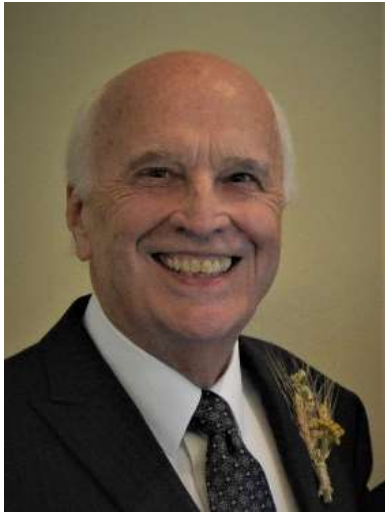


# Ministry Assistant for Pastoral and Congregational Relations

Rev. Fred Kandeler



For the last fifteen months, since this volunteer position on the Conference Staff was approved and implemented with my being called to serve as an authorized minister in the KO Conference of the UCC, the focus has been on assisting the Conference Minister and the Conference Committee on Ministry with assigned responsibilities related to both pastoral and congregational transitions, as well as participation as a member of the KOC Core Team related to the Kansas Leadership Center's leadership edge training program. Participation as an additional staff person for the Conference Staff and Conference Council meetings was also implemented.

In the area of Pastoral Relations, one assignment to be a support resource person for a clergy person transitioning into retirement has been completed. A small group monthly meeting on-line via Zoom calls has been established to provide support for the retired clergy of the conference by building a sense of continuing community through gatherings that keep folks in touch with each other and the retirement journey that they are experiencing. Twelve (about 1/3) of the retired clergy in the conference have participated. A second small group monthly meeting on-line via Zoom has been established for a select group of pastors serving in rural churches or small towns. This small group focuses on sharing support for one another related to the common challenges and tasks being faced by their congregations. Seven of the nine have been able to actively participate. Outreach to another seven rural church pastors will be made by the end of this year. On-line seminars offered by the UCC have supported this work with continuing education on such topics as assessing the capabilities of rural congregations and guidance for authorized ministers transitioning to retirement. Participation in on-line workshops provided by General Synod 33 were also valuable.

The area of Congregational Relations has focused on a primary assignment to guide a rural, small-town congregation through the process of calling a new pastor to their part-time ministry. In addition, occasional pulpit supply has been provided for four congregations.

