

Rev. Fred Brandenburg



For better or worse, I'm a Missouri boy. If there is a better place to live and pastor, you'll have to "Show Me".

I grew up in my faith at Calvary E&R, St Louis, under the tutelage of Pastors Louis Lammert and Associate, Jim Tomasek. The building was near our house, so from early on, church was my second home. This is my understanding of "call"---I wanted to contribute my life to this amazing group of people, "the body of Christ", who had loved and nurtured me.

I began my higher education at Harris Teachers College, a stimulating inter-racial experience, then transferred and received my degree in psychology at SIU. I entered Eden Seminary that fall. At a Christmas dance at Deaconess Hospital School of Nursing that year, I met my wife-to-be, Shelley Cooper. The aging Deaconess Sisters loved us seminary 'boys', the perfect matches for their young charges.

There is no better place than the Eden community of faculty and students to be mentored for leadership in the Church. Thus the stage was set for pastor and spouse. I would like to take this opportunity to thank Shelley for making me look good through the years. In addition to our lifelong teamwork in the church, she also worked part-time for 40 years as a cancer screening nurse.

Our first church was Emanuel UCC, Jackson. The congregation welcomed this green young couple with genuine acceptance and caring, teaching us how to

pastor. It was there that our two children, Seth and Sara, were born.

It was most difficult to leave, but after 7 1/2 years, we needed to broaden our horizons and that we did. We accepted a call to Columbia UCC, which through the years was challenging and satisfying beyond measure---a very active, young congregation in an exciting university community. We were continually drawn by the talent, openness, and vision of the congregation. For 30 years we shared the adventure of faith, the "seasons of life", from birth to death. It was here that our children grew, and our son, Seth, died at age 24 of Hodgkin's disease. The congregation then pastored us.

From a Conference perspective, the two areas in which I was most heavily involved, were Outdoor Ministries and Campus Ministry. Through junior high, senior high, and college camps, float trips, trail rides, hikes, and campouts---we encountered where nature, Spirit, and sharing came together.

A focus of Columbia UCC was Campus Ministry. In fact, the congregation assumed leadership of campus work on behalf of the Conference. College student outreach was at the heart of the church, and students were part of the lifeblood of the congregation.

On Association and Conference levels, I have been active through the years in many committees and programs, even taking my turn as Conference Moderator.

Our life has been fulfilling and we feel immeasurably blessed by the love shared. Our daughter, Sara, married Eric Schweain, and they live close by in St. Louis. Sara is a managing editor of a pharmaceutical publishing company, and Eric is a teacher/coach at Marquette High School. They have three of the most endearing kids/grandkids you can imagine---Mia, Isaac, and Riley.

After retiring from Columbia UCC, we served 2 very enjoyable interims with Peace UCC in Hartsburg, and St John's UCC in High Hill. I have since taken the opportunity to supply in many of the fine congregations in our area.

In these later years, like Thoreau, we have moved "to the woods", our old family place near Hermann, overlooking the Missouri River valley. Come join us on our deck for a glass of wine and spirit.

Rev. A. Gayle Engel



Greetings friends and colleagues in the Missouri Mid-South Conference!

Donna and I regret not being with you all for the Annual Meeting. I have been consulting with the Rocky Mountain Conference UCC and we will be with them in Salt Lake City at the RMC Annual Meeting. We cherish the memories of our time with the Missouri Mid-South family and our thoughts will transcend the miles as you gather in Columbia!

My ministry began in Washington-Labadie, an outstanding area with wonderful people! Following those five plus years I transitioned into Conference Ministries which covered 35 years until my retirement in Missouri Mid-South at the end of 2005. The 15 years with you in Missouri Mid-South was a blessed time. Coming back to Missouri where I was raised and where I had served brought many challenges as we focused on the renewal of the Conference and many joys as we worked together in a mutual bond accomplishing significant mission and ministry. Donna and I cherish the memories and we will always be grateful for your gracious support. During the 15 years with you we hosted two UCC General Synods - St. Louis '93 and Kansas City '01. We changed our name to Missouri Mid-South to be more inclusive of "who we are" as a UCC family in Missouri, Arkansas, and Memphis, Tennessee. Our Conference made significant strides during this time in the placement of women clergy, in becoming more diverse and inclusive of persons of color and the LGBT members within the structures of the Conference and as representative on national boards and committees.

OCWM and special giving remained strong during this era enabling mission and ministry. I look back on this period as a very faithful and fruitful time and am grateful to have been your Conference Minister.

