

MINUTES OF THE 2012 ANNUAL MEETING
Vermont Conference United Church of Christ
217th Annual Meeting
June 2-3, 2012
Vermont Technical College

The 217th Annual Meeting of the Vermont Conference United Church of Christ was held on a Saturday and Sunday at Vermont Technical College, June 2-3, 2012. The theme of the meeting was “Go Out with Joy!”

SATURDAY, JUNE 2, 2012

PLENARY I

Call to Order

The Saturday session opened with a brief worship, which included the music of OIKOS and an opening prayer by Conference Minister Rev. Dr. Lynn Bujnak.

Rev. Kevin Goldenbogen, Moderator, extended greetings and a welcome to the 217th Annual Meeting of the Vermont Conference. He then called the meeting to order with these words: *God was and is and will be calling the Vermont Conference. The still-speaking God is also the still-calling God, calling us to worship, listen, be Christ’s hands and feet in the world, to learn and to grow, to be different than we have been but not more different than we need to be, not to be afraid but to go and tell, be good news in a world that is desperate for good news, to be radically inclusive. God is calling us to great joy, to “Go Out in Joy.”*

Registrar Rev. Dr. Lynn Bujnak, Conference Minister, confirmed that we had a quorum present.

Thanksgivings, Introductions, and Housekeeping

Rev. Debbie Ingram, Chair of the Board of Directors, introduced the members of the Board of Directors: Rev. Amy Pitton, Rev. Rona Kinsley, David Durfee, Rev. Mike Ford, Sheri Baer, Rev. Roger Daum, Malcolm Chase, David Damkot, Alan Parker. Board member Rev. Laurie Krooss was unable to attend.

Carrie Youngblood gave thanks to the Annual Meeting Planning Committee and to the Southwest Association for providing the “Red Vesters,” who are so clad to indicate their support if attendees have any questions about where to go and what to do while at the meeting.

Kevin extended further thanks to others who are supporting the community during the Annual Meeting: Brenda Egbert, nurse; Rev. Elissa Johnk, chaplain; Carrie Youngblood, timekeeper; Alan Parker, Speakout coordinator; Rev. Robin Junker and the youth of Bethany, UCC, Randolph, childcare providers; Lynn Thomas and Sybil McShane, registration coordinators; Rev. DaVita McCallister, Associate Connecticut Conference Minister for Youth and Young Adult

Ministries, keynote speaker; guest Florence Coppola, UCC, Cleveland, Disaster Ministries; guest Rev. Bert Marshall, regional director of Church World Service; Dinny Adamson, Hopkins Bookstore; members of OIKOS, Cliff Aerie, Carol Daggs, Connor Roundtree, Gary Smith; representative from Andover Newton Theological School, Peg Carroll; Daehler Hayes, Cornerstone Fund; David C. Williams, New England Representative of the United Church Fund; Phillip Brown, UCC Musicians Association; Rev. Hal Harrison, former Vermont Conference Minister; Rev. Avery Post, past UCC General Minister and President; Rev. Carole Carlson, past Conference Minister.

The gathered assembly voted unanimously to grant the guests privilege of voice without vote.

Thanks were expressed to Mary Jean Taylor of Vermont Technical College for support in facilities management this weekend.

Document F: Definitions and procedures (see attached)

It was moved and seconded that we adopt Document F for our guiding principles.

Discussion clarified that microphones will be brought to those unable to navigate to the microphone stands placed in the front of the auditorium.

Document F adopted unanimously.

Document G – Covenant for Dialogue (see attached)

It was moved and seconded that we adopt Document G as guidelines for how we will conduct ourselves to facilitate good conversation.

Document G adopted unanimously.

It was announced that Roberts Rules of Order will be used throughout the meeting and Rev. Dick White will be the Parliamentarian.

Rev. Susan Tarolli and Rev. Peter Plagge were elected as scribes for the meeting.

It was moved and seconded to approve the minutes from last year's annual meeting, which were previously approved by the Board of Directors. The minutes were approved unanimously.

Document C: Resolution on Continuation of Dillard Henderson Scholarship Fund

(see attached)

Jeanne Zammataro, member of Second Congregational Church in Londonderry and Vice Chair of the Vermont Conference Department of Mission, presented the Resolution on Continuation of Dillard Henderson Scholarship Fund. The Vermont Conference has been contributing the offering received during the annual meeting worship to Dillard University since 2004. In 2010 the fund reached the minimum level that allows the fund to give scholarships. The resolution commits this annual meeting to contribute odd year annual meeting offerings to the fund. It also seeks commitments by local churches to make offerings to the fund.

Jeanne Zammataro moves that the Vermont Conference commits itself to the health of this scholarship by dedicating the odd year offering to the fund for the next twenty years, and that it

be further resolved that the Vermont Conference, through its Department of Mission, will encourage Associations and local churches to do fundraising and make donations to further expand the Dillard Henderson Scholarship Fund; and be it further resolved that the Vermont Conference, through the Department of Mission Diversity Committee, encourage and seek ways to enter into meaningful relationship with the Dillard Community to our mutual benefit, education, and growth in grace and wisdom. The motion was seconded.

The discussion clarified that the money is given to Dillard and the scholarship fund is administered by Dillard, with the scholarships going to Dillard students. The criteria for the scholarship awards are academic performance, financial need, and the social connectedness of the applicant.

There was a request that the Conference consider keeping some of the funds in Vermont to support the local youth of color. It was stated that resources are limited and it would be a lot of work to create a whole new program. In lieu of that, Dillard is hoping to strengthen its relationship with Vermonters. It was also noted that the scholarships offer the Conference an opportunity to participate in reaping a national benefit that isn't reaped from a local program.

A concern was voiced that the 20-year commitment articulated in the resolution seems like a long time and there may be other, more pressing, needs that arise during that period of time. A suggestion was made to make the language a bit more flexible, less absolute.

Florence Coppola, Disaster Ministries, UCC, and others spoke about the devastation of Dillard as a result of Hurricane Katrina. Through these scholarships, the Vermont Conference is helping Dillard to rebuild and facilitate their work in education.

It was further clarified that the offering from Annual Meeting is typically between \$1500 and \$3000 each year. At present, there is no designation for the offerings collected in even years.

The motion to adopt the resolution as written carried, with some opposition.

Document D: Resolution on Disaster Preparedness (see attached)

Rev. Susanna Griefen, pastor of Dummerston Congregational Church, presented the resolution. She spoke of the deficiency in resources and responsiveness in Vermont after Tropical Storm Irene, while she also acknowledged the good work done by many. This resolution seeks to put into place structures to help us deal with disasters and mitigate their effect.

Rev. Susanna Griefen moves that the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ put into place structures and policies that will enable it to respond quickly and effectively in time of need. The motion was seconded.

The discussion clarified that the Department of Mission has the authority to establish a Disaster Response Committee, but it is being presented to the Annual Meeting in resolution form so as to encourage local churches and Associations to be engaged in moving the effort forward. The resolution also encourages local churches and Associations to connect with the local

governmental and other relief agencies to establish partnerships that will be useful in recovery efforts. The Conference has some money on hand for training volunteers and handling immediate administrative needs. If a disaster hits, an appeal will need to be made for additional support. Rev. Bert Marshall, Regional Director for Church World Service, offered an endorsement of the resolution. He said that “Only 14 states have disaster response programs. Preparedness is essential and [he] applauds the Vermont Conference in taking the initiative.”

The motion to adopt the resolution passed unanimously.

Worship

The meditation during worship was offered by the Rev. Da Vita McCallister, Associate Conference Minister for Youth and Young Adult Ministries in the Connecticut Conference. She invited the gathered assembly to consider *that love and lament go hand in hand; they are connected one to the other. Lamenting is different than grief and mourning. The latter are about me. The former is about you/others. Lamentation, like love, pulls us out of ourselves and into the other. Lamentation moves from sorrow to anger (Jeremiah), righteous indignation... We have to be connected enough through love to lament. It is the comingling of righteous indignation and love that is the fuel for building the kingdom of God.*

PLENARY II

Speakouts

Daehler Hayes, representing the Cornerstone Fund: The Cornerstone Fund is your fund. Anyone can invest, both individuals and churches. The money is not invested in the stock market but, instead, loaned, with interest, to local churches.

Rev. Abby Gackenheimer, pastor New Haven Congregational and Campus Minister with UVM Cooperative Christian Ministries: UVM Cooperative Christian Ministries is a Protestant-based program, which means anyone and everyone can participate. We have atheists and agnostics participating too, which is lots of fun.

Ann Vivian, chair of the Vermont Conference Nominating Committee: Thanks to everyone who is still serving and to the freshly willing. We have some last minute vacancies: three more people are needed for the Annual Meeting Planning Committee; one more person is needed for Church Growth, one clergy person is needed to serve as Vice Chair of the Department of Mission; and David Damkot is willing to serve one more year as treasurer, but would like to be replaced.

Chris Heintz, moderator of the Southwest Association, speaking on behalf of Friends of Vermont Conference: our contributions are the way to help expand the work of the Vermont Conference and the connections we make as far out and as far in as we can go.

Rev. Susanna Griefen, Disaster Preparedness: requests tools for Tool Trailer that was donated by the national setting so that volunteer groups can work in recovery throughout Vermont.

Jeanne Zammataro, Chair of the Prison Justice Committee of the Vermont Conference: Camp Agape needs 25 beach towels and 25 bath towels. Please contact Jeanne, whose contact info is in e-kit.

Rev. Mandy Lape-Freeburg, pastor of First Congregational Church, Windsor: “My son and husband delighted to bring music to your church. Every church that has had them has had them come back. Their schedule is filling up.”

Document B: Proposed Bylaw Change (see attached)

David Durfee moved the proposed conference bylaws change. Until now, the tasks of nurturing churches and determining standards for churches have resided in one committee. There is a need to separate these functions for optimal ministry. As with all proposed bylaw changes, the motion is made one day in advance of the discussion and vote.

Treasurer’s Report

Vermont Conference Treasurer, David Damkot, presented the treasurer’s report.

He offered affirmation of Jim Thomas’ work as Business Manager and expressed respect and appreciation for the rest of the staff of the Vermont Conference as well as for the Board of Directors.

In sum, the financial sustainability of the current level of ministry through the Vermont Conference Office continues to be a concern. There is nothing left to reduce on the expenditure side of the Conference budget. The upside potential of investment growth seems greater than the downside potential. Contributions to Our Church’s Wider Mission (OCWM) are at the lowest point since 1992. Per capita income remained essentially the same.

If *Document H* (see attached) is passed, assets will be moved to pay off the mortgage of the Vermont Conference. This action will reduce liquid assets and increase equity. It will also likely reduce expenditures.

John Holme, Chair of Finance Committee, presented the other members of the committee: Rev. Mary Nelson Abbot, David Damkot, Robert Delaney, Rev. Richard White, Jim Thomas, and Rev. Dr. Lynn Bujnak.

This is the group that reviewed and made revisions to 2012 budget and drafted the 2013 budget. The 2013 budget is balanced and represents the best thinking of this committee and the Board of Directors. The staff is the most important part of the operations of the Conference. To honor their service, a 3% increase to their compensation is being proposed. The Finance Committee has also considered the recommendation for paying off the mortgage. They strongly support the proposed budget and encourage the Conference’s support as well.

Jim Thomas, Business Manager and Stewardship Associate, reviewed the year-end numbers and the finance-related proposals. Operating expenses for the year were \$39,000 under budget; however, operating income was \$43,000 under budget. Thus, after four years of surpluses, the Conference ended the year with a small budget deficit of \$3,819. Per capita income held steady, while OCWM income decreased by \$11,000. This was an especially disappointing outcome, given that the budget had anticipated a \$30,000 increase in OCWM. This represents the third straight year that OCWM recorded a decrease and that decrease is the biggest single factor in budget results and planning. The decrease in OCWM income also results in the increased use of the Unrestricted Fund, which is currently valued at half the value it was 15 years ago.

Document H: Proposals for Paying Off Mortgage (see attached)

At present, the Conference mortgage is an expense of \$24,000/year, \$10,000 of which is interest. The proposal is to transfer \$155,000 from the Unrestricted Fund to pay off the mortgage. This would save the Conference \$10,000/year in interest payments. It would remove \$24,000 of expense. It will also reduce the monies available to draw, though this is considered a transfer of assets, not a withdrawal from the Unrestricted Fund.

In an effort to replenish the Unrestricted Fund, the Board of Directors and Finance Committee are proposing a special fundraising campaign. The 217 Years of Faithful Ministry Campaign affirms the value of the Unrestricted Fund and seeks to replace the money transferred to pay off the mortgage. The campaign will seek 1,000 contributions in increments of \$217, which will be deposited into the Unrestricted Fund.

