

**DES MOINES OFFICE:**  
5609 DOUGLAS AVE  
DES MOINES, IA 50310  
515.277.6369



**IOWA, NEBRASKA  
& SOUTH DAKOTA**  
• C O N F E R E N C E S •  
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

**SIOUX FALLS OFFICE:**  
3500 S PHILLIPS AVE, STE 100  
SIOUX FALLS, SD 57105  
605.338.8738

January 28, 2022

Friends and Members of the Iowa, Nebraska, and South Dakota UCC Conferences,

After significant discernment, I share with you that the tenure of my leadership as your Executive Conference Minister (ECM) will end on July 31, 2022. Our time in ministry together has been the most rewarding and challenging of my career. We created something new together, the partnership between our conferences that we call the Tri-Conference UCC Ministries (TCM)!

We celebrated Members in Discernment and ordinations, church anniversaries and newly called pastors, creative new vocations and retirements from ministry. We embraced the gospel work of becoming Open and Affirming and Anti-Racist conferences and started practicing transformational conversations with resources of curricula, partnerships, and deep faith. We resourced congregations and clergy through technology like updated websites, social media, and databases and through a brilliant staff of diverse gifts and skills. We remained steady and faithful in our stewardship of the conferences' resources. We did all of this while everything about how we work and live changed because of the CoVid-19 global pandemic. Our ministry has been miraculous in a number of ways!

It has also been very challenging. While we were accomplishing everything listed above and more, we also created new structures, roles, and practices to support that ministry among our three conferences. The boards of directors, staff and I updated Employee Handbooks, explored the roles of staff and board members, updated job descriptions, adopted new technologies, and wrote policies and procedures to govern and guide our work. It is the work of creating the systems and processes of our ministry that have been the most difficult. Through months of prayer and discernment, I decided that it is time I move on so another leader may continue this important work with the TCM.

In meaningful discussion, prayer, and discernment, the TCM Board of Directors approved a faithful transition plan. I will transition out of the role of Executive Conference Minister by July 31<sup>st</sup> and the TCM Board will search for an Acting ECM to begin work on August 1, 2022. They have already begun that work. The TCM BOD is well supported by the national UCC resources, especially national UCC staff person the Rev. Lee Albertson, as a guide for the Acting ECM search and call process. The TCM BOD will keep the conferences updated as to their progress along the way.

In the coming six months, the TCM Board of Directors and I will diligently process our experiences of the past four years, mining them for insight and growth for what comes next. We will continue projects identified from our recent time with a consultant, such as refining and clarifying HR policies and practices, identifying needs and resources for ongoing board member on-boarding and training, and engaging ways to build trust among members and leaders of the conferences.

For the work continuing beyond my tenure, there is high priority among board members to diligently engage a plan for assessing the TCM covenant that shapes this partnership of UCC

conferences. This is not a small endeavor and will be a point of interest regarding skills and gifts sought in the Acting ECM. Please look for ways to participate in that important work.

As we serve together in ministry in the coming months and we find ways to gather and say good-bye to one another, I am rooted in and proud of our commitment to live into God's extravagant welcome and advocate for justice, so that all know love, safety, belonging, and dignity. It has been a honor to serve as your Executive Conference Minister. I love you. I am praying for you. And I know that God is here among and within us in this time of transition and change.

In the blessing of being,



Rev. Brigit F. Stevens  
Executive Conference Minister  
Pronouns: she/her/hers  
[brigit@ucctcm.org](mailto:brigit@ucctcm.org)  
515-277-6369 (office)

Ministry, support, resources, and connections happen because of gifts to Our Church's Wider Mission and Friends of the Conference. Thank you for prayerfully considering a gift today!

[www.ucctcm.org/donate/](http://www.ucctcm.org/donate/)

*Rev. Brigit Stevens, Executive Conference Minister*  
*Rev. Ellis Arnold, Associate Conference Minister*  
*Rev. Samantha Houser, Associate Conference Minister*  
*Rev. Sarah Rentzel Jones, Associate Conference Minister*  
*Rev. Kendy Miller, Associate Conference Minister*