

## Message from the Illinois Conference President

Rev. Charles Maney

### Illinois Conference Minister Candidate Announced

At our video Annual Business Meeting on June 27, you will get to see and vote for the candidate selected by the Search Committee for our next Conference Minister, the Rev. Molly Carlson.

Rev. Carlson was an easy consensus choice by the Search Committee. She brings a wealth of experience and focused energy to the various tasks of this work. We are arranging opportunities for a Zoom “Meet and Greet” in advance of the meeting. Molly is currently serving as an Interim Pastor. That congregation has generously offered to make the candidate available to us as early as August. We are blessed.



Rev. Molly Carlson is a graduate of The College of Wooster with a BA in mathematics and Pacific School of Religion with a Master of Divinity. She has been ordained within the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) for 19 years and has held Ordained Ministerial Partner Standing with the United Church of Christ for the last eight years. Molly has served in a variety of contexts including local, regional, and national settings of the church. She has served as an interim minister, church planter, solo pastor, head of staff, and church consultant. Her ministry has taken her to Indiana, California, South Dakota, Oregon, and Tennessee.

Currently, Rev. Carlson is serving as Intentional Interim Minister at Eastwood Christian Church in Nashville, Tenn. Prior to this position, she completed her term as Designated Term Conference Minister for the Central Pacific Conference of the United Church of Christ. Molly is committed to lifelong learning and has recently completed training as a professional coach as well as with The Art of Hosting. She also completed all the requirements toward her D.Min. at Lexington Theological Seminary including a final project titled “Creating Church in a Postmodern Context.”

The following statement from Rev. Carlson’s ministerial profile speaks to the passion she brings to her work:

“I have a passion for middle-judicatory ministry. It is the big picture and the details. It is leadership and community building. It is networking and recruiting. It is conflict management and corporate celebration. It is administration and proclamation. It is fund raising and event planning. It is being a pastor to pastors – and their families. It is supporting congregations in transition. It is equipping congregations to do more together than any can do alone. It is building a community of faith that celebrates, grieves, supports, encourages, and learns from one another. [...] I believe there is an urgent need for the progressive church and the good news of Jesus Christ for this time and place – in every church, in every community, in each and every one of our neighbors.”

Molly grew up as a preacher’s kid in northwest Indiana. She stayed in the Great Lakes Region for college and then in a management role with Ameritech (now, again, AT&T). She and Michael have been married for 23 years and are proud parents to teenagers Sierra and Adam. They have three dogs, a whole lot of books and are looking forward to making a home once again near the Great Lakes.