These proposals will be moved now and discussed and voted tomorrow.

Document E: Proposed 2013 Budget (see attached)

The Finance Committee expects that income will begin a modest recovery from the low points of 2009-2011. If, however, the mortgage-related motions are not passed, this budget would not be viable. This budget also illustrates the hope for an increase in OCWM contributions of 2%. It assumes that per capita income will hold steady. Conference staff and department budgets show a slight increase in expenses and the distribution of OCWM stays the same, 65% to the Conference and 35% to the national setting. Total budget: \$693,185.

What do you get for \$693K?

- ▲ support to national setting
- ▲ pastoral search and call support
- ▲ resource center
- ▲ financial support for the Atkinson Residence
- ▲ communications
- ▲ Conference website
- ▲ financial, volunteer, and programmatic support for Covenant Hills Christian Camp
- ▲ training and resources on Stewardship, Church Vitality
- ▲ support for regional and national Youth Events
- ▲ annual clergy convocation

- ⤴ Vermont low income support
- ⤴ Seed money for local churches to provide summer programs
- ⤴ Church growth and vitality gatherings
- ⤴ Diana Butler Bass in April of 2013
- ⤴ The work of critical groups including:
 - ⤴ Just peace Advocates
 - ⤴ Prison Justice Committees
 - ⤴ Healing Committees
 - ⤴ MSSC
 - ⤴ much much more.

How can you help?

- ⤴ You are the Conference evangelists. Share what you hear and take it home and educate and evangelize, tell the story of the Vermont Conference.
- ⤴ Encourage your church to enhance the mutual covenant. Get folks to attend Association and Conference gatherings and incorporate those experiences into the life of your congregation.
- ⤴ Commit to supporting the Friends of the Vermont Conference.

Document I: Financial Resolutions (see attached)

These are the resolutions that will be moved now, with discussion and vote taking place tomorrow.

1. That the division of undesignated Basic Support for Our Church's Wider Mission income for 2013 be 65% for the Vermont Conference and 35% for the United Church of Christ beyond Vermont.
2. That the Vermont Conference share with the national setting of the United Church of Christ 65% of any operating budget surplus at the conclusion of the 2013 fiscal year.
3. That the Conference continues to encourage each church to increase its Basic Support for Our Church's Wider Mission by 1% per year of its operating budget expenses; moving toward a full tithe (10%) and beyond if possible.
4. That the 2013 Vermont Per Capita be set at \$11.87
5. That the churches be encouraged to pay Basic Support for Our Church's Wider Mission and Per Capita at least quarterly.
6. That the Board of Directors be authorized to take funds from the unrestricted reserves for any emergency deficit in 2013.
7. That the Board of Directors be authorized to adjust the 2013 operating budget as unforeseen circumstances require, within the spending limits established in the budget.
8. That the Conference adopt a 2013 Operating Budget of not more than \$693,185 in expense and not less than \$693,185 in income, with the goal of ending 2013 with a balanced budget.

PLENARY III

Speakouts

Rev. Ryan Gackenheimer, Covenant Hills Christian Camp: Please send your youth to Covenant Hills. There's something for everyone from kindergarten to senior high.

Laurie Chipman, Christian Educator, First Congregational, Essex Junction: Celia Whitler, songwriter and storyteller is coming to Vermont in October. There will be several events at Barre Congregational Church. All proceeds will benefit Covenant Hills Christian Camp.

Sonia Dunbar on behalf of UCC Musicians Association: The biennial annual conference will take place July 29 – August 1 in Burlington. The theme is “Enlivening Worship and Music.” Don't let your musicians miss it.

Carrie Youngblood, Bethany United Church of Christ, Montpelier: Don't miss this evening's reception and informal time. It will be held at the campus center, featuring the Woodbury Highlanders.

Grace Cleary, member of Mallets Bay Congregational Church, UCC, speaking on behalf of Friends of the Vermont Conference: Mallets Bay was a new church start, which would not exist without support of Vermont Conference. Please support the ministry of the Vermont Conference by being a contributor. One of the programs that suffer with a decreased Conference budget is the Summer Lunch Program. Grants for this program are smaller because we don't have the money we used to. Please make a contribution to Friends of the Vermont Conference.

Rev. Debbie Ingram, Vermont Interfaith Action: VIA continues to engage government and agencies in Vermont to affect social change and justice. Current issues being addressed include affordable housing, education for new Americans, state budget, responsible banking practices, health care reform, and immigration reform.

Frank Richardson, Lifetouch Church Directories: Olan Mills has been sold to LifeTouch. The church directory is a tool of ministry within the church and beyond the walls of the church. Speak with him for more information.

Rachel Stampul, member of Mallet's Bay Congregation: She coordinates RIPPLE, an ecumenical youth group in the Burlington Area, hoping to create the next generation of peacemakers. www.makeitripple.org – little actions can create an effect on the world to create peace.

State of the Conference/Visioning for the Future– Rev. Dr. Lynn Bujnak and the Board of Directors

The Board read a number of statements describing the current status of church affiliation and participation in the United States. Lynn said that hearing those statistics makes her feel like a polar bear, wondering where the ice has gone.

I love Jesus and I love the church. The church is the place where I have been called and claimed by God. It is the intersection of my deep gladness and the world's deep hunger. I also love the United Church of Christ. At its best, the UCC is not so much an institution as a movement; a distinct community of faith and action animated by values and vision. This movement is rooted in the gospel of Jesus Christ and animated by the Holy Spirit. It transforms us, as individuals and as faith communities, into disciples and activists who seek in God's name to make the world a better place.

Lynn identified the core values of denomination as extravagant welcome, continuing testament, and changing lives. "As we move forward," she claims, "the question we need to answer is: what do we have to offer the world?"

The Conference staff and Board of Directors have been envisioning the future of Conference ministry, seeking to follow Jesus forward into the future. They are talking about "legacy churches," "vital churches," and "emerging faith communities." Legacy churches are churches in the last phase of their lives. Churches can die with dignity; churches can literally give their all to make life happen. Vital churches have creative worship, are involved in neighborhoods, have vital music and a commitment to the wider church. Emerging faith communities are intentionally not called churches. Not all expressions of the faith are going to happen in churches. "The future of the church is not in bricks and mortar," claims the president of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). We ought not get jealous of new church starts (or emerging faith communities), but rejoice that more folks are coming into relationship with Jesus Christ.

The pledge of the Conference staff and Board of Directors is to equip local churches through...

- Deep prayer and presence
- Articulating the big picture
- Lifting up the good news of changed and changing lives
- Pastoral and leadership development
- Resources for all stages of congregational life
- Coaching for vitality
- Visioning and stewardship development
- Encouragement tools to help congregations move into God's future
- Training and assistance with new tools/technology

When I look to the future – my hope and prayer for us is that we will find those kernels that are the very best of who we have been and who we are and then let go of what doesn't matter. Letting go is how we get to be alive and dare and try new things and grow. We can grow because we are filled with God's Spirit. (Lynn Bujnak)

Lynn invited the gathered assembly to break into small groups and discuss their responses to the following questions:

Why does your faith matter to you?

Why does your church matter to you?

Describe your vision for your church. What changes are necessary to get there?

Where would you put your church on the three-legged stool (legacy, vital, or emerging)? Why? What is the most helpful thing your Conference can do to equip your church and leaders for the future?

Some of the comments shared in the plenary, following these discussions were as follows:

- ⤴ most struck by how many named their church as in some sense vital, experiencing something as spirit filled.
- ⤴ Another question arose: In the midst of all of this change, what does God want us to be?
- ⤴ Hard to say aloud “legacy churches”
- ⤴ Struck by churches doing interesting things, but rarely inviting them to Sunday morning.
- ⤴ The thing that struck me was the way in which the first question is worded. By starting with faith we go much more deeply into things much quicker.
- ⤴ As to the most helpful thing for the Conference can offer – that the Conference ministers continue in the great work of pastoral care to the pastors.
- ⤴ Surprised by a sense of some that the churches see the Conference as a resource for new pastors.
- ⤴ In response to second question – a vision of the church as counter-cultural
- ⤴ Desire to be a community of faith. Linking faith with courage.
- ⤴ The building: 1) Do away with it. It's hazardous to the church. 2) Would like to see it form partnerships in the community.
- ⤴ The Conference could provide financial expertise. Could help to get radical seminary students to shake us up and teach Sunday School
- ⤴ Would like to see Conference help us create more diversity.
- ⤴ To help with new technology like social media
- ⤴ All our churches should be paying our OCWM money.
- ⤴ Way too much time managing the institution and not enough time being the body of Christ in the world.
- ⤴ Allows you to help by simply saying, “I'm from the church.”
- ⤴ Active involvement in the community with the community.
- ⤴ My faith gives me the hope that I might be a human being
- ⤴ The church matters because it strengthens my faith.

SUNDAY, JUNE 3, 2012

PLENARY IV

Opening worship included the Board of Directors Choir.

Rev. Kevin Goldenbogen called the meeting to order and announced that the offering received during last night's worship totaled \$2230.17.

Speakouts

Rev. Ryan Gackenheimer and Rev. Susie Webster-Toleno, Ministerial Standing and Standards Committee: recognized members-in-discernment and licensed ministers, thanking all who are involved in the discernment and support process with MSSC.

Rev. Susan McKnight, pastor: Jesus went away to a quiet place to pray. Convocation offers pastors a pause. It will be held in Burlington at Bishop Booth Conference Center at Rock Point, September 17-19, 2012. Come find renewal for your spirit and collegiality. Guest will be Dr. Nicki Verploegen, Weston Jesuit Theological Seminary.

Tom Hurst, Greensboro, UCC: This Pentecost is a good time to participate in the Strengthen the Church offering. Support new church starts.

Rev. Bert Marshall, Regional Director, Church World Service: Eradicate hunger and poverty to promote peace and justice around the world. CROP Hunger Walk is the oldest ecumenical walk fundraiser in the country. Bert is available for talking with churches, preaching, etc.

Betty Edson: Secure Communities Legislation was imposed on Vermont as of May 22, 2012. Those picked up on any offense, may have their information sent to Immigration and Customs Enforcement. You can learn more about this from the Department of Mission.

Rev. Lee Moore, retired pastor, educator in UCC: The Conference is on a bare bones budget. We have cut staff by 50% in the past 5 years, purse strings are being held tight by local churches. God is still speaking through us (if we don't speak, God isn't heard). This is an altar call for folks to become Friends of the Vermont Conference. Please do.

Rev. Mark Milligan, pastor, South Church, St. Johnsbury: He is a labyrinth specialist and interested in creating a labyrinth network. Let's make Vermont the labyrinth capital of the world.

Rev. John Weatherhogg, Grace Congregational Church, Rutland: Leonard Bernstein's Mass will be performed at the Paramount theatre with choreography, June 29-30. Tickets available at Paramountvt.org.

Lynn Wickberg, Christ's Church, Saxton's River: She has "ugly quilt sleeping bags" for the homeless, if anyone would like to take one to give away. She is also happy to come teach your church how to make them.

Lise Sparrow, pastor, Guilford Community Church: She and the church are working on a project in Kenya. If anyone else is working in Kenya, please see Lise.

Rev. Martha Peck, pastor, United Church of Newport: Happy birthday to Jay Sprout who turned 65 today and is celebrating at North Church in St. Johnsbury with his congregation.

Rev. Susanna Griefen, pastor, Dummerston Congregational Church: The Department of Mission wants to create a quilt that represents all the missions that local churches are doing. They would like to collect 140 quilt squares, 12.5 x 12.5 inches, washed cotton. Please encourage your local church to submit a square.

Recognition of Generosity

Jim Thomas recognized notable givers to Our Church's Wider Mission as well as those local churches who submitted contributions for five of the five denominational offerings ("5 for 5"). Certificates are at the registration table. Please pick up before leaving the meeting.

Neighbors Helping Neighbors

Rev. Dr. Lynn Bujnak introduced Florence Coppola, Executive, National Disaster Ministries, coppolaf@ucc.org, 216-736-3211. Lynn expressed gratitude to Florence and the gifts from Our Church's Wider Mission and One Great Hour of Sharing that were given to Vermont in response to the damage caused by Tropical Storm Irene.

Florence extended greetings from the national staff and thanked those local churches who have made contributions to OCWM and OGHS, which allows the denomination to be responsive. Florence then offered a slide show to illustrate the ways in which the UCC has responded to disasters, especially those resulting from hurricanes, tornadoes, floods, and nor'easters. Florence commended Vermont's response among neighbors. She assured us that the UCC will be here for as long as necessary to rebuild. Be patient. In closing, she thanked the gathered assembly for the gracious hospitality she has received this weekend.

