

United Church of Christ

**A Conceptual Staffing Model For The
Southern Conference
Effective July, 2012**

Prepared for the Annual Gathering of the Southern Conference
June 14-16, 2012
Dr. Edward Davis, Designated Conference Minister

Brothers and Sisters of the Southern Conference;

I believe in covenant and I believe in honoring the covenant we have established with one another. I believe in your constitution and its bylaws; and I am in support of these as they exist. With this being said, I wanted to be sure that this staffing model would be within the realm of our constitution and bylaws. Therefore I consulted our UCC National Attorney; and here is his response to my inquiry.

“Edward :

“I have reviewed the proposed Staffing Model as well as the Constitution and Bylaws of the Southern Conference.

I believe the proposed staffing model may be adopted by the Conference; there is nothing in the Constitution and Bylaws which precludes its adoption. Indeed, I believe support for adoption of the proposed Staffing Model may be found in Article V, Section C and Article V, Section D, Paragraphs 5 and 8 of the Conference’s Constitution and Bylaws.”

Don Clark

Theological Reflections

The shifting nature of our society challenges the church to find new way to serve Christ and to steward the trusted resources in a common ministry (1 Corinthians 4:1-2, Luke 16:9), as shrewd and faithful managers. Seeking to be faithful to those resources entrusted to us as the Southern Conference, our common ministry will be recreated by the best use of the Spiritual gifts God has placed in our midst.

The church, our church is presently faced with significant challenges as the reality of dwindling economic resources leads us to seek God’s presence as we discern God’s new creation. It is that same Holy Spirit that is “creating and renewing the church” throughout her history. So, “if anyone is in Christ, there is a new creation; everything old is passed away; see, everything has become new! (2 Corinthians 5:17)

“Now to God who by the power of God in us is able to accomplish abundantly far more than we can ever ask or imagine; to God be the glory in church and in Christ Jesus, to all generations, forever and ever amen” (Ephesians 3:20-21).

Introduction

The current economic conditions that our country is facing, is being felt throughout the entire Church. The Local Church, Association, Conference, and National Setting of the United Church

of Christ have all experienced this economic challenge. Because of this shift in our society and in the Church, we are faced with the reality that how we had done church for many years may not be sustainable in the future. Therefore, we propose a way toward greater vitality and responsiveness of meeting the needs of our local congregations, pastors, institutions and ecumenical partners. And, as the book of Nehemiah suggest, “you see the conditions that we are in, come, let us rise up and build together” (Nehemiah 2:17).

Input From Various Sources

In the information gathered from the Center for Congregational Health and the input from the Restructuring Action Committee, and based conversations I have had with churches, clergy, and individuals throughout the Southern Conference, there were several core areas we needed to address:

- Building relationships by building trust in order to repair the breach among us.
- Strengthening our local churches by equipping our clergy and laity.
- Assisting congregations with search and call; Christian education and training for our laity; providing avenues for continuing education and training opportunities for our clergy; helping congregations with conflict resolution and crisis oriented issues; and strengthening our UCC identity, polity and covenantal relationship within our congregational setting.
- Inspiring and empowering our youth and young adults to actively participate in support of the Conference.
- Improve our communications through all the mediums necessary in order to create a higher visibility.

General Principals

- This will be a transitional plan.
- Current association boundaries are not changed.
- Any plans about the future of the Southern Conference staff will be discussed with the Board and relevant committees of the Southern Conference and Association for input and discernment.
- The primary consideration in these staffing plans is prompted by financial considerations and to be created with the conference resources, time and effort to better support, nurture, and serve the local congregations and pastors of the Southern Conference.
- This plan will emphasize a “team” approach that places more emphasis on more volunteerism in multiple entities.
- This staffing model will be in place for 18 months and will be implemented in stages with the Board making modifications if needed at each evaluation point, (6 months, 12 months, 18 months), at board meetings prior to the Annual Meeting. The effectiveness of the plan will be based upon our ability to meet the requirements of item number 4.
- In one year, budgetary revisions will be made that will allow more programming within the Associations. At the end of the 18 month period, consideration will be made as constitutional changes are warranted.

