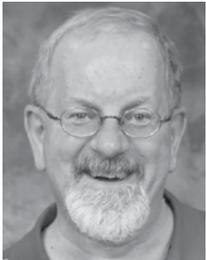


Communications



Steve Dennie
Director of
Communications

As Communications Director, I'm on call to serve the various ministries of the United Brethren National Office—primarily UB Global, the leadership teams, and the various functions of the Bishop's office. I write stuff, I edit stuff, I proofread stuff, and more and more, I design stuff.

I've now lurked about this building for 43 years, and have walked these halls with 11 different bishops. I'm thankful for the chance to serve my denomination in a way that has been meaningful, fulfilling, fun, and perfectly suited to my gifting.

Print Publications

Most print publications from the UB National Office come through my office. My role might include any combination of the following — writing, editing, graphic design, proofreading — but more often than not involves all four.

I do the annual UB Year in Review, update the Discipline, and make revisions to the Pastoral Ministry Handbook. I edit and compile all reports for the ELT meetings, as well as for the US National Conference. I also produce materials for various denominational events. I also handle quite a few projects for UB Global. They include prayer cards for missionaries, the *Worldview* newsletter, inserts for Thank Offering and the Easter Offering, and the quarterly newsletter for a missionary serving in a restricted-access country.

Internet Strategy

I oversee much of what the national office does on the internet.

Ub.org. This is the official website of the Church of the United Brethren in Christ, USA. If you're looking for information related to the denomination, I want you to be able to find it at UB.org.

UBCentral.org. This is where I publish news about what's happening in the United Brethren world. The UB Daily News is a daily email which goes out around 11:00 each morning containing all items posted on UB-Central during the previous 24 hours. Since 2005, when we adopted the current structure, I've seen a steady decrease in the amount of church news sent to me, and I've come to interpret that as a decrease in appetite for news from other local churches. But I continue sensing a strong appetite for news related to UB missions, Huntington University, and other things we do cooperatively.

UBGlobal.org. This is our missions website. I pretty much take the lead in maintaining and updating this website, with help from David Kline and Angela Vincenti.

Facebook. Facebook continues to grow in popularity. We're now up to 2250 "follows," an increase of nearly 300 since 2019. Facebook is valuable for getting information to a large number of people quickly (perfect for urgent prayer needs). Many persons share posts on their own personal or church timelines, thereby greatly increasing the reach of our posts. The denominational page is at Facebook.com/unitedbrethren. UB Global has their own page at facebook.com/ubglobalministries.

Other. We use various e-letters to get information out. Community Church Builder is a nice tool to communicate with UB ministers, but Cathy Reich takes care of that. I also manage a number of UB-related domain names, manage the UB email addresses (Gmail branded with the UB name), and give oversight to our Mailchimp (mass emailings) and Wufoo (online forms) accounts.

Other Things

Events. On odd-numbered years, like 2021, I spend the early part of the year focused on matters pertaining to the upcoming US National Conference. On even-numbered years, I assist with communications resources for the pastor summits and the UB Women's Conference. Every year, I work on materials for the ELT meetings and Cluster Leader Winter Gathering.

Filemaker. I built and maintain the Filemaker database, which has been an important tool for the UB National Office for over 20 years. It contains extensive information about our ministers, statistical information on UB churches going back to 1996, and all kinds of related data. We use the Filemaker database for various



kinds of mailings, and it interfaces with the online church directory. In early 2021, we moved Filemaker to a new hosting company; the company which had hosted us for at least 15 years closed down.

The History Guy

I've enjoyed participating via Zoom in the UB History Courses. Bob Bruce gives me a chunk of time, during which I talk mostly about the UB church during the 1800s. Then I pop in now and then to eavesdrop and participate in the Q&A times. It's fun.

We get a lot of phone calls from people with history-related questions, especially people doing genealogy research. Some great-great-grandfather was a United Brethren minister, and they want to know what records we have on him (usually: none, because he was with the "other" group). All of those calls get sent to me...and, frankly, I enjoy them.

Bishop Todd Fetters and others come to me with questions like, "Are you aware of anything in our history about..." I always enjoy providing or finding an answer.

Since 2017, I've been writing a book with the working title of "The United Brethren Church During the Civil War." I had hoped it would be done in time for the 2021 National Conference, but not gonna happen. But I'm well along and have found some truly fascinating nuggets. I've compiled a database of over 2100 UB or UB-related men who served in uniform during the Civil War, 800 of whom died in combat or from disease. I've discovered some amazing United Brethren people (four Medal of Honor winners!), and can't wait to share them with the rest of the denomination.

On the Personal Side

A week after National Conference, Pam and I will celebrate our 32nd anniversary. She's a partner in a CPA firm, which is good, because I'm purely a wordsmith and numbers freak me out. We are both introverts, so the lockdown suited us both very nicely. If I had to be locked down with somebody, I'm glad it was with Pam.

Back around 2005, Miniere's Disease stole over half of the hearing in my left ear (and gave me vertigo), and in 2017 a virus took half the hearing in my right ear. So I say, "Huh?" a lot. But it's livable, and not nearly as annoying as you might think. My philosophy is that, if I don't hear something, I figure it must not be important. To which Bishop Fetters mentions such things as police sirens.

Last Thanksgiving, I began having major problems with my eyesight, which really affected my work. So in April, I had two surgeries to remove cataracts. People told me I would be amazed at how well I would be able to see afterwards. They were right.

In March 2018, a biopsy showed that I have prostate cancer. A second biopsy earlier this year showed that it's growing, and "active surveillance" is not enough. Two options: surgery, or radiation. I'm going with radiation. The process starts in October, and the actual Cyberknife radiation treatments will happen in November.

So, to recap: I have terrible hearing, my head sometimes spins, and I've got cancer quietly doing bad things. Oh, and I'm claustrophobic. But, I've now got really good eyesight.

And Finally....

I really enjoy working at the UB National Office. We've got a wonderful, drama-free staff. We laugh a lot. It's a delight to work with Bishop Todd Fetters, who is giving really good strategic direction to our churches. The UB Global staff rocks. I miss Jeff Bliejerveld, who led UB Global in some really good directions, but I'm excited to see where Frank Yang takes things. Marci Hammel has really come into her own as Finance Director, and I value her leadership in that area (we don't talk about finances, because, as I said, numbers freak me out, but we talk a lot about cats).

Cathy Reich and I worked together in the 70s in the printshop, in the 80s in the new Church Services department, and since 2007 in the bishop's office. She's got a ton of gifts which she uses with a servant's heart on behalf of the denomination. She's moving into a new role, and won't be in the office (much), but I'm glad she'll still be around.

I turn 65 in October. I'll be cutting back to three days a week, starting in January 2022, and am confident everything I need to do will still get done.

As always, it's been a privilege, and a fulfilling one, to serve the Church of the United Brethren in Christ.