Nominating Committee Report, Presentation & Movement

Rev. Skip Dickinson presented *Document J* (see attached). In addition to the names already listed among the nominations, he offered the following names of those who responded positively to the invitation to serve.

Treasurer David Damkot is willing to serve one more year.

Annual Meeting Planning Committee members should include:

2012-2014 Susan Maginniss United Church of Newport

2012-2015 Gail Compton, First Congregational Church, Burlington

2012-2015 Joanne Hardy, Bethany Church, Montpelier

Church Growth Committee members should include: Sonia Dunbar, 2012-2014

Department of Mission members should include: Rev Deborah Adams, Interim, Hardwick, vice chair (Rona Kinsley willing to step in if Deborah's interim comes to an end and she leaves the VT Conference).

Vermont Ecumenical Council & Bible Society has an opening for the Prayer and Worship Committee.

Skip offered thanks to all who have served and who have said yes to serving. The vote on the Nominating Committee's report will be later today.

Ministerial Compensation Report

David Durfee announced that the 2013 Ministerial Compensation Guidelines can be found on the Conference website. There was a major overhaul of the guidelines for 2012. The revisions for 2013 were minimal. Cost of living increase has been adjusted to reflect a 2.9 percent increase.

David moved acceptance of the compensation guidelines. Discussion elicited some clarifying edits for p. 12. The date should be changed to 2013 and the note about \$1,000 cash salary for full-time ministers should be deleted. Compensation guidelines were approved as amended.

Necrology & Moment of Silence

The gathered assembly was invited to remember and give thanks for those of the Vermont Conference who have died this past year. They include: Rev. Dr. Robert A. Lee; Rev. Charles L Knight, Jr.; Carl Rice, Lay minister; Rev. Jane Bartlett; Rev. R. Ward Wilson; Rev. Malcolm Davis; Richard C. Dumont. Also remembered are those who died who have been a significant part of the Vermont Conference ministry: John Hancock and Eleanor Belding.

Those gathered were then invited to name local church members who have died this past year. Rev. Dr. Lynn Bujnak closed the time of remembrance in prayer.

Voting on Document H: Resolutions pertaining to paying off the mortgage

These proposals were presented and moved yesterday. Discussion clarified that the transfer of assets will happen before July 2, but the specific date will be determined by what makes the best financial sense. Jim Thomas also clarified that the “Celebrating 217 Years” campaign is just kicking off at this annual meeting. More information will be forthcoming to churches, inviting participation. This not meant to be a pressure-filled, 11th-hour request. The motion to accept the proposals to pay off the mortgage (Document H) passes unanimously.

Voting on Document I: Resolutions pertaining to the 2013 budget

These proposals were presented and moved yesterday. Discussion revolved around Our Church’s Wider Mission contributions. It is important to bring the goal of a 1% annual increase back to the local congregations so they can rise to the challenge. It was clarified that the retention ratio of OCWM income used to be 50% to the national setting, 50% retained by the Conference. More recently, the Conference has had to change that to 35% to the national setting and 65% retained by the Conference.

Carl Wermer proposed an additional resolution regarding the level of detail offered in the financial reports. Given that this is a proposed resolution and not an amendment to the resolution being discussed, Carl agreed to wait until the current resolution was voted upon before proposing an additional one.

Document I, Resolutions pertaining to the 2013 budget, passes unanimously as written.

Consideration of an Additional Resolution Presented from the Floor

Carl Wermer moves the following resolution: That the Board of Directors provide detailed information concerning the actual income and expenses of the Conference budget to the annual meeting starting in 2013. The motion is seconded.

John Holme of the Finance Committee, Business Manager Jim Thomas, and Treasurer David Damkot offered the assurance that the detail exists and is accessible by anyone who is interested. However, to include the detail in annual meeting resolutions would invite extended conversation with little change in the outcome of votes. Actual income and expense figures can be found on the Conference website or requested from the Conference Office. Others in the assembly affirmed the efforts made by all to be transparent and informative. The proposed resolution was voted upon and defeated.

Renewal of Covenant with Covenant Hills, Document K (see attached)

Rev. Ryan Gackenheimer gave an overview of the camp's history, beginning with the vote by the Troy Conference to purchase 139 acres. In 1989 the Vermont Conference agreed at an annual meeting to covenant with the Troy Conference to run Covenant Hills. Ryan moves that we adopt Document K, the new covenant between the Vermont Conference of the UCC and the New England Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church, necessitated by the name change in the United Methodist re-districting.

Discussion included affirmations of the positive experiences at Covenant Hills. The resolution passed unanimously.

Vote on Conference By-Laws Change, Document B (see attached)

David Durfee, on behalf of the Board of Directors, moved the adoption of the amendments to the Bylaws as presented in Document B.

Discussion clarified that, in past years, neither the Conference nor the Associations have had a group paying attention to church standing. It is an important function. This by-law change creates two separate standing committees, one for churches and one for authorized ministers. The resolution passed unanimously.

Vote on UCC Constitution Change, Document L (see attached)

Hal Drury, who is a member on the Board of Local Church Ministries (national church setting), moves that the Conference vote to accept the changes resulting from last year's Synod regarding a unified governance structure for the United Church of Christ, meaning one unified board to oversee all ministries in Cleveland. This reduces the necessary human resources from approximately 250 to 60. The motion is seconded.

Discussion clarified that 2/3 of the Conferences have to ratify this action or it will be referred by to Synod. There was some concern voiced about adequacy of representation with a significantly

reduced board. There will be a Conference Minister from each region on the board and there will be efforts made to nominate individuals for the board who have sensitivity toward inclusion. Document L is voted upon and passed.

Presentation of Associate Conference Minister Position Description, Document M
(see attached)

Rev. Debbie Ingram, Chair of the Personnel Committee, whose other members include Rev. David Vanderlinde-Abernathy, Arlinda Wickland, and Rev. Dr. Lynn Bujnak, presented Document F, which is a revised position description for Jim Thomas' position. The position has been called Business Manager. The proposed title is Associate Conference Minister for Stewardship, Church Vitality, and Finance. This change in title is a better representation of what Jim actually does. On behalf of the Personnel Committee and the Board of Directors, Debbie moved confirmation of the change in position. Motion is seconded.

Discussion clarified that position descriptions don't normally come before the Conference, but only the gathered body can confirm the position of Associate Conference Minister. It was stated that the title of "Business Manager" does not come close to capturing all that Jim does. This is a vote of confirmation on the change in position, not the job description. While this new position seems especially tailored to Jim's gifts and expertise, the position can be redefined in the future, if necessary, when Jim is no longer filling it. It was further clarified that this change in position will enhance the Conference offerings to the local churches, providing additional human resources to engage around the critical issues of vitality, emergent, and legacy communities of faith.

Carrie Youngblood proposed a friendly amendment to change "maintain conference Facebook presence" to "actively maintain conference social media presence." The amendment was seconded and passed, without discussion.

David Durfee moved that we amend the original motion to "...we establish the position of the Associate Conference Minister of Stewardship, Church Vitality and Finance." The amendment was seconded and passed, without discussion.

Rev. Kevin Goldenbogen, moderator, pointed out that now that we have approved the amended wording of the motion, we must vote on the motion, as amended.

Rev. Debbie Ingram moves, on behalf of the Personnel Committee and the Board of Directors, to establish the position of Associate Conference Minister of Stewardship, Church Vitality and Finance. The motion is seconded and approved.

Again on behalf of the Personnel Committee and the Board of Directors, Rev. Debbie Ingram moves to confirm Jim Thomas as Associate Conference Minister for Stewardship, Church Vitality, and Finance. The motion is seconded.

Discussion clarifies that there will not be a change in the budget as a result of this vote. There was some confusion around the language of "confirm" versus "call." Doug Carter offers an

amendment to the motion. He proposes that the motion read, "...we move to call Jim Thomas as the Associate Conference Minister for Stewardship, Church Vitality, and Finance." The proposed amendment is seconded and passed, after brief discussion.

The motion to call Jim Thomas as the Associate Conference Minister for Stewardship, Church Vitality, and Finance passes unanimously.

Break for Lunch

PLENARY V

We gathered together singing, "Come bring your burdens to God,...for Jesus will never say no."

Speakouts (bonus!)

Rev. Carole Carlson and Rev. Rona Kinsley, Friends of the Conference: 20 new contributors were recorded this weekend, totaling 54 in all. Income from Friends of the Conference for 2012 is \$30,000.

Rev. Dr. Lynn Bujnak, Conference Minister: extends thanks to the Conference staff and to Ned Davis, commissioned minister of liturgical floral design, who provided the liturgical art for the weekend.

Election of Officers and Committee Members: Vote on Document J (see attached)

Skip moves Document J, the slate of nominations. It is seconded and passed, without discussion.

All members of boards and departments are commissioned and Rev. Kevin Goldenbogen thanks the nominating committee for a job well done, inviting a round of applause for their work.

Presentation of Gifts

Vice Moderator, Alan Parker, presented gifts to guests Rev. Da Vita McCallister, Florence Coppola, and OIKOS.

Presentation of Gavel to New Moderator

Outgoing moderator, Rev. Kevin Goldenbogen, handed over the gavel to incoming moderator, Alan Parker.

Resolution of Thanks (see attached)

Alan Parker read the Resolution of Thanks. It was moved, seconded, and passed, without discussion.

Motion to adjourn pending conclusion of worship was seconded and passed.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Susan Tarolli and Rev. Peter Plagge

Proposed Amendment to Article VI – Departments and Committees – As the section will read if the amendment is adopted.

22. Committees and Entities of Departments

- a. Within the Department of Church and Ministry there shall be a Ministerial Standing and Standards Committee and Church Standing and Standards Committee, including both ministers and laity, elected by the gathered Conference for three-year terms with the terms of as close to one-third as possible to expire each year. No committee member shall serve more than six consecutive years.

(1) The Ministerial Standing and Standards Committee:

- (a). The Ministerial Standing and Standards Committee shall be responsible for the authorization of ministry, upholding standards of excellence and providing leadership and resources in all matters pertaining to the fitness and standing of ministers on behalf of those Associations of the Conference which have delegated such responsibilities to the Conference. The Ministerial Standing and Standards Committee shall use as its standard and guide the United Church of Christ Manual on Ministry.
- (b). The Committee shall consist of a Chair and Scribe and no fewer than six or more than ten other members.
- (c). The Scribe of the Ministerial Standing and Standards Committee shall be responsible for maintaining accurate and confidential records of the work and decisions of the Committee. These records shall be housed at the Conference Office. The Conference Placement Secretary shall be responsible for reporting appropriate and required records concerning the work of the Ministerial Standing and Standards Committee to the appropriate denominational office.

(2) The Church Standing and Standards Committee:

- (a) The Church Standing and Standards Committee shall be responsible for certifying the readiness of churches to enter into covenant with the United Church of Christ through the granting of standing by an Association; facilitating periodic visits to, or reviews of, covenanted churches; and facilitating covenantal support consultations and if necessary recommending, to an Association, dissolution of covenantal relationship with churches. This work is to be done on behalf of those Associations of the Conference which have delegated those specific responsibilities to the Conference. The Church Standing and ~~Growth~~ Standards Committee shall use as its guide the United Church of Christ Manual on Church and other United Church of Christ resources.
- (b) The Committee shall consist of a Chair and Scribe and no fewer than three or more than seven other members.
- (c) The duties of the Scribe and the responsibilities for records shall be the same as those described in paragraph (1) (c) above. The Conference Minister shall designate the staff person responsible for reporting appropriate and required records concerning the work of the Church Standing and Standards Committee to the appropriate denominational office.

Rational:

The document, as originally adopted, gave responsibility for nurturing churches and determining standing of churches to the same committee. These two responsibilities can be in conflict. As the Conference and Associations have become more serious about church standing and standards the need for separate committees for the two functions has become apparent. Church Standing and Standards, since it may have to take actions with legal implications, remains in this section of committees elected by the Annual Meeting. Church Growth will continue to exist as a committee within a department.

