

## Moving Forward

Zion UCC and St. Paul's UCC have formed a Moving Forward Committee to explore the process and various aspects of creating a new congregation together. Through prayer, study, and consultation, we believe God's Spirit is leading us to have intentional conversation with one another about the possibility of what we could do together.

We are using the book *Better Together* as our primary guiding resource, which was recommended by our Pennsylvania Southeast Conference (PSEC) leadership. Within that book, there are four key questions we are to ask ourselves:

Would our congregation *be better* by coming together than remaining separate?

Could we *accomplish more* together than we could separately?

Would our congregation be *better served* if we joined together?

Could the kingdom of God be *further enlarged* by joining together?

The leadership of St. Paul's UCC & Zion UCC unanimously and enthusiastically answered all four of those questions with a resounding "Yes." We are finding that our two churches have much in common, and a common sense of the ministry to which God is calling. In just these few short months, we have already begun to experience that we can do more in mission outreach, study, and worship together, while forming and growing some wonderful friendships with each other.

We do not yet know for sure where this process will lead, but we are excited and hopeful about the possibilities. We are in the very beginning stages of conversation and exploration.

During this exploration process, we plan to continue to have combined worship services, Sunday school, Bible study, youth group, and mission outreach opportunities. We fully expect that if God leads us to be together, we will be able to fulfill those ministries and more better together as one in Christ, and form even more meaningful and supportive Christian friendships with one another.

The Moving Forward Committee is being co-chaired by Cory Putt from Zion UCC and Kirk Aulenbach from St. Paul's UCC. Both pastors are members of the committee, as are an equal representation from both congregations. Please keep the members and the work of this committee and the ministry of our churches in your prayers.