

Communications Specialist

Rev. Michael Vollbrecht



Over the past year I have had the opportunity to serve as the Communications Specialist for the Conference, a role that I have enjoyed because it has put me in contact with many of the people and churches that are doing such good work here in KO. My first task since beginning in the position was to create a new website for the Conference that we could manage on our own. In addition, I have worked to send out newsletters to the Conference every two weeks.

An early idea for these newsletters was to include the voices of Conference members, and so authorized ministers, lay members, and Conference Council members were invited to write articles and share their wisdom and experiences with us. I hope to continue this practice in 2022, and so if you're interested in writing for the newsletter, please let me know!

One of my hopes is to continue to engage the Conference in more virtual experiences, especially since this is how we've had to primarily interact with one another over the past 18 months. In 2021, I enjoyed putting together an interview with KO's Chaplains, as well as a virtual Pride Event co-facilitated with Julia Gaughan, as well as the production of an introductory video of the Conference that was meant to be shared at General Synod. You can watch the video by visiting our website or Facebook page. I look forward to creating other video content, as well as hosting more virtual gatherings and classes, in the new year.

I am driven by a calling to connect the people and churches within our Conference, especially as we welcome new Conference leadership in 2022. Because I did not grow up in the UCC, it has taken me awhile to understand what a Conference "does." Over the years, I've come to see that a Conference isn't some hidden organization within the UCC, or merely a piece of church bureaucracy, rather the Conference is what we make it. The Conference has the resources to bring churches together, to empower its ministers to get into some "good trouble" here in KO, and to spread the work of the UCC to areas that need to hear and know that wherever they are, and whoever they are, they are welcome here. This message saves lives, and sharing the message is vitally important to me.

That's the message I found in the UCC, and I am grateful to have had the ability to "plug in" to the Conference over the past year. I am excited about what we can do, together.

Peace,

Rev. Michael Vollbrecht