Resolution on CONTINUATION OF DILLARD HENDERSON SCHOLARSHIP FUND

Submitted by the Department of Mission, 2012

1

2 Whereas we are called "To do justice, love mercy and walk humbly with our God," (Micah 6:8)
3 and Jesus prayed that "they may all be one." (John 17: 21); and

4

5 Whereas Dillard University in New Orleans is a Historically Black College, founded as Straight
6 University in 1869 with the support of the American Missionary Association of the
7 Congregational Church, now the United Church of Christ; and

8

9 Whereas Dillard University is a partner of the United Church of Christ and a Full Member of the
10 United Church of Christ Council on Higher Education; and

11

12 WHEREAS the Vermont Conference, UCC committed itself to supporting African American
13 education in the 1999 Resolution, "...TO SUPPORT AFRICAN-AMERICAN EDUCATION" and
14 affirmed (99AM34) in a vote that one half of the 204th Annual Meeting offering go toward the
15 Dillard University Scholarship; and

16

17 WHEREAS George Washington Henderson, after receiving education in Underhill and Barre,
18 graduated from UVM in 1877, first in his class and the first African American initiated into Phi
19 Beta Kappa, and in 1880 was awarded a Master of Arts degree, and an honorary Doctor of
20 Divinity in 1896 both also from UVM, and served as an educator in schools in Jericho,
21 Craftsbury, and Newport; and

22

23 WHEREAS George Washington Henderson beginning in 1890 was university pastor and chair
24 of theology at Straight University; and

25

26 WHEREAS the Vermont Conference has since 2004 contributed to the Dillard University Henderson
27 Scholarship fund reaching the \$25,000 level in 2010.

28

29 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Vermont Conference commit ourselves to expand the Dillard
30 Henderson Scholarship Fund by dedicating the odd-year Annual Meeting offerings to the Dillard
31 Henderson Scholarship Fund for the next 20 years; and

32

33 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Vermont Conference, through its Department of Mission, will
34 encourage Associations and local churches to do fund raising and make donations to further expand the
35 Dillard Henderson Scholarship Fund; and

36 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Vermont Conference through the Department of Mission Diversity
37 Committee encourage and seek ways to enter into meaningful relationship with the Dillard Community
38 to our mutual benefit, education and growth in grace and wisdom.

39

Resolution on DISASTER PREPAREDNESS

Submitted by the Department of Mission 2012

WHEREAS God has promised, that if we “satisfy the needs of the afflicted...Your ancient ruins shall be rebuilt; you shall raise up the foundations of many generations; you shall be called the repairer of the breach, the restorer of streets to live in.” Isaiah 58: 10, 12, and

WHEREAS God calls us to comfort God’s people. Isaiah 40:1, and

WHEREAS the Disaster Ministries Guidelines of the United Church of Christ state that “Each Conference, drawing upon the gifts of its local congregations, determines how best to serve as denominational and ecumenical partners, and witnesses of hope when disasters occur in their geographic area. A network of Conference Disaster Coordinators assists in developing preparedness measures before crises occur. Coordinators help to organize volunteers for clean-up and rebuilding efforts; as well as participate in response and long term recovery efforts in communities affected by natural disasters.” and

WHEREAS “We look ... to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, to prosper us in creative and redemptive work in the world.” Constitution and Bylaws of The Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ, Preamble. and

WHEREAS in Tropical Storm Irene on August 28, 2011, we saw the great and immediate need for a prepared response in the face of disaster;

25 THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ
26 will put into place structures and policies that will enable it to respond quickly and effectively in
27 time of need. To that end :

28 1. The Conference will establish, train, equip and maintain a Vermont Conference Disaster
29 Response Team (VTCDRT) that will report to the Department of Missions Council and oversee
30 Disaster Preparedness

31 2. The VTCDRT, working with National UCC Disaster Ministries and local partners will:

- 32 • Recruit and train local volunteers for the work of disaster response
- 33 • Seek host churches for out-of state disaster response volunteers
- 34 • Assist churches in preparing for disaster, providing training and resources for
 - 35 ○ increasing physical and fiscal resilience for church properties,
 - 36 ○ increasing the capacity of churches to assist in time of disaster,
 - 37 ○ helping churches equip their members to be prepared for disaster.
- 38 • Have in place a plan to identify and respond to immediate and long-term disaster
39 recovery needs.
- 40 • Provide educational resources and training opportunities for effective Disaster
41 Response and Recovery Ministries.
- 42 • Be represented on VTVOAD (Vermont Voluntary Organizations Assisting in
43 Disasters). and

44 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Conference, through the VTCDRT, will ask each
45 Association to appoint liaisons to local/regional Long-Term Recovery Committees (LTRCs)
46 and the VTCDRT. and

47 BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Conference, through the VTCDRT, will ask each
48 Local Church to:

- 49 • Form a Local Church Disaster Response Team (LCDRT) and/or appoint a
50 coordinator and a contact person for the VTCDRT
- 51 • Explore ways to be helpful in times of disaster including becoming a community
52 shelter, seeking volunteers willing to be trained in disaster response, becoming a
53 host church for volunteers
- 54 • Provide resources to help members, friends, and the community to be better
55 equipped before disaster strikes
- 56 • Have a liaison to its local Town Emergency Management Group
- 57
- 58

								DOCUMENT E		
VERMONT CONFERENCE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST BUDGET 2012-2013										
			2012			2012			2013	
			Approved at Annual Meeting 2011			BOD approved changes			Presented to Annual Meeting 2012	
Acct #	Account Name	Operating	Special	Total	Operating	Special	Total	Operating	Special	Total
INCOME										
General Income										
3002	Our Church's Wider Mission Basic Support	440,000		440,000	400,000		400,000	408,146		408,146
3204	Friends of the Conference	28,000		28,000	28,000		28,000	30,000		30,000
3212	Synod travel pool			-			-	9,000		9,000
3300	Per Capita Income	150,000		150,000	148,000		148,000	148,000		148,000
3405	Unrestricted Fund	47,764		47,764	47,764		47,764	45,539		45,539
3502	Interest - Operating Checking	900		900	600		600	600		600
3508	Restricted Fund - Income	2,400		2,400	2,100		2,100	2,100		2,100
3507	Miscellaneous			-			-			-
3604	Annual Meeting Income	30,000		30,000	30,000		30,000	30,000		30,000
3404	Additional Draw Unrestricted Fund				155,000		155,000			
Transfers										
3503	Outdoor Ministries Fund Special Transfer			-			-			-
	Dept. Mission Special Transfers			-			-			-
9102	Atkinson and Miller Fund Income	2,900		2,900	2,300		2,300	2,300		2,300
Departmental Income										
0002	Dept. Church & Ministry Income	6,200	2,000	8,200	6,500	2,000	8,500	6,500	2,000	8,500
0003	Dept. Mission Income			-			-			-
0004	Dept. Christian Education Income	13,000		13,000	11,000		11,000	11,000		11,000
0005	Dept. Stewardship Income			-			-			-
	TOTAL INCOME	\$ 721,164	\$ 2,000	\$ 723,164	\$ 831,264	\$ 2,000	\$ 833,264	\$ 693,185	\$ 2,000	\$ 695,185
EXPENDITURES										
3004	OCWM Basic Support to National	154,000		154,000	140,000		140,000	142,851		142,851
4000	Dept. Church & Ministry	8,700	2,000	10,700	6,500	2,000	8,500	7,500	2,000	9,500
5000	Dept. Mission	12,850		12,850	10,164		10,164	13,164		13,164
6000	Dept. Christian Education	23,100		23,100	20,000		20,000	21,500		21,500
7000	Dept. Stewardship	65,450		65,450	208,050		208,050	42,750		42,750
8000	Compensation of Staff	339,000		339,000	335,500		335,500	346,000		346,000
8243	Staff Travel & Expenses	36,500		36,500	30,000		30,000	33,100		33,100
8401	Conference Office Operations	34,514		34,514	34,000		34,000	38,570		38,570
8550	Conference Operations	17,050		17,050	17,050		17,050	17,750		17,750
8710	Annual Meeting Expenses	30,000		30,000	30,000		30,000	30,000		30,000
9800	Repayment to Unrestricted Fund									
	TOTAL EXPENDITURES	\$ 721,164	\$ 2,000	\$ 723,164	\$ 831,264	\$ 2,000	\$ 833,264	\$ 693,185	\$ 2,000	\$ 695,185
	SURPLUS (DEFICIT)	\$ -	\$ -	\$ -	\$ 0	\$ -	\$ -	(\$0)	\$ -	(\$0)
		2012 Per Capita rate: \$11.54				2013 Per Capita rate: \$11.87				
		2010 cpi: 1.6%				2011 cpi: 2.9%				

Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ
2012 Annual Meeting
Definitions and Recommended Procedures

1. RESOLUTIONS

All resolutions except for emergency or courtesy resolutions must be submitted by the deadlines set, in advance of the meeting, so that delegates and churches may study the issues before the voting. Resolutions that have been submitted have been distributed to all delegates. Emergency Resolutions may be accepted by the Business Committee (the Executive Committee of the Board of Directors) no later than 3 PM on Friday, June 1, 2012)

2. MOTIONS AND AMENDMENTS

All motions and amendments from the floor shall be presented to the Scribe and the meeting Chair in written form at the time they are moved.

3. DISCUSSION AND DEBATE

When necessary, the meeting Chair may impose the following limits on debating motions and resolutions:

- a. A limit on the total time for discussion of the motion or resolution.
- b. A limit of three minutes for any one speaker. Time to be kept by an appointed time keeper.

4. USE OF MICROPHONES

Delegates must go to one of the microphones in order to address the assembly. Specific microphones may be assigned for those supporting and those opposing the matter on the floor. Those waiting to be heard should line up behind a microphone and will be recognized in the order in which they are lined up.

5. VOTING

Delegates should be prepared to vote by standing (if able) and holding up their name tag when called upon to do so or to show a voting slip in order to receive a paper ballot if a ballot vote is called for. Tellers will be appointed to count the votes in the various sections of the auditorium. Please keep your voting slips raised until the teller for your area asks you to lower them.

6. RULES OF ORDER

Robert's Rules of Order shall be used to guide debate and action. The meeting Chair may seek the advice of the Parliamentarian at any time. A delegate, at a microphone, may seek a ruling by the Parliamentarian.

Significant Rules from Robert's Rules of Order

- a. A motion or resolution may be amended and an amendment to a motion or resolution may be amended, but an amendment to an amendment cannot be further amended.
- b. No speaker may speak to an issue more than twice unless the rules are suspended by the body to allow him or her to do so. Pro and con sides of the issue will alternate.
- c. An amendment may affect the action to which it is related by adding or inserting, striking out, striking out and adding, substituting, or dividing the question.
- d. When making a motion it is best to put it positively. It can be stated by saying, "I move that..." It must be seconded before it comes before the assembly for discussion or action.
- e. To obtain the floor, a delegate or guest who has been granted voice must approach a floor microphone then address the Chair stating name and church or office. After being recognized by the Chair, the delegate may speak to the issue.
- f. A delegate who has the floor cannot be interrupted except for one of the following reasons:
 - (1) a call for the Order of the Day (to return to the items scheduled on the agenda for that time);
 - (2) A question of Privilege (a pressing situation affecting the rights of the assembly.)
 - (3) Point of Order (questioning whether the present procedure is appropriate.)
 - (4) Parliamentary inquiry (a request for guidance on the correct procedure in this instance.
 - (5) A call for Division of the House (standing vote)
 - (6) Expiration of the time allotted to the speaker.
- g. To close debate, a delegate obtains the floor and says, "I move the previous question," or "I move to close debate." This motion cannot be debated or amended and must be carried by a two-thirds majority.
- h. A motion may be made to "lay on the table" one item of business so that another more pressing one may be addressed. This motion should be made with the intention of taking up the original matter again after the intervening matter is dealt with. A motion may also be made to "postpone indefinitely" when there is no intention of considering the matter further at this meeting. Both the action "to lay on the table" and the action "to postpone indefinitely" require a simple majority vote. "Laying on the table" is not a debatable motion, while "postponing indefinitely" is debatable.
- i. When a report is given, it is not necessary to move that it be accepted or received; it is, in fact, received by being presented to the assembly. The report, following its presentation, may be discussed and amended by the assembly.

7. SOME SPECIAL CONSIDERATIONS FOR A CHURCH MEETING

- a. As members of a faith community, we should consider the feelings of others on the losing side when deciding whether or not to applaud the result of the vote on a contested issue.
- b. Making a motion to get an immediate note on an issue ("I move the previous question" or "I call the question") is an important parliamentary tool, but if there are still those wishing to speak, they may feel treated as unimportant. This tool should be used sparingly in a church assembly.
- c. There are other more obscure parliamentary maneuvers which can sometimes be used to "win" a point. Those familiar with these should be careful about invoking them since decisions in a faith body should be made on the basis of discernment of the Spirit and rational argument rather than manipulation of the rules.

