

Frequently Asked Questions:

What's the short version of the proposed plan?

Northern Association is considering participation in the Unified Conference-Association Model. This would transition essential Association responsibilities—such as ministerial oversight, support for churches, and event coordination—to settings of the Conference. AND, as the Association concludes its ministry, a new set of opportunities will begin. The Conference setting (reminder: the Conference is the collective of churches and members) will work with regional representatives to host regional gatherings that promote health, wellbeing, and vitality among clergy and churches.

Who plans the regional gatherings?

Each region—including Northern—will have **event liaisons**—representatives from the region who are on the Conference Board and Covenanting Committee on Ministry—who help plan gatherings in partnership with Conference Staff, local leaders, and host churches. Others with interest can help in planning gatherings.

Is this a new thing?

No and Yes. Many Associations across the UCC—including two within our own Conference—have already transitioned to a model of the Conference-acting-as-an association. What is new for us is a plan for hosting regular regional gatherings. This **provisional structure** is designed to be adaptive and reviewed regularly to make sure it meets the needs of the Church today.

How is this better?

This model reduces the burden on volunteers, frees up energy spent on institutional upkeep, and redirects it toward connection and ministry. By sharing responsibilities across the Conference, we gain support from staff and leadership while still gathering in our region for shared learning, worship, and fellowship.

Where will my Ministerial Standing be held?

Ministerial Standing would be held by the Southern California Nevada Conference.

Is there a polity term for this?

UCC polity (aka governance) has a provision that allows a Conference to be given the responsibilities of an Association. When this happens, the “Conference is acting as an Association.”

Where will remaining Association funds go?

Any remaining Association funds will be transferred to the Conference with a designated purpose: to continue supporting ministry in local churches. The funds would be used to initially support regional events and continue to provide cost-sharing for MID psychological assessments

Do we -as folks from Northern-still have a place?

Yes! This model is not a hierarchy, but a covenantal invitation. The northern region vital part of the wider Conference. Your churches, voices, and gifts matter. This model maintains your regional reality, while offering more sustainable ways to participate in shaping our shared life and ministry.

What happens if the Association votes “no”?

If the Northern Association determines it wants to continue as an Association, then Association leaders will work diligently to manage the affairs. The Executive Committee would meet, volunteers would be recruited, and another Association meeting would need to be called to consider and approve nominations for the next Association of leaders.