human Services Ministries)
- Offering outdoor ministries, including Camp MoVal and Shannondale
- Introducing and reinforcing United Church of Christ (UCC) concepts, history, and values, particularly with members and clergy from other faith traditions
- Providing age/gender-specific ministries

## **Report to Conference Annual Gathering 2024**

From October 2023 through October 2024, this core ministry team was comprised of 3 BoD members, and 3 association delegates (STL, EA, WA\*) Of note, one member left in July due to no longer being in the MMSC. We met 6 times via zoom (Jan 11, Feb 21, Mar 19, May 15, July 17, Sept 17) and had a Camp Connections Project subcommittee that was active March through August. We have 3 working groups that are part of this core ministry team:

- Heritage Committee- tasked with archiving the history of MMSC churches and celebrating church and clergy anniversaries
- Older Adults Group-facilitates retired clergy gathering, shares event information and celebrates retired clergy with cards for holidays/birthdays
- Youth Ministry-Supports local church youth ministry through monthly meetings and programming support, plans conference youth events for middle school and high school, interfaces with conference youth minister for regional and national events

Additionally, we connect with outdoor ministry for updates at Camp MoVal and Shannondale.

Our work to create community over the past year has included:

- Touching base with each of our working groups on their activities and providing association contact information so they can better publicize events.
- Encouraging an extravagant welcome to conference events by laying a foundation through wording on emails/invites that encourages the willingness to problem solve for childcare needs or other accommodations vs expecting participants to voice their needs.
- Addressing the need to add simple safety modifications consisting of a few shower/dressing benches at Camp MoVal to create a more accessible environment.
- Reaching out to be a partner in organizing events like the Persons in Ministry Retreat, CAG and planning for General Synod.

- Launching a Camp Connections Project to preserve Camp MoVal specifically, but also camp experiences in general and link current campers to a past generation of campers by sharing camp experiences. The project interfaced with all this committee's working groups. The older adult group sent out requests for camp memory letters to their adults. An appeal to complete a formatted adult camp memory letter went out conference wide in the eCourier and July Outdoor Ministry newsletter. From the youth ministry team, Alysha Petry, shared the 6 adult letters and 1 video received with MoVal campers and facilitated 37 camper writing letters about their experiences. All the camp memory letters were archived by the Heritage committee. The Camp Connections Project will continue for 2025.

Respectfully Submitted by Carolyn Stecher