A COVENANT FOR DIALOGUE

“But **speaking the truth in love**, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body’s growth in building itself up in love.” Ephesians 4:15-16

We covenant with one another to sustain a congregational culture in which we will communicate with integrity and mutual respect, and in which our creative energy—both individual and collective—will be free to flourish.

1. We will repeat in our own words what the other has said to confirm that we have understood them, and ask them to do the same if we feel we have not been understood.
2. We will communicate directly with each other, using the first person, using “I.”
3. We will try to make our meaning clear and say what we mean and mean what we say.
4. We will identify merit in another person’s idea or suggestion before we identify its deficiencies.
5. We will be willing to inquire into another person’s reasons and reasoning and will welcome inquiry into our own reasons and reasoning.
6. We will listen to understand, but don’t necessarily have to agree.
7. We will not say outside the meeting what we are unwilling to say inside the meeting.

**Resolutions Recommended by the Board of Directors
Pertaining to the 2012 Budget**

- 1 **1.) That the BOD be authorized to transfer an amount not to exceed \$155,000 from the**
2 **conference unrestricted funds for the sole purpose of retiring the mortgage on the**
3 **conference office located at 36 N. Main St. in Randolph, VT no later than July 2,**
4 **2012. Because this is a transfer of assets there is no requirement that the money must be**
5 **repaid to the unrestricted fund.**
- 6 **2.) That the Annual Meeting enthusiastically endorse the campaign to raise \$217,000 in**
7 **recognition of 217 years of faithful ministry of the Vermont Conference and its churches.**

**Resolutions Recommended by the Board of Directors
Pertaining to the 2013 Budget**

- 1 **1.) That the division of undesignated Basic Support for Our Church's Wider Mission**
2 **income for 2013 be 65% for the Vermont Conference and 35% for the United**
3 **Church of Christ beyond Vermont.**
- 4 **2.) That the Vermont Conference share with the national setting of the United Church of**
5 **Christ 65% of any operating budget surplus at the conclusion of the 2013 fiscal year.**
- 6 **3.) That the Conference continues to encourage each church to increase its Basic Support**
7 **for Our Church's Wider Mission by 1% per year of its operating budget expenses;**
8 **moving toward a full tithe (10%) and beyond if possible.**
- 9 **4.) That the 2013 Vermont Per Capita be set at \$11.87. (Note: The association**
10 **portion of Per Capita is in addition to the Conference amount.)**
- 11 **5.) That the churches be encouraged to pay Basic Support for Our Church's Wider**
12 **Mission and Per Capita at least quarterly.**
- 13 **6.) That the Board of Directors be authorized to take funds from the unrestricted**
14 **reserves for any emergency deficit in 2013.**
- 15 **7.) That the Board of Directors be authorized to adjust the 2013 operating budget as**
16 **unforeseen circumstances require, within the spending limits established in the**
17 **budget.**
- 18 **8.) That the Conference adopt a 2013 Operating Budget of not more than \$693,185**
19 **in expense and not less than \$693,185 in income, with the goal of ending 2013**
20 **with a balanced budget.**

VERMONT CONFERENCE, UCC 2012-2013

Nominating Committee Report

Conference Officers

2012-2013	Mr. Alan Parker	Moderator
2012-2013	Rev. Emily Heath	Vice-Moderator
2012-2013	_____	Treasurer

Board of Directors

2012-2015	Mr. Chris Heintz	Southwest Association
2012-2015	Rev. Amy Pitton	Washington Association

Personnel Committee

2012-2015	Rev. Debbie Ingram
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Nominating Committee

2012-2015	Rev. Rob Noble
2012-2015	Ms. Lucy Samara

Annual Meeting Planning Committee

2012-2014	_____	
2012-2015	_____	
2012-2015	_____	
2012-2015	Ms. Ann Vivian	
2012-2013	Mr. Alan Parker	Conference Moderator
2012-2013	Rev. Emily Heath	Conference Vice-Moderator
2012-2013	Rev. Kevin Goldenbogen	Chair (Past Moderator)

Department Of Church And Ministry

2012-2013	Mr. David Durfee	Chair
2012-2013	Rev. Dereen Vanderlinde-Abernathy	Vice-Chair

Church Growth Committee

2012-2014	Rev. Deadra Ashton
2012-2014	_____
2012-2015	Rev. Cordelia Burpee
2012-2015	Ms. Rachel Stampul

Church Standing Committee

2012-2013	Rev. Bruce Comiskey
2012-2013	Ms. Cordelia Merritt
2012-2014	Ms. Carrie Youngblood
2012-2014	Rev. Allen (Mick) Comstock
2012-2015	Rev. David Andrews
2012-2015	Mr. Jack Bixby

Ministerial Standing & Standards Committee

2012-2015	Rev. Donald Harpster	Windham-Union Assoc
2012-2015	Rev. Susan Tarolli	Champlain Assoc
2012-2015	Rev. Christine Boardman	Windham Union Assoc
2012-2015	Rev. Ryan Gackenhaimer	Champlain Assoc

Department Of Mission

2012-2013	Ms. Jeanne Zammataro	Chair
2012-2013	_____	Vice-Chair

Department Of Christian Education

2011-2013	Rev. Sandra L. Daly	Chair
2011-2013	Ms. Laurie Chipman	Vice-Chair

Department Of Stewardship And Financial Development

2011-2013	Rev. Lucia A. Jackson	Chair
2011-2013	Rev. Mary Abbott	Vice-Chair

Finance Committee

2012-2015	Mr. Michael Branfield
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Investment Committee

2012-2014	Mr. Rufus Cushman
2012-2015	Mr. Paul Simpson
2012-2013	Ms. Susan Coffey

General Synod Delegates

(years noted = Synods to attend during term)

2013 & 2015	Mr. Cleophas MuKeba	Champlain
2013	Rev. Cynthia Batten	Grafton-Orange
2013 & 2015	Rev. Rona Kinsley	Northeast
2013 & 2015	Mr. James Merriam	Washington
2013 & 2015	Rev. Kathy Clark	Southwest
2013 & 2015	Ms. Rachel Cleary	Youth

VERMONT ECUMENICAL COUNCIL & BIBLE SOCIETY**Prayer & Worship Committee**

2011-2014	_____
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Atkinson Residence (Vermont Congregational Home)

2012-2013	Florence Cheney
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1 A Covenant for Christian Outdoor Education
 2 Between the
 3 Vermont Conference, United Church of Christ
 4 And the
 5 New England Annual Conference, United Methodist Church
 6

7 The New England Annual Conference of the United Methodist Church (subsequently referred to as NEAC) and
 8 the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ (Subsequently referred to as VC) agree on a working
 9 covenant to offer Christian outdoor education together.

10 The covenant will provide a working and programmatic relationship for the two conferences as long as both
 11 parties agree. This covenant may be ended by either party. Either party must give the other party written
 12 notice at least one (1) year prior to the beginning date of the next summer program season. The provisions of
 13 this covenant shall be as follows:
 14

15 1.0 OWNERSHIP OF SITE

16 1.1 The NEAC shall remain the sole owner of Covenant Hills Christian Camp, in the town of Cabot,
 17 Vermont.

18 1.2 As a contribution to the property development, the VC provided an interest free loan in the amount
 19 of \$ 25,000.00 in 1989. In the event that Covenant Hills is dissolved, the \$ 25,000.00 would be
 20 returned to the VC, without interest.
 21

22 2.0 MEMBERSHIP ON COMMITTEES

23 2.1 In the NEAC each site committee/board is an annual conference entity relating to the conference
 24 programming organization, and the conference board of trustees. The site committees/boards have
 25 responsibility to oversee each site locally in a manner that creates healthy site operation. Site
 26 committees/boards establish goals and policies, and work toward providing resources (including
 27 capital) that enable the sites' ministry to function. They oversee management practices to assure
 28 compliance with broader annual conference goals and needs. The site committees/boards do not
 29 directly supervise the site director, but provide input regarding their respective director to the assistant
 30 to the bishop/director of connectional ministries who is responsible for supervision.

31 2.2 Members of the executive board will be elected by the NEAC in regular session and affirmed
 32 by the VC in regular session.

33 2.3 Site committees/boards are exempt from the eight year term limits, but are encouraged to arrange the
 34 membership in three year classes.

35 2.4 Effort by the executive board will be made to achieve an equal balance of membership from the NEAC
 36 and VC on all committees.
 37

38 3.0 AREAS OF PROGRAMMATIC COOPERATION

39 3.1 The program committee will submit the proposed next year's camping events and tentative schedule to
 40 a fall meeting of the executive board for consideration and approval.

41 3.2 Volunteer directors will be recruited by the executive director of Covenant Hills with the advice and
 42 consent of the program committee. The executive director will seek to maintain a good balance
 43 between UMC & UCC participation for both volunteer directors and counselors.
 44
 45

(More)

3.3 The executive director, the executive board and the program committee will provide training and will exercise all due diligence in the enforcement of Safe Sanctuary (UMC) / Safe Church (UCC) policies, which are denominational programs for the protection of children and staff in all religious programming and at all of our sites.

4.0 ONGOING FINANCES

4.1 The VC will make annual contributions to Covenant Hills. The amount may be determined in multiple-year commitments by the VC. The Covenant Hills Treasurer will submit annual financial reports to the VC Conference Office.

5.0 AMENDMENTS

5.1 This covenant may be amended by submitting proposed changes, in writing at least six months prior to the meetings of the respective conferences, to the New England Annual Conference and Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ.

**THE CONSTITUTION
OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
PREAMBLE**

1 The United Church of Christ, formed June 25, 1957, by the union of the Evangelical and Reformed Church and The General Council of the Congregational Christian Churches of the United States in order to express more fully the oneness in Christ of the churches composing it, to make more effective their common witness in Him, and to serve His kingdom in the world, hereby adopts this Constitution.

2 The United Church of Christ acknowledges as its sole Head, Jesus Christ, Son of God and Savior. It acknowledges as kindred in Christ all who share in this confession. It looks to the Word of God in the Scriptures, and to the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, to prosper its creative and redemptive work in the world.

It claims as its own the faith of the historic Church expressed in the ancient creeds and reclaimed in the basic insights of the Protestant Reformers. It affirms the responsibility of the Church in each generation to make this faith its own in reality of worship, in honesty of thought and expression, and in purity of heart before God. In accordance with the teaching of our Lord and the practice prevailing among evangelical Christians, it recognizes two sacraments: Baptism and the Lord's Supper or Holy Communion.

3 The provisions herein define and regulate the General Synod, [the United Church of Christ Board](#) and those Covenanted Ministries, Affiliated Ministries, and Associated Ministries, as hereinafter set forth, of the United Church of Christ which are related to the General Synod and describe the free and voluntary relationships which the Local Churches, Associations, Conferences and ministers sustain with the General Synod and with each other. The pattern of relationships and procedures so described is recommended to Local Churches, Associations, Conferences and [authorized](#) ministers, to enable them more effectively to accomplish their tasks and the work of the United Church of Christ.

ARTICLE I. NAME

4 The name of this Church shall be UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST.

ARTICLE II. STRUCTURE

5 The United Church of Christ is composed of Local Churches, Associations, Conferences and the General Synod.

ARTICLE III. COVENANTAL RELATIONSHIPS

6 Within the United Church of Christ, the various expressions of the church relate to each other in a covenantal manner. Each expression of the church has responsibilities and rights in relation to the others, to the end that the whole church will seek God's will and be faithful to God's mission. Decisions are made in consultation and collaboration among the various parts of the structure. As members of the Body of Christ, each expression of the church is called to honor and respect the work and ministry of each other part. Each expression of the church listens, hears, and carefully considers the advice, counsel, and requests of others. In this covenant, the various expressions of the United Church of Christ seek to walk together in all God's ways.

ARTICLE IV. OFFICERS

7 The Officers of the United Church of Christ shall be a General Minister and President, ~~an Associate General Minister~~, an Executive Minister for Local Church Ministries, an Executive Minister for Wider Church Ministries, an Executive Minister for Justice and Witness Ministries, and such other officers as the General Synod may from time to time determine. They shall be responsible to and called by election of the General Synod as officers of the United Church of Christ.

Collegium of Officers

8 Composed of the Officers of the United Church of Christ meeting as peers, the Collegium of Officers is responsible for providing leadership for the mission programming of the United Church of Christ and for the implementation of General Synod actions. [The General Minister and](#)

President is the presiding officer of the Collegium. The Collegium shall attend to the quality of relationships among **the United Church of Christ Board and** the Covenanted Ministries and foster a climate of respect, collaboration, and collegiality among various expressions of the church. The Collegium provides a setting for mutual accountability, for mutual reporting, and for assessing the ongoing programs of the United Church of Christ. It shall reflect the commitment of the United Church of Christ to be an inclusive church.

