



Southern Conference

Report to Synod Assembly

June 2019
Pastor Melissa Waterman, Dean

Congregations: 18

Congregations in transition: 8

Professional Leaders:

- 7 clergy under call
- 2 On Leave from Call
- 4 interims
- 8 retired clergy
- 3 SAMs

A few of the Southern Conference professional leaders met in Carlinville in September for their annual continuing education. The Southern Conference had their yearly check-in meeting in October at St. Luke's in Campbell Hill. November, we hosted Pastor Ken Tegtmeier (Assistant to the Bishop) who presented on the responsibilities of the Southern Conference. In December, we met at Our Redeemer in Marion. Pastor Marlin Otte presented on the history of Seminex and The Crossings continuing education event. January we met at Epiphany in Carbondale and Pastor Paul Waterman presented on his trip to the Parliament of the World Religions in Toronto, Canada. In February, Pastor Elise Rothfus, DEM did a great presentation at Mt. Moriah in Anna about stewardship. March was our yearly Bishop's colloquy held at Lutheran Church of the Cross in Metropolis. We did not meet in April due to Holy Week.

The Southern Conference had their yearly assembly on April 7th at Our Redeemer in Marion. This Worship & Music event was led by Dr. Stephen Mager. It included two 45 minute workshops on worship, teaching and leading new songs for choirs & congregation, small congregation music resources, worship planning and more. The event concluded with a special worship experience of *Holy Manna, a Folksong Communion Service* that was been written by our guest workshop leader and service conductor, Dr. Stephen Mager. Choirs from area churches were also invited to share a song of their choice. The service was further enhanced by talented instrumentalists from area churches. Dr. Mager has served as organist and choirmaster for Bethel Evangelical Lutheran Church (ELCA), Saint Louis, since 1988. So he fully understands the congregational dynamics of worship in small congregations with limited resources. Dr. Mager holds a Doctorate in choral conducting from the Jacobs School of Music at Indiana University, where he also completed his master's studies. His minor field studies include organ and piano. Dr. Mager has served as Artistic Director and Conductor of the Masterworks Chorale, Belleville, Illinois, since 2009. In 2004, Dr. Mager was appointed composer-in-residence by the Bach Society of Saint Louis. *For more info & to hear music go to www.stephenmager.com*

The Southern Conference continues to struggle with church vacancies. We continue to meet the second and fourth Tuesdays of the month for text study.