Proposed Staffing Positions and Primary Responsibilities

Minister for Church Affairs

- Establishing and re-establishing connections between the Southern Conference and Local Churches by constructing relationships that build trust.
- Pastor to Churches and Pastors; church visiting/checking on clergy/selling mission
- Church and Ministry, Search and Call Coordinator within the Association, Interim /Pulpit supply placement, Ordinations & Installations as needed, and coordination of the activities of the Ministry Specialist.

Minister for Communication

- Maintain Conference Website
- Maintain Conference Minister's Page
- Email Blasts
- Share Conference News, Information, Updates
- Trainings in Communication / Technology
- Bring all local churches in the Southern Conference online.
- Database Management

Minister for Education and Training (Clergy & Laity)

- Coordinate continuing education programs
- Develop and implement assessment tool to determine clergy and laity needs in education, training, and leadership development.
- Evaluates the qualitative and quantitative effectiveness of programs and training tools
- Coordinates a yearly Christian Education Summit

Minister for Missions

- Establish and execute effective strategies and action plans that spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ to individuals and churches across racial, ethnic and cultural lines.
- Encourage contributions to OCWM
- Plan and Implement long and short term mission projects and/or trips.

Minister for Stewardship (OCWM, Conference Giving, Association Giving)

- Manage and coordinate the overall stewardship activities for the conference
- Develop and execute strategies that challenge congregations to practice a stewardship way of life.
- Develop and execute a system that acknowledges and thanks individuals, churches, and associations, etc, for their donations.
- Maintain a database of donors and types of donations.

Minister for Youth and Young Adults

- Organizes and lead Youth and Young Adult Ministry Programs
- Provide positive examples for Youth and Young Adults

- Identify, coordinate and provide resources and programs that train, nurture and develop the full potential of youth and young adults
- Plan and execute age appropriate ministry programs that attract and engage children, youth and young adults.

***Ministry Specialist**

- Conflict resolution and problem solving in response to complaints and inquiries received from staff and local churches.
- Search and Call as needed and staffing committees as needed
- Contact with churches that have pulled out.
- Provides training in establishing and implementing church policy (*i.e. Deacon Boards and help with Constitution and Bylaws*).

Placement Coordinator for the Southern Conference

- Receives and submit churches ad listing for UCC Employment Opportunities
- Receives list of potential candidates from Minister of Church Affairs indicating which churches are specified by the candidate.
- Creates a spread sheet for that search with names of candidates, their response, date that was sent and search committee’s eventual response.
- Sends profile to committee chairs when candidates agrees or request it themselves.
- Order any profiles requested by the Minister for Church Affairs and forward them when received.
- Receive profiles from the National Office and keeps them on file as well as sending them on to each Minister for Church Affairs.

****Note: Ministry Specialist will be paid \$100 per visit plus expenses and will act under the supervision and coordination of the Minister for Church Affairs***

Timeline for Implementation of Staffing Model

*Staffing Positions	Date of Initial Placement
Minister for Church Affairs	
Rev. Nora Foust / Rev. Eddie Weathers, ENCA	07/2012
Rev. Jerry Rhyne, WNCA	07/2012
Rev. John Myers, EVA	10/2012
Minister for Communications	
Rev. Curly Stumb	07/2012
Minister for Education and Training	
Lorita Mayo, EVA	07/2012