ARTICLE V. LOCAL CHURCHES

9 The basic unit of the life and organization of the United Church of Christ is the Local Church.

10 A Local Church is composed of persons who, believing in **the triune God as heavenly Father,** ~~and~~ accepting Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and depending on the guidance of the Holy Spirit, are organized for Christian worship, for the furtherance of Christian fellowship, and for the ongoing work of Christian witness.

11 In accordance with the custom and usage of a Local Church, persons become members by (a) baptism and either confirmation or profession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior; (b) reaffirmation or reprofession of faith; or (c) letter of transfer or certification from other Christian churches.

12 All persons who are or shall become members of a Local Church of the United Church of Christ are thereby members of the United Church of Christ.

13 Congregational Christian Churches and the Evangelical and Reformed Church unite in the United Church of Christ without break in their respective historic continuities and traditions.

14 The following Local Churches compose the United Church of Christ:

- a) The Local Churches of the Evangelical and Reformed Church;
- b) The Local Churches of the Congregational Christian fellowship which vote to become a part of the United Church of Christ, or which vote to approve this Constitution;
- c) Any Congregational Christian Local Church which, although it has not voted to become a part of the United Church of Christ, or to approve this Constitution, votes to join the United Church of Christ after this Constitution is declared in force;
- d) Any Local Church which, after this Constitution is declared in force, is accepted, on any basis other than that described in paragraph 16, into an Association, or Conference, of the United Church of Christ;
- e) The Local Churches of any denomination which, after this Constitution is declared in force, unites with the United Church of Christ; and
- f) Any Local Church in a category not otherwise defined in this article, received upon its request, subject to such provisions as in consultation with the Conference may be specified by the Association within whose bounds it is located, and which are not inconsistent with this Constitution and the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ.

15 Local Churches of the United Church of Christ are represented in the General Synod by the delegates from the Conferences to which they belong.

16 An Association or a Conference of the United Church of Christ may, under such provisions as it deems wise, admit, or continue to fellowship with, any Congregational Christian Local Church which is not part of the United Church of Christ. The names and statistics of such churches shall be kept separately; their members shall not be counted in determining the number of delegates which the Conference is entitled to send to the General Synod or hold elective office in that body, except that no ordained minister who has full standing or ordained ministerial partner standing in the United Church of Christ shall be ineligible to be a delegate to the General Synod or to hold elective office in that body. No direct or indirect participation by any such Local Church in, or support of, the work of the United Church of Christ, or of any of its Covenanted Ministries, The Pension Boards—United Church of Christ, United Church **Foundation Funds**, or of any Conference or Association, shall be construed as making it a church of the United Church of Christ.

17 The Local Churches of the United Church of Christ have, in fellowship, a God-given responsibility for that Church, its labors and its extension, even as the United Church of Christ has, in fellowship, a God-given responsibility for the wellbeing and needs and aspirations of its Local Churches. In mutual Christian concern and in dedication to Jesus Christ, the Head of the Church, the one and the many share in common Christian experience and responsibility.

18 The autonomy of the Local Church is inherent and modifiable only by its own action. Nothing in this Constitution and the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ shall destroy or limit the right of each Local Church to continue to operate in the way customary to it; nor shall be construed as giving to the General Synod, or to any Conference or Association now, or at any future time, the power to abridge or impair the autonomy of any Local Church in the management of its own affairs, which affairs include, but are not limited to, the right to retain or adopt its own methods of organization, worship and education; to retain or secure its own charter and name; to adopt its own constitution and bylaws; to formulate its own covenants and confessions of faith; to admit members in its own way and to provide for their discipline or dismissal; to call or dismiss its pastor or pastors by such procedure as it shall determine; to acquire, own, manage and dispose of property and funds; to control its own benevolences; and to withdraw by its own decision from the United Church of Christ at any time without forfeiture of ownership or control of any real or personal property owned by it.

19 Actions by, or decisions or advice emanating from, the General Synod, a Conference or an Association, should be held in the highest regard by every Local Church.

ARTICLE VI. THE MINISTRY

20 The United Church of Christ recognizes that God calls the whole Church and every member to participate in and extend the ministry of Jesus Christ by witnessing to the Gospel in church and society. The United Church of Christ seeks to undergird the ministry of its members by nurturing faith, calling forth gifts, and equipping members for Christian service.

21 The United Church of Christ recognizes that God calls certain of its members to various forms of ministry in and on behalf of the church for which ecclesiastical authorization is required. Recognizing God's call, the ecclesiastical authorization is granted by an Association through the rite of ordination, through commissioning, licensing, granting either ordained ministerial standing or ordained ministerial partner standing and other acts of authorization.

22 Ordination is the rite whereby the United Church of Christ through an Association, in cooperation with the person and a Local Church of the United Church of Christ, recognizes and authorizes that member whom God has called to ordained ministry, and sets that person apart by prayer and the laying on of hands. By this rite ordained ministerial standing and status as an Ordained Ministerial Partner is conferred and authorization given to perform the duties and exercise the prerogatives of ordained ministry in the United Church of Christ.

23 An Ordained Minister of the United Church of Christ is one of its members who has been called by God and ordained to preach and teach the gospel, to administer the sacraments and rites of the Church, and to exercise pastoral care and leadership.

24 Ordained ministerial standing is an ongoing covenant of mutual accountability, as described in Paragraph 25, which recognizes and continues the authorization of that person to perform the duties and exercise the prerogatives of ordained ministry. Ordained ministerial standing in the United Church of Christ is granted by and held in an Association in cooperation with a local church and confers voting membership in the Association.

25 The Call of an Ordained Minister or Ordained Ministerial Partner ([see Article VII](#)) to a Local Church establishes a covenantal relationship among the Ordained Minister or Ordained Ministerial Partner, the Local Church, and the United Church of Christ as represented by an Association. The Call of an Ordained Minister or Ordained Ministerial Partner to other forms of ministry recognized by an Association of the United Church of Christ establishes a covenantal relationship among the Ordained Minister or Ordained Ministerial Partner, the calling body, the

United Church of Christ as represented by an Association and the Local Church where the Ordained Minister or Ordained Ministerial Partner is a member.

26 Commissioning is the act whereby the United Church of Christ through an Association, in cooperation with a person and a Local Church of the United Church of Christ, recognizes and authorizes that member whom God has called to a specific church-related ministry which is recognized by that Association, but not requiring ordination or licensing. By this act the status of Commissioned Minister is conferred and authorization granted to perform duties necessary to and for the specific ministry, and voting membership in that Association is granted.

27 A Commissioned Minister in the United Church of Christ is one of its members who has been called by God and commissioned for a specific church-related ministry.

28 Licensing is the act whereby the United Church of Christ through an Association, in cooperation with a person and a Local Church of the United Church of Christ, recognizes and authorizes that member whom God has called to perform specified duties in a designated Local Church or within that Association, mainly preaching and conducting services of worship, for a designated time within a covenant of mutual accountability that includes appropriate supervision and guidance of that Association. The license may be renewed. Voting membership in that Association is granted.

29 A Licensed Minister of the United Church of Christ is one of its members whom God has called and who has been recognized and authorized by an Association to perform specified duties in a designated Local Church or within that Association, mainly preaching and conducting services of worship, for a designated time within a covenant of mutual accountability that includes appropriate supervision and guidance of that Association. The license may be renewed.

30 A Member in Discernment is a member of the United Church of Christ who has been called by God and who is, in covenant with that member's Local Church and Association, engaging in a time of discernment of that call and preparation for [authorized](#) ministry in response to that call.

**ARTICLE VII. RECOGNITION AND RECONCILIATION OF THE
ORDAINED MINISTRIES OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
AND THE CHRISTIAN CHURCH (DISCIPLES OF CHRIST)**

31 The United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) recognize the ordained ministries of the other church to be efficacious ministries of grace within that church and these ministries to be valid and full ministries of the one Church of Jesus Christ.

32 The ordained ministries of the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) are reconciled. An Ordained Minister with ordained ministerial standing in one church may function, whenever invited, and as established procedures permit, as an ordained minister to the other.

33 The designations "Ordained Ministerial Partner" and "ordained ministerial partner standing" manifest the corporate and individual nature of the recognition and reconciliation of the ordained ministries of the United Church of Christ and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

34 Each member of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) who holds ordained ministerial standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) is an Ordained Ministerial Partner of the United Church of Christ.

35 Each member of the United Church of Christ who holds ordained ministerial standing in the United Church of Christ is an Ordained Ministerial Partner of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

36 Ordained ministerial partner standing is authorization granted to an Ordained Minister with ordained ministerial standing in the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ) who has a call to perform the duties and exercise the prerogatives of ordained ministry in the United Church of Christ. This authorization assumes knowledge of, and appreciation for, the history, polity, and practices of the United Church of Christ. Ordained ministerial partner standing provides ongoing ecclesiastical authorization to perform the duties and exercise the prerogatives of ordained ministry in the United Church of Christ.

ARTICLE VIII. ASSOCIATIONS AND CONFERENCES

37 Associations and Conferences are bodies organized on a territorial basis to perform functions in accordance with the provisions of the Constitution and the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ.

Associations

38 An Association is that body within a Conference of the United Church of Christ which is composed of all Local Churches in a geographical area, all Ordained Ministers holding standing or ordained ministerial partner standing therein, all Commissioned Ministers and Licensed Ministers in that Association.

39 Subsequent to the initial organization of Associations in the United Church of Christ, the boundaries of any new Association, or any adjustment of boundaries between Associations, shall be determined by the Associations concerned with the approval of the Conference or Conferences involved. The standing of an Association as a body of the United Church of Christ is determined by the Conference in which it is located.

40 An Association is that body which determines, confers, and certifies to the standing of the Local Churches of the United Church of Christ within its area.

41 An Association is that body which grants; authorization that is required for various forms of ministry in and on behalf of the Church. Such authorization is granted through the rite of ordination, through commissioning, licensing, granting either ordained ministerial standing or ordained ministerial partner standing and other acts of authorization certifies to, transfers and terminates ordained ministerial standing or ordained ministerial partner standing in the United Church of Christ. Such authorization may be terminated by the Association.

42 An Association may retain or secure its own charter, and adopt its own constitution, bylaws and other rules which it deems essential to its own welfare and not inconsistent with this Constitution and the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ.

43 An Association is related to the General Synod through its Conference.

44 When an Association meets, its voting membership includes the lay delegates selected by and representing the Local Churches of that Association, all Ordained Ministers holding standing or ordained ministerial partner standing therein, all Commissioned Ministers and Licensed Ministers of that Association.

45 Meetings of the Association are held annually and at such other times as may be necessary for the discharge of its responsibilities.

Conferences

46 A Conference is that body of the United Church of Christ which is composed of all Local Churches in a geographical area, all Ordained Ministers holding standing or ordained ministerial partner standing in its Associations or in the Conference itself when acting as an Association, all Commissioned Ministers and Licensed Ministers in its Associations.

47 Subsequent to the initial organization of Conferences in the United Church of Christ, the boundaries of any new Conference, or any adjustment of boundaries between Conferences, shall be determined by the Conferences concerned with the approval of the General Synod. The standing of a Conference as a body of the United Church of Christ is determined by the General Synod.

48 A Conference may retain or secure its own charter, and adopt its own constitution, bylaws and other rules which it deems essential to its own welfare and not inconsistent with this Constitution and the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ.

49 A Conference is related to the General Synod as described in the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ.

50 When a Conference meets, its voting membership includes lay delegates selected by and representing the Local Churches of that Conference, all Ordained Ministers holding standing or ordained ministerial partner standing in its Associations or in the Conference itself when acting as an Association, all Commissioned Ministers and Licensed Ministers in its Associations.

51 Meetings of the Conference are held annually and at such other times as may be necessary for the discharge of its responsibilities.

Conferences Acting as Associations

52 A Conference may exercise the functions of an Association when they are delegated to it by an Association or where no Association exists.

ARTICLE IX. THE GENERAL SYNOD

53 The General Synod is the gathering of a faith community representative of the wider church to listen for and discern the call of God to the United Church of Christ. The General Synod deliberates, discerns, and identifies the mission of the wider church of the United Church of Christ in God's world and receives and offers suggestions, invitations, challenges, and assistance in covenant with Local Churches, Conferences, and other settings as they engage in mission together. The General Synod is the representative body of the United Church of Christ and is composed of voting delegates ~~chosen by the Conferences, voting members of Boards of Directors of Covenanted Ministries who have been elected by General Synod, as described in the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ, and of ex-officio delegates; these shall constitute the voting delegates. There shall not be fewer than three delegates allocated to each Conference.~~ A quorum for the conduct of business shall consist of one-third of the voting delegates, provided that in this number at least two-thirds of the Conferences are represented by at least one delegate each. There shall also be associate delegates and ecumenical delegates, without vote, as determined by the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ or action of the General Synod.