In my ministries these I have had the opportunity to work with many talented colleagues and I have been able to put together quality staff teams. This was true in Missouri Mid-South as I was involved in selecting persons you will remember: Denise Hill, who has returned back to Missouri in Kansas City, Dan Hatch, Shirley Asmussen, Bob Atkinson, Jeff and Laurie Fulk, and of course Dale Parson, who is still doing a great ministry among you. Then there were two more who were members of our team and went on to Conference Ministries after I left: Sheldon Culver in Illinois South and John Dorhauer in the Southwest Conference. John has achieved another significant place in our denomination as the new General Minister and President. These are all wonderful colleagues and I am grateful they were with me in MMSUCC.

I also am grateful for the faithful Moderators, members of committees and task forces who served us so well. I cannot say enough about all of these dedicated clergy and laity. They each brought great gifts as part of our MMSUCC team for which I will be eternally grateful.

Below is a listing of the places I have served during these years since Ordination in 1966. Each of these settings have blessed my life and provided a diverse and supportive setting for my family:

2006-present, Consulting with conferences, national entities, and churches

1990-2006, Conference Minister Missouri Mid-South Conference UCC, St. Louis, Mo.

1979-1990, Conference Minister Kansas-Oklahoma Conference UCC, Wichita, Ks.

1975-1979, Associate Conference Minister Northern California-Nevada Conference UCC, San Francisco, Ca.

1971-1975, Associate Conference Minister Southwest Conference UCC, (Arizona, New Mexico, and El Paso, Tx.) Phoenix, Az.

1966-1971, Shared Ministry St. Peter's UCC, Washington, Mo. and Pilgrim UCC, Labadie, Mo.

Honored Statespersons – 50 Years

One of my most gratifying accomplishments during my entire ministry, is being one of the architects of the Next Generation Leadership Initiative (NGLI) of the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance. We designed this initiative from a vision and developed it into implementation. Now 8 years later there are 75 young clergy under 35, who are in their first pastorates, involved in this major leadership development initiative. It is empowering participants and the UCC as we evolve “the church of the future.” I have Chaired the Steering Committee for NGLI since its inception and am involved in every aspect of this initiative. This is a gratifying experience!

Finally, Donna retired as a Music Teacher in the Parkway School District at the time of my retirement and often travels with me as I work with different groups across the country. We have had great times these years and had several overseas travels with our grown kids and their families. We now are grandparents of two boys. Our kids are doing great -- Michael is a faculty member and Research Scientist in Evolutionary Biology at the University of Kansas and on the faculty at the American Museum of Natural History in NYC. Elisabeth is Curator of Collections at Arkansas State University and our youngest, Jeffrey, is in Investment Operations at the home office of American Century Investments in Kansas City. We see them often and are proud of their accomplishments.

Blessings to you and the churches in MMSUCC as you embrace the “new thing” that God is doing in our midst!

Honored Statespersons – 50 Years

Rev. Wayne Hoffman



staff, especially Gene Wehrli, Walt Brueggeman, Oscar Rumpf. Neighbors at Eden, Don & Dorothy Chrisman were also influential.

Seminary intern year served at Austintown Community Church, Youngstown, Ohio; three months hospital chaplaincy at Deaconess Hospital, Milwaukee, Wisconsin. Served St. John in Brighton, Illinois 1966-1968; Evangelical UCC, Highland, Illinois 1968-1970 as youth and education pastor. Also assisted with youth and educational work in Illinois South Conference and Illinois Council of Churches.

Changed careers to become a State Farm agent, following in my grandfather and father's footsteps.

Taught youth for Missouri Mid-South Conference during first few years back in my hometown of Saint Charles, MO. Served pulpit supply in Saint Charles County, Lincoln County, Warren County, Franklin County and St. Louis City and County as needed. Served on Eastern Association Council for many years. Served on Implementing Ministry Committee of Mid-South Conference. Boundary trainer and developer of boundary training material. For the last 24 months, served on the search committee for our new Conference minister.

Family update: Married to Christine for 34 years. Son, Joe and daughter, Diana. One granddaughter, Rachel.

Memories/Influences/Eden: Rev. Walter Hotz, pastor during my teen years, encouraged me towards ministry. Church camps, church school teachers, State Farm agents (Howard Robertson and Les Hoffman, my father) were both great examples of Christian lay servants. Rev. Vic Schoen, entire Eden