Minister for Education and Training / PLD Rev. Margot Pickett, ENCA and WNC	07/2012
Ministry Specialists ENCA Rev. K. Ray Hill	07/2012
Ministry Specialists WNCA Rev. Barbara Rathbun	07/2012
Rev. William Vanderburg	07/2012
Rev. Jim Luck	07/2012
Ministry Specialists EVA Rev. Drew Morris	07/2012
Rev. Carole Christopher	07/2012
Minister for Youth and Young Adults ENCA	(To Be Appointed)
Rev. Elizabeth Schiemann, WNCA	07/2012
Rev. Lisa Gaul, EVA	07/2012
Minister for Stewardship To Be Appointed	10/2012
Minister for Mission To Be Appointed	2013
Placement Coordinator Rev. Nora Foust	07/2012

****Note: The initial placements of these positions are by appointment; and effective for a period of six months.***

STAFFING BIOS

Rev. Nora Driver Foust is a lifelong member of the Southern Conference and the United Church of Christ. She has served as Associate Pastor at First Reformed UCC in Burlington for 9 years. She also teaches in the Humanities Department at Alamance Community College. Nora is married to Mike Foust and they have two children, McKenzie and Joshua. Prior to answering the call to ordained ministry, Nora was a high school history teacher and served Elon University as the Assistant Athletics Business Manager and Ticket Manager. She was ordained in August of 2007 after completing her Master of Divinity at Duke Divinity School. Nora has served the Southern Conference as a camp staff person and camp director at Johns River Valley Camp, serving on the boards of the Eastern North Carolina Association, Blowing Rock Conference Center and Johns River Valley Camp. She has been working as the Registrar for Eastern North Carolina Association

since January.

Rev. Eddie Louis Weathers was born in Greensboro, North Carolina. He graduated from James B. Dudley High School, attended Shaw University in Raleigh, North Carolina and completed two years before entering the United State Navy in 1961. Rev. Weathers spent five years in the Navy and received an Honorable Discharge in 1966. He attended Lancaster Theological Seminary Pastor School and completed that work in 1995. In 1976 he was pastor at Melfield United Church of Christ in Haw River, North Carolina and Mt. Zion United Church of Christ in Rockingham North Carolina, 1988 until 2008. He is now an associate pastor at Union Chapel UCC in Burlington. He is married to the former Annie Martin and they have one son, four daughters, nine grandchildren and two great-grandchildren.

Reverend John T. Myers is currently serving as the pastor of Corinth Chapel United Church of Christ in Suffolk, Virginia. They have three sons, Troy, Tory and Terry. John has served on the Board of Directors of the United Black Christians of the United Church of Christ, President of the Eastern Virginia Association of the United Church of Christ, Secretary of the Holland Ministerial Alliance and the treasurer for the Ministers for Racial, Social and Economic Justice Hampton Roads. He is also currently serving on the Board of Directors of the Southern Conference UCC and Justice and Witness Ministries for the national church. Educational accomplishments include the following: Bachelor of Arts Degree in Mathematics from San Diego State University, Master of Science Degree in Educational Leadership from Troy State University and a Master of Divinity Degree in Theology from the Samuel Dewitt Proctor School of Theology at Virginia Union University and currently enrolled to complete his Doctor of Ministry degree through Chicago Theological Seminary by 2014. Finally, he is a 21 year veteran of the United States Navy retiring in October of 2004 attaining the rank of full Commander. His life's mission is to empower a congregation of Christian believers to exercise their spiritual gifts of the Holy Spirit in order to be instruments of service to God going into all the world performing ministries of outreach, reconciliation and healing as God has ordained.

Reverend Jerry Rhyne came to North Carolina in 1992 after retiring as Air Force Chaplain where he served in many locations in the United States, Europe and Asia. In the 20 years since coming to North Carolina he has served as Staff Chaplain at CMC Northeast, as Chaplain of Hospice of Cabarrus County and as co-pastor with his wife. He has been on many mission trips to Mississippi, Louisiana, Iowa, North Dakota, the Dominican Republic and Haiti. Currently he is serving as Interim Associate Conference Minister of the Southern Conference of the United Church of Christ. His wife, the Rev. Marion L. Rhyne, is the Associate Pastor at Trinity Reformed United Church of Christ in Concord.