

MINUTES OF THE 2013 ANNUAL MEETING

Vermont Conference United Church of Christ

The 218th Annual Meeting of the Vermont Conference United Church of Christ was held at Vermont Technical College, Randolph Center, Vermont, June 1st – June 2nd. The theme of the meeting was “Faith @ The Edges.”

PLENARY I: GATHERING @ THE EDGES

10:25 – Call to Order

Announcements

- Pam Lucas who is not with us in person as she recovers from a broken ankle in Florida. She is with us in spirit, as we hold here close in our prayers.

Establish Quorum

- Rev. Dr. Lynn Bujnak announces a quorum.
- Mr. Parker declares it so.

Words of Welcome

- Rev. Amy Pitton, chair of the Board of Directors, greets the gathered body and introduces the Vermont Conference Board of Directors:

Alan Parker – Moderator

Rona Kinsley – vice moderator

David Damkot – treasurer

Debbie Ingram – past chair

Malcolm Chase – Addison Association

Mike Ford – Northeast Association

Ann Miller – Windham-Union Association

Wendy Farrel – Champlain Association

Chris Heinz – Southwest Association

Roger Daum – Grafton Orange Association

Sherry Baer – Windsor-Orange Association

- Kevin Goldenbogen, chair, introduces the Annual Meeting Planning Committee:

Rev. Dr. Lynn Bujnak, Lynn Thomas, Abby Gackenheimer, Joanne Hardy, Gail Compton, Hal Drury, Martha Peck, Ann Vivian, Rona Kinsley, Ned Davis.

- Lynn Bujnak introduces the Conference Staff:

Jim Thomas – Associate Conference Minister for Stewardship, Congregational Vitality and Church Finance

Sybil McShane – Communications and Resource Center Coordinator

Lynn Thomas – Administrative Assistant
Pam Lucas – Associate Conference Minister

- Alan Parker introduces other participants:

Rev. Peter Cook – Chaplain for the Annual Meeting
Robin Junker-Boyce and the youth group of Bethany Randolph, UCC – Childcare
Sybil McShane and Lynn Thomas – Registrars

Visiting dignitaries

- Rev. Dr. Robin Meyers – Keynote Speaker
- Dinni Adamson – Hopkins Bookstore
- Cheri Lovell – UCC funds
- Daehler Hayes and Chuck Holingsworth Cornerstone Fund
- Hal Harrison and Avery Post, Conference Minister Emeritus
- Bert Marshall, Church World Service

It was moved by Chris Heinz and seconded that these visitors have voice without vote. Approved unanimously.