Powers and Responsibilities of General Synod

54 The General Synod has the following powers and responsibilities, provided, however, that no power vested in the General Synod shall invade the autonomy of Conferences, Associations, and Local Churches, or impair their right to acquire, own, manage, and dispose of property and funds:

- a) To carry on, directly and through ~~its Executive Council~~ the United Church of Christ Board, as well as through the Covenanted, Affiliated, and Associated Ministries and other bodies, the work of the United Church of Christ, and to provide for the financial support of this work;
- b) To create such bodies, temporary or permanent, incorporated or unincorporated, suitable for the discharge of its responsibilities;
- c) To organize as required for the transaction of business;
- d) To call and elect Officers of the United Church of Christ who shall be chosen from the membership of the United Church of Christ and who ~~with the Moderators~~ shall serve as Officers of the General Synod;
- ~~e) To nominate and elect those members of Boards of Directors of the Covenanted Ministries whose election is vested in the General Synod;~~
- ~~ef) To determine by appropriate Bylaws the composition of an Executive Council to act for the General Synod ad interim, and to nominate and elect at least a majority of its members~~ To elect all members of the United Church of Christ Board, which shall act as the General Synod ad interim and carry out the United Church of Christ Board's other responsibilities as described in the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ;
- ~~fg) To establish and maintain national headquarters for the United Church of Christ;~~
- ~~gh) To establish a Treasury, which shall receive funds contributed to the General Synod for the support of the United Church of Christ and for its Covenanted Ministries;~~
- ~~hi) To determine the relationships of the United Church of Christ with ecumenical organizations, world confessional bodies, interfaith and other interdenominational agencies;~~
- ~~ij) To encourage conversations with other communions and when appropriate to authorize and guide negotiations with them, looking toward formal union;~~
- ~~jk) To amend this Constitution as hereinafter provided; and~~
- ~~kl) To adopt Bylaws for the United Church of Christ and, as hereinafter provided, to amend them.~~

Meetings of the General Synod

55 The General Synod shall hold meetings at regular intervals as provided in the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ. Special meetings may be called in the manner provided in those Bylaws.

Correlation

56 a) The General Synod and ~~its Executive Council~~ the United Church of Christ Board shall consider the work of all Covenanted, Affiliated, and Associated Ministries. It shall also correlate their work, publicity and promotion, preventing duplication and effecting economies of administration, so as to secure maximum effectiveness and efficiency through careful stewardship of personnel and financial resources. ~~Due protection shall be given to all trust funds, including pension funds.~~

b) The General Synod and the United Church of Christ Board and each of the Board of Directors of all Covenanted, Affiliated, and Associated Ministries shall assure that due protection shall be given to all assets, trust funds, including pension funds so that the legacy/historic restrictions on the use of restricted funds and the intended use restrictions of the unrestricted funds of each of the historic ministries are monitored, accounted for, maintained and reported to the United Church of Christ Board to assure that the use of all such assets and funds will be allocated and used based on donor intent, whenever that can be determined.

ARTICLE X. UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST BOARD

57 The United Church of Christ Board is the successor to and agent for the Executive Council and the Office of General Ministries (including its predecessor offices and bodies: President, Secretary, and Director of Finance and Treasurer of the United Church of Christ; Commission on Development; Stewardship Council; Office of Communication; and ministries of research formerly conducted by the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries), and as such continues the work, mandates and legacies of these predecessor bodies and offices. The members of the United Church of Christ Board shall serve as the directors of each of the Covenanted Ministries. The United Church of Christ Board shall be responsible for strategic planning and policymaking. The United Church of Christ Board shall be responsible, with the General Minister and President, for the ecumenical and interfaith relationships of the United Church of Christ in the national setting. In all its work, the United Church of Christ Board shall be guided by the policies established by the General Synod. The United Church of Christ Board shall be incorporated in order to carry out its mandates and responsibilities, including without limitation, performing all legal functions of the General Synod, as set forth in the Constitution and Bylaws of the United Church of Christ. The members of the United Church of Christ Board shall be elected and shall serve as provided in the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ.

ARTICLE XI. COVENANTED MINISTRIES

~~57~~58 The United Church of Christ recognizes the call to proclaim the good news of Jesus Christ in word and deed through the work of Local Churches; Associations; Conferences; national expressions; and global, ecumenical, and interfaith relationships. The United Church of Christ is and seeks to be an inclusive, multiracial, multicultural church, accessible to all, engaging in ministries of justice, witness, healing, teaching, and preaching. There are ~~four~~ three Covenanted Ministries as defined and set forth in the Constitution and the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ: ~~Office of General Ministries~~, Local Church Ministries, Wider Church Ministries, Justice and Witness Ministries. A Covenanted Ministry may retain or secure its own charter and adopt its own bylaws and other rules which it deems essential to its own welfare and not inconsistent with this Constitution and the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ and in accordance with advice and counsel given from time to time by the General Synod.

Powers and Responsibilities of Covenanted Ministries

~~58~~59 Each Covenanted Ministry shall have the following powers and responsibilities:

a) To carry out ~~it's~~ the Covenanted Ministry's programmatic work ~~mandates~~, including the historical mandates of its predecessor bodies, as set forth in its Charter and Bylaws, or referred

from the General Synod, or as set forth in the Constitution and the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ;

- b) To retain responsibility for all legacies and other property received, maintained or held by it, and to approve any use, expenditure or disposal of its legacies or other property;
- ~~bc)~~ To work in covenantal relationship with the General Synod, ~~Executive Council~~ the United Church of Christ Board, and other Ministries to fulfill its mandates;
- ~~ed)~~ To participate through its Executive Minister in the Collegium of Officers;
- ~~de)~~ To participate in the Mission Planning Council;
- ~~ef)~~ To nominate and elect its Executive Minister as set forth in paragraph ~~6061bc~~;
- ~~fg)~~ To organize itself as it deems necessary to carry out its programmatic work, including the fulfillment of historical mandates, which shall be carried out in accordance with this Constitution and the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ, through the United Church of Christ Board ~~and fulfill its mandates~~;
- ~~gh)~~ To determine its budget to be submitted to the United Church of Christ Board in accordance with the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ;
- ~~hi)~~ To adopt its own charter, bylaws, and rules of procedure which it deems essential to its own welfare, not inconsistent with the Constitution and the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ;
- ~~ij)~~ To hold in highest regard actions by, or decisions or advice emanating from, the General Synod, the United Church of Christ Board, another Covenanted Ministry, a Conference, an Association, or a Local Church.

~~5960~~ Each Covenanted Ministry shall be incorporated in order to fulfill its mandates; fulfill all normal, lawful purposes; and receive, hold, manage, and distribute real and personal property, endowments, and restricted funds in compliance with the terms, conditions, and requirements of said funds. The voting membership of each Covenanted Ministry shall be the members of that corporation's Board of Directors. ~~who shall be elected as provided in the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ.~~

~~6061~~ The corporation documents of Local Church Ministries, Justice and Witness Ministries, and Wider Church Ministries shall reflect their covenantal relationship with the General Synod and shall provide:

- a) ~~that the Covenanted Ministry shall vest the General Synod with the power to elect not fewer than fifty-five nor more than fifty-eight members of the Board of Directors of the Covenanted Ministry~~ the members of the United Church of Christ Board comprise the Board of Directors of the Covenanted Ministry;
- ~~b) that the voting members of the Covenanted Ministry shall have the power to elect additional Board members, but only if the voting members authorize the exercise of such power by an affirmative vote of not less than two-thirds of all voting members;~~
- ~~eb)~~ that the Covenanted Ministry shall vest the General Synod with the power to call by election the Executive Minister of the Covenanted Ministry;
- ~~dc)~~ that any modification of the provisions or powers in a, ~~or b, e~~ above shall be authorized only after consultation with the Collegium of Officers and the United Church of Christ Board ~~Executive Council of the United Church of Christ~~ and after presentation to the General Synod ~~at two regular meetings of the General Synod~~, and shall require an affirmative vote of not less than two-thirds of all voting members of the Covenanted Ministry;
- ~~ed)~~ that the Covenanted Ministry must approve any use, expenditure or disposal of its legacies or other property;
- e) that dissolution of the Covenanted Ministry shall occur only with an affirmative vote of not less than two-thirds of all members of the Covenanted Ministry, ~~consent of its Board of Directors~~, after advice and consultation with the General Synod, and only with provision for the transfer of the ownership, management, and control of its assets and funds to a successor corporation that is legally obligated and empowered to own and carry out the obligations, terms, conditions, and requirements of said assets and funds, as the Board of Directors shall determine. In keeping with

the covenantal basis of the United Church of Christ, such successor corporation shall be related to the United Church of Christ whenever legally permissible and appropriate, all as determined by the Board of Directors of the Covenanted Ministry.

~~61~~⁶² The General Synod, in covenant with a Covenanted Ministry, may, from time to time, delegate or assign to a Covenanted Ministry such responsibilities as fall within that Covenanted Ministry's purpose and mission as set forth in the Constitution and the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ and in that Covenanted Ministry's corporate documents.

~~62~~⁶³ Each Covenanted Ministry of the United Church of Christ shall report its ~~program and~~ finances annually to the ~~Executive Council~~ United Church of Christ Board and to each regular meeting of the General Synod. Each Covenanted Ministry shall submit to the ~~Executive Council~~ United Church of Christ Board, acting as the Budget Committee of the General Synod, a detailed request for support of its work through funds allocated from the biennial income goal budget to be recommended to the General Synod.

Incorporation of Existing and Prior Agencies

~~63~~⁶⁴ The Covenanted Ministries listed in paragraph ~~57~~⁵⁸ above, acting as successors to and agents for all predecessor bodies related to the United Church of Christ, continue the work, mandates, and legacies previously carried on by the ~~Secretary, Director of Finance and Treasurer,~~ American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, the Board of International Missions, the Commission on World Service, the Congregational Christian Service Committee, the United Church Board for World Ministries, Board of National Missions, Board of Christian Education and Publication, Board of Business Management, Board of Home Missions of the Reformed Church in the U. S., the American Missionary Association, Congregational Church Building Society, Congregational Education Society, Congregational Home Missionary Society, Congregational Publishing Society, The Congregational Sunday School Extension Society, the Congregational Women's Home Missionary Federation, the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, Coordinating Center for Women in Church and Society, Commission for Racial Justice, Office for Church Life and Leadership, Office for Church in Society, Stewardship Council, ~~Commission on Development,~~ and Office of Communication.

Office of General Ministries

~~64~~ The purpose and mission of the Office of General Ministries shall be to care for the spiritual life, unity, and well-being of the church; to nurture its covenantal life, and its ecumenical and interfaith relationships; and to facilitate the visioning, planning, coordination, and implementation of the total mission of the United Church of Christ. The Office of General Ministries continues the work of, and acts as the agent for, the following predecessor offices or bodies: The President, the Secretary, and the Director of Finance and Treasurer of the United Church of Christ; the Commission on Development; the Stewardship Council; and the Office of Communication. It also continues the following ministries: ministries of research formerly conducted by the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries.

Local Church Ministries

~~65~~ The purpose and mission of Local Church Ministries, to be carried out in accordance with the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ, shall be to encourage and support the Local Churches of the United Church of Christ in the fulfillment of God's mission. Specifically, Local Church Ministries continues the work of, and acts as agent for, the following predecessor bodies: the Office for Church Life and Leadership, the Coordinating Center for Women in Church and Society, the Stewardship Council, the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, and its predecessor bodies: The Board of National Missions, Board of Christian Education and Publication, Board of Business Management, Board of Home Missions of the Reformed Church in the U.S., the American Missionary Association, Congregational Church Building Society, Congregational Education Society, Congregational Home Mission Society, Congregational

Publishing Society, The Congregational Sunday School Extension Society, the Congregational Women's Home Missionary Federation.

Justice and Witness Ministries

66 The purpose and mission of Justice and Witness Ministries, [to be carried out in accordance with the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ](#), shall be to enable and encourage Local Churches, Associations, Conferences, and the national expressions of the United Church of Christ to engage in God's mission globally by direct action for the integrity of creation, justice, and peace. Justice and Witness Ministries continues the work of, and acts as agent for, the following predecessor bodies: the Office for Church in Society, the Commission for Racial Justice, the Coordinating Center for Women in Church and Society. It also continues the following ~~ministries~~: ministries of public policy advocacy in the area of communications formerly conducted by the Office of Communication, ministries of prophetic service and action formerly conducted by the Division of the American Missionary Association of the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries, ministries of global advocacy in the U.S.A. formerly conducted by the United Church Board for World Ministries.

