



Community of Christ

Midlands USA Mission Center

March 29th, 2025

Dear Members of the Midlands Mission Center,

In preparation for the **Spring Mission Center Conference**, scheduled for **Sunday, April 13th, 2025, 2:30 PM** at the **Mission Road Congregation (7842 Mission Road, Prairie Village, KS 66201)** or via Zoom (**midlandsmc.org for the link**), we want to share some observations, comments, and a plan for our next faithful steps together.

As we reflect on the past and envision the future, we are reminded of the collective strength and dedication that have carried us forward as one unified Mission Center. Midlands is home to eighteen congregations, along with six affiliate organizations governed by six boards. What many may not be aware of is that Midlands USA Mission Center is the fourth largest Mission Center in the United States and the tenth largest worldwide. **The ministry we provide collectively matters in the life of the church and within the communities we serve.**

In 2020, a pivotal shift occurred within our mission center as we transitioned from paid leadership to a volunteer-led model. This strategic decision allowed us to redirect human resource funds towards hiring a young adult minister and a part-time bookkeeper/recorder, with volunteer leaders serving across teams. Over the past five years, this model has evolved and currently includes a full-time **peace and justice specialist**, a part-time **bookkeeper/recorder**, and volunteer **youth and young adult leaders**. This approach has been instrumental in strengthening Midlands, fostering shared leadership, and embracing the diverse giftedness of our community.

Through this shared leadership model, the Mission Center has experienced tremendous financial flexibility and agility, enabling us to:

- complete vital HVAC and pool repairs for both campgrounds.
- provide financial support to campgrounds during COVID-19.
- fully repay the Doniphan loan.
- nearly eliminate reunion deficits.
- support our camping programs and camperships, ensuring accessibility for all.
- make significant contributions to the Bridge of Hope initiative.

Looking Ahead: With the recent call for Kat Hnatyshyn to serve in the Council of Twelve Apostles, and Steve Beckman's announced intent to step down as mission center financial office (MCFO) team lead at the end of 2025, we find ourselves at a unique crossroads, contemplating the

exciting possibilities for ongoing leadership in Midlands. As we navigate this transition, we remain deeply committed to:

- shared leadership and ministry.
- advancing mission both inside and outside church buildings.
- promoting peace and justice within our communities.
- cultivating and creating sacred spaces.
- supporting discipleship, priesthood formation, and leadership development.

Looking to the future, we envision a new leadership structure led by a **single-line administrator** who will oversee both the mission center president and financial officer teams on a full-time basis. This dedicated role will provide the time and focus necessary to nurture and explore innovative approaches to ministry and mission, while also having the availability to deliver critical support and oversight for financial operations and emerging opportunities. This leadership will be complemented by the ongoing contributions of our peace and justice specialist, bookkeeper/recorder, and other essential volunteer roles.

With the support of field leaders, we are pleased to announce the appointment of **Betty Smith Campbell** (Webb Road congregation) as the volunteer mission center president (MCP) team lead to guide us through this transitional period. Betty's leadership, vision, and organizational expertise will be invaluable as we chart a new path forward. Alongside Betty, Allen and Stan will continue serving on the president team, ensuring stability and continuity. With the support of the conference, Betty will be set apart as the interim mission center president team lead.

Budget Implications: To support the transition to a single-line administrator, we propose the following budget amendment for Midlands' Spring Conference:

- For 2025, an increase of **\$50,000** in the Human Resource line and a corresponding **\$50,000** increase in income from the Operating/Reserve Fund.

Future years:

- For 2026, an additional increase of approximately **\$55,000** is projected in the human resource line, along with a corresponding increase in income from the Operating/Reserve Fund. This represents an increase of approximately \$105,000 compared to the current 2025 budget.
- By 2027, with the maturation of a HUD property, we anticipate generating new revenues from this resource, reducing reliance on the Operating/Reserve Fund and potentially ensuring financial sustainability for the single-line administrator position. *However, it is important to recognize that this expectation is subject to unpredictable circumstances and variables and therefore cannot be guaranteed.*

Following conference approval of both leadership change and budget revision, we will initiate the search for a single-line administrator who will gradually assume responsibilities starting with the MCFO duties and later transitioning into MCP duties.

Through collective discernment with the apostle, current mission center leadership, and the Leadership Advisory Council, future leadership updates will be shared at or around Mission Center Conference in October 2026.

We thank you for your unwavering commitment to the Midlands Mission Center. Together, through shared ministry and vision, we will continue to nurture and strengthen our congregations, embracing the mission of Christ in all that we do. If you have any questions or insights, please do not hesitate to reach out.

With gratitude and anticipation,

Midlands Mission Center Leadership Team
(Allen, Kat, Stan, Steve, and Emily)

cc: Betty Smith Campbell