

CASE STUDY

Missouri Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church

COLUMBIA, MSOVERVIEW

When the oldest United Methodist church in Kansas City, Missouri, explored how to reinvigorate and refresh its presence in the community, its leadership decided that becoming a satellite location of the largest United Methodist church in the country— The United Methodist Church of the Resurrection, based in neighboring Kansas—would be the best option, but much work was required to make that dream a reality.

Challenges

An unusual transition like this did require a lot of logistical work not only between the two congregations but also between the Missouri Conference and the Great Plains Conference, which hold the property in trust for local congregations. Most of Central's assets were transferred to Resurrection, subject to all donor restrictions.

Another challenge involved the status of Missouri-based members who join Resurrection, which belongs to the Great Plains Conference. How those members interface with the annual conferences—and how they are accounted for in annual apportionments and within the structure and governance of the church were important and somewhat novel issues that needed to be addressed.

Anyone who becomes a member at the Resurrection site will be a member of Resurrection, served by pastors appointed by the Great Plains Conference. This means the members who



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join Resurrection will not be eligible for leadership roles in Missouri that require membership in a Missouri congregation. That said, it would be possible for a participant in Resurrection's site to hold their local church membership in another Missouri congregation.

As with all the Missouri sites operated by Resurrection, pastors at the site will be appointed by the Great Plains bishop. Clergy membership within the annual conference is largely independent of appointment.

Solution

The Missouri Annual Conference, Great Plains Annual Conference and Resurrection finalized a Memorandum of Understanding related to all of Resurrection's Missouri sites. Under that MOU, apportionments are calculated and paid by Resurrection's Missouri sites as if they were standalone churches in Missouri; therefore, they will report their year-end statistics to Missouri and have their apportionments calculated based on Missouri's expense-based formula, paid to the Missouri Annual Conference.

Additionally, it was made possible for a participant in Resurrection's site to hold their local church membership in another Missouri congregation, even though members who join Resurrection would not be eligible for leadership roles in Missouri that require membership in a Missouri congregation. As with all the Missouri sites operated by Resurrection, pastors at the site will be appointed by the Great Plains bishop. Clergy membership within the annual conference is largely independent of appointment.

Result

Now operating as Resurrection Brookside, the church is poised to build on its nearly 180-year history of ministry. "This is a win-win for Missouri and Resurrection," said Rev.

Nate Berneking, Director of Financial & Administrative Ministries at The Missouri Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church. “Resurrection is extremely successful in ministry conduct and will provide three strong sites to support Missouri’s ministries for many years to come.”