MISSOURI MID-SOUTH CONFERENCE UCC

Business Meeting Minutes

Saturday October 18, 2025

Welcome – Rev. Mary Nelson, Transitional Conference Minister

Call to Order by Duana Russell, Board Chair. Secretary Pro Tem, Karen Miller, confirmed that we have a quorum. (55 congregations represented, with 83 voting delegates and clergy present)

Consent Agenda – Meeting agenda, standing rules, receiving reports. Chair noted that standing rules were last reviewed in 2019 and need revision – Consent agenda approved by acclamation.

Approval of 2024 CAG Minutes – Motion to approve by Michael Pope, seconded by Tim Farley. Motion passed. (yes: 60; no: 0; abstain: 2)

Approval of Special 2025 Special Called CAG Meeting – Motion to approve by Joshua Rau, seconded by Liz Devaney. Motion passed. (yes: 60; no: 0; abstain: 1)

Conference Board of Directors Report – Duana Russell, Board Chair

Duana gave update and encouraged all to be in a prayerful and loving mindset as we move forward.

Vote to adopt the presented slate of the Board of Directors - Approved (yes: 70; no: 0; abstain: 0)

Personnel Committee Report – Dane Sommer – Vice Board Chair

Dane gave update:

- Staffing Changes:
  - Rev. Mary Nelson will end her time with us December 31, 2025
  - Kathie Rainey retired
  - Leigh Porter has taken Kathy's position. Will be ¾ time with the Conference and ¼ with Eden Seminary
  - Elimination of Youth Resources Coordinator position
  - Rev. Damian Lake on Sabbatical for three months
  - Rev. Sam Houser hired for part time doing Search and Call and Mary working with COM's while Damian is on Sabbatical
- Search Process:

    - Dane reviewed the various position terms that are currently being used:
        - Bridge Conference Minister
        - Intentional Interim
        - Designated Conference Minister
        - Settled Conference Minister
- Rev. Dr. Diane Weible from the National staff is working with the Executive Committee and will provide profiles. They hope to have a Bridge Minister by January 1, 2026. The Board will keep the Conference members informed. The Board had voted to have an Intentional Interim Minister by 1month to 2 years.

Outdoor Ministry Report: Glenn Svetnicka, Associated Minister of Outdoor Ministries.
He thanked the Churches for OCWM contributions and all volunteering at the camps. The DOC and Episcopal Diocese have contracted for several weeks. There have been continued cabin renovations at Shannondale. At MoVal the buildings have been brought back. We need to be aware the work is still not done at the camps. They are still trying to gather a Capital Campaign Committee.

Finance Committee Report: Adam Lawler, Conference Treasurer.
He reviewed the 2025 financial report. We are operating at a loss. Giving continues to be less. Shared the 5-year analysis on OCWM. Audit strategy in place. 2026 budget will be presented and voted on later in the meeting.

Break and Speak Outs

Core Ministry Reports:

Creating Community – Alysha Petry
The committee creates community through connections:

- Creating a list of clusters throughout the Conference
- Camp Connections letters written to campers
- Youth Ministry Group meets monthly and reports to Committee monthly. The winter event will be Nov 14-16 and include ages 6th grade to 12th grade
- Supporting Heritage Cluster Committee request for funds to recognize anniversaries
- Retired Clergy Group meets frequently throughout the year. Group includes clergy and spouses from St. Louis Association and

Eastern Association but not yet the Western Association. All are welcome.

Disaster Ministry – Josh Rau

Josh is looking for a disaster team to help with his work. Hoping to have a volunteer from each congregation as a contact that can be reached when needed. A link for the Disaster workbook has been sent to each church.

Visioning the Future - KPVF Radio – Sonya Vann

- Preparing to have the radio station up and running by June
- Tower will be located in St. Paul's church in Oakville
- Broadcast signal will have a ten mile radius
- First liberal station in the area
- Need funding, support and volunteers
- $178 thousand dollars needs to be raised for 2026, separate from Conference budget
- Donate to www.MMSUCC.com/KPVF
- Support needs to be given by the Conference. Received affirmation from the Conference

2026 Budget – Greg Schmelig

- Greg presented the motion from the Board to allow the Board to access up to $100,000 from our reserves in an emergency
  - 67 yes, 2 no, 0 abstention – motion passed
- Greg presented the motion from the Board to approve the proposed 2026 budget.
  - 65 yes, 3 no, 1 abstention - motion passed

Conference Minister's Report - Rev. Mary Nelson

- This has been a hard year
- Needed to regroup after the last CAG meeting to not continue her Settled Conference Minister position.
- Preparing and hosting Synod in Kansas City which was a team effort and considered to be the best in recent memory. Thanked all those who helped.
- Working to have this be a smooth transition in all areas.
- Received a $20,000 grant for the radio station

- Got a new treasurer – Adam Lawler
- Got Leigh Porter to replace Kathie Rainey
- Dealt with four churches that were affected by the tornado and storms
- Sent Joshua Rau to Cleveland for Disaster Ministers training. This is an example of the Strengthen the Church offering at work: this funding makes such opportunities possible.
- Our camps are moving in the right direction but need a Capital Campaign and volunteers to help.

Facilitated Conversations held.

Business Meeting Adjourned at 3:25 P.M.

Closing Worship with Installation of Conference Leaders and Communion.

Submitted by:
Karen Miller
Joyce Bathke