Wider Church Ministries

67 The purpose and mission of Wider Church Ministries, [to be carried out in accordance with the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ](#), shall be to encourage and support Local Churches, Associations, Conferences, and the national expressions of the United Church of Christ to participate in the global, multiracial, multicultural church, and to support United Church of Christ ministries around the world and the nation. Wider Church Ministries continues the work of, and acts as agent for, the following predecessor bodies: the United Church Board for World Ministries, the American Board of Commissioners for Foreign Missions, the Board of International Missions, the Commission on World Service, and the Congregational Christian Service Committee. It also continues the following ~~ministries~~: ministries of volunteer services formerly conducted by the Division of the American Missionary Association of the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries; ministries of the Health and Welfare Coordinating Council formerly related to the United Church Board for Homeland Ministries.

ARTICLE XII. AFFILIATED AND ASSOCIATED MINISTRIES

68 An Affiliated Ministry of the United Church of Christ is a non-profit corporation which provides services to or for the United Church of Christ, and whose Board of Trustees is elected by its corporate membership, and which was recognized previously as an Instrumentality by the General Synod.

69 An Associated Ministry of the ~~Executive Council~~ [United Church of Christ Board](#) of the General Synod of the United Church of Christ is a nonprofit corporation which provides services to or for the United Church of Christ, and whose corporate membership is nominated and elected by the ~~Executive Council~~ [United Church of Christ Board](#), and which was recognized previously as an instrumentality by the General Synod.

Pension and Relief Activities

70 The pension activities of the United Church of Christ are administered by a non-profit membership corporation(s) known as The Pension Boards—United Church of Christ and designated as an Affiliated Ministry of the United Church of Christ. The control of each such corporation lies in its members through a board of trustees chosen by the members from a list of persons whose names have been presented to and approved by the General Synod or by the ~~Executive Council~~ [United Church of Christ Board](#). Persons for this list may be proposed by any member of the corporation(s) or by the Trustees thereof. Such corporation(s) shall report its program and finance annually to its members and to the ~~Executive Council~~ [United Church of Christ Board](#) and to each regular meeting of the General Synod. The General Synod shall from time to time make examination of the practices and developments of such corporation(s).

71 The ministerial relief activities of the United Church of Christ, by whatever corporate bodies administered, are coordinated with the pension activities of the Church through corporation(s) above described. The pension and the relief corporation(s) shall submit to [the United Church of Christ Board, acting as](#) the Budget Committee of the General Synod, a request for allocation of sufficient funds, from the budget to be [approved by the United Church of Christ Board recommended to the General Synod](#), for the payment of ministerial relief benefits and such other benefits as the [United Church of Christ Board General Synod](#) may provide. Payment of such benefits shall be limited to the funds received for that purpose.

United Church ~~Foundation~~ Funds

72 The United Church ~~Foundation~~ Funds, Inc., is designated as an Associated Ministry of the ~~Executive Council~~ [United Church of Christ Board](#) of the United Church of Christ to receive gifts from individuals and organizations, to hold such funds and property as may be entrusted or conveyed to it by the General Synod and other organizations, and administer, invest, and reinvest the same and other funds in trust or otherwise, as set forth in the Bylaws.

73 The United Church ~~Foundation~~ Funds shall report its program and finances annually to the ~~Executive Council~~ [United Church of Christ Board](#) and to each regular meeting of the General Synod, and shall submit to the [United Church of Christ Board, acting as the](#) Budget Committee of the General Synod, a detailed request for support of its work through funds allocated from the [biennial income goal budget](#) to be recommended to the General Synod.

ARTICLE XIII. AMENDMENTS

The Constitution

74 Amendments to this Constitution may be proposed by a Conference, the General Synod or the ~~Executive Council~~ [United Church of Christ Board](#). Such proposed amendments shall be submitted in writing to the General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ at least three months prior to a meeting of the General Synod to which they are to be presented. At least two months prior to the meeting of the General Synod, the General Minister and President shall transmit such proposed amendments to the delegates, to the Conferences and to the Local Churches. Adoption of an amendment to the Constitution shall require a two-thirds affirmative vote of those present and voting in the General Synod and, before the next regular meeting of the General Synod, an affirmative vote of two-thirds of the Conferences. If so approved the General Synod, if in session, or the ~~Executive Council~~ [United Church of Christ Board](#), shall declare the amendment adopted and in force.¹

The Bylaws

75 Amendments to the Bylaws of the United Church of Christ may be proposed by an Association, a Conference, the General Synod, or the ~~Executive Council~~ [United Church of Christ Board](#). Such proposed amendments shall be submitted in writing to the General Minister and President of the United Church of Christ at least three months prior to the meeting of the General Synod to which they are to be presented. At least two months prior to the meeting of the General Synod, the General Minister and President shall transmit such proposed amendments to the delegates, to the Conferences and to the Local Churches. Any Bylaw that is contingent upon a Constitutional provision shall not be effective until after the Constitutional provision is ratified and declared in force. Adoption of an amendment to the Bylaws shall require a two-thirds affirmative vote of those present and voting in the General Synod, and shall be effective upon adoption unless otherwise set forth in the vote.

¹The General Synod declared the original Constitution of the United Church of Christ in force June, 1961, upon ratification of 2/3 of the Synods of the Evangelical and Reformed Church and by 2/3 of the Congregational Christian churches voting.

**ASSOCIATE CONFERENCE MINISTER FOR
STEWARDSHIP, CHURCH VITALITY AND FINANCE
Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ
Position Description
1/30/12**

Purpose

The Associate Conference Minister for Stewardship, Church Vitality and Finance shall coordinate and provide resources to our local congregations for stewardship interpretation and development. This person will also provide oversight of resources and programs promoting congregational vitality in the Vermont Conference and provide oversight of conference financial matters and maintain conference properties and facilities.

Responsibilities

- Preach and teach on matters of stewardship and congregational vitality throughout the Vermont Conference;
- Along with the Resource Center Coordinator, insure the availability of up to date resources for stewardship and congregational vitality and promote their use throughout the conference;
- Provide staff support to the Department of Stewardship and the committees of that department;
- Provide staff support for the Congregational Vitality Committee;
- Ensure sound fiscal management of all Conference finances;
- Provide assistance and support to the work of the Finance Committee as they develop and monitor the conference budget;
- In consultation with the Conference Minister develop annual budget for office operations, staff travel and conference operations;
- Generate public monthly financial reports and present them to the Conference Board of Directors;
- Attend Board of Directors meetings as directed by the Conference Minister;
- Prepare budget reports for Annual Meeting;
- Implement payment for all Conference expenses and implement data entry for accounts receivable and payable, including payroll, all tax filings and IRS donor letters;
- Maintain conference Facebook presence;
- Provide technical advice and support for the conference website to the Communications Coordinator;
- Provide conference IT management, including network administration, PC and network repair, and hardware and software evaluation and purchase;
- Provide assistance and resources for congregations around properties, congregational beginnings and endings, local church constitutions and bylaws, local church policies, including personnel;
- Ensure proper maintenance of all Conference properties;
- Attend all staff meetings;

- Meet regularly with the Conference Treasurer.

Qualifications

- A strong Christian faith and commitment to serve the church;
- UCC Ministerial Authorization required (or ordained ministerial partner standing);
- Good listening skills and communication skills and the ability to maintain confidentiality and high ethical standards;
- Excellent organizational skills;
- Experience and enthusiasm in the promotion of Christian stewardship;
- Experience and enthusiasm in the promotion of vitality in Local Congregations;
- Proven accounting skills;
- Knowledge of office equipment, purchasing and leasing;
- Ability to work well in a cooperative team ministry;
- Knowledge of and commitment to the United Church of Christ;
- Ability to work in a multi-media environment using computers and social media and a willingness to continue to grow in this area.

Work Schedule

Full-time according to the Ministerial Compensation Guidelines including availability on evenings, Saturdays and Sundays

Accountability

Conference Minister

Support

Conference Minister and the Personnel Committee

**217TH ANNUAL MEETING OF THE VERMONT CONFERENCE,
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST, June 2-3, 2012
Vermont Technical College, Randolph, VT**

RESOLUTION OF THANKS

WHEREAS the 217th Annual Meeting of the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ convened at Vermont Technical College June 2-3, 2012, and there worshipped, lived in fellowship together, and conducted business; and

WHEREAS God's mysterious, comforting, advising, troubling, and Still-speaking Spirit was everywhere to be found within and through our fellowship, and called us to share the Good News in all corners of Creation; and

WHEREAS we have grieved together, sung together, argued together, imagined together, broken bread and drank wine together, and danced with joy together as covenant partners within the United Church of Christ; and

WHEREAS so many of our family and friends worked tirelessly to plan, to welcome, to decorate, to preach, to lead worship, to photocopy, to email, to drive, and to do all those things necessary to make our Annual Meeting safe, productive and a visible witness to the world; and

WHEREAS we continue to adhere to the Covenant for Dialogue with one another which allows us to conduct the business of this Annual Meeting with integrity, mutual respect, accountability; and

WHEREAS we were blessed to look up and to share our faith and discover that it is, finally, the reason we "Go Out in Joy":

THEREFORE be it resolved that we, the delegates and visitors to the 217th Annual Meeting of the Vermont Conference, United Church of Christ extend our gratitude to those who have shared their time and gifts with us;

TO Vermont Technical College, and especially Mary Jeanne Taylor and her staff, who have welcomed us, provided for us, given us a beautiful, Heaven-sent place to be, and made our stay so enjoyable;

TO the members of Annual Meeting planning committee, and conference staff, especially Lynn Thomas and Rev. Lynn Bujnak, who served with the committee all year long. This group labored with joy and diligence to make this sweet time happen in this sweet place.

TO Ned Davis, whose wondrous ministry of hand, flowers, and whose sacred talent for design has adorned our common meeting space and reminded us that God really, really loves beauty, art, and symbol;

TO Sybil McShane and Lynn Thomas for their fine work coordinating registrations, room assignments, and answering a few thousand questions for this gathering;

TO the Vermont Conference Board of Directors and chair Debbie Ingram for their guidance and support, for their organization, and for their spirit of discernment;

TO all Red Vesters who answered our questions and guided us to event venues with grace and warmth;

TO our keynote Speaker/Preacher of the Holy Word, DaVita McAllister, whose spirit, complete presence, and holy exhortations awakened us, challenged us, comforted us, and centered us for the joyous and troubling work we are all called to do in God's name;

TO the Rev. Clifford Aerie and the Oikos Ensemble - Carol Daggs, Connor Rowntree, and Gary Smith, who brought the music of their hearts - and the heart of God Godself - to us, and thereby demonstrated anew the sacred truth of the observation that "life without music would be a mistake";

TO Florence Coppola, national UCC Disaster Relief Coordinator, for her presence, holy labors, and her time with us this weekend;

TO the Worship Planning Committee and all those who participated in leading worship that energized us, renewed us, and reminded us who we are and to whom we belong;

TO the Conference committee members – nominating, finance and budget, resolutions, and others, whose work leading up to this meeting is so central to our purpose and actions;

TO Mark Pitton and the Dough-ers of the Word, who made our Communion bread come alive with symbol, the breath of life, and the very Holy Spirit:

TO our Parliamentarian Dick White, Scribes Susan Tarolli and Peter Plagge, and our timekeeper, Carrie Youngblood, who were on hand to ensure propriety, accuracy and a good record of our doings;

TO our Chaplain, the Rev. Elissa Johnk, and our Nurse Brenda Egbert who tended to both our physical and our spiritual well-being;

To our child care providers, Robin Junker and Bethany Randolph Youth Group;

TO our "servants of servants," the Vermont Conference Staff: Revs. Lynn Bujnak and Pam Lucas, Lynn Thomas and Jim Thomas, and Sybil McShane, who work tirelessly and joyously on behalf of the "herd of cats" known as the people of the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ; for all of us, they are friends, colleagues, resources, connections, shepherds, and even, sometimes, parents.

AND with heartfelt thanks to our outgoing Moderator, Rev. Kevin Goldenbogen, who gave so much of his time and his talents in both planning and with the gavel. We have been blessed by his service, his perspective, his sense of humor, his firm but gentle hand, and his partnership with all comers.

TO all of these folks as well as anyone I have neglected to name and whose forgiveness I beg for so forgetting, we offer our deep and sincere gratitude, even as I ask that someone from the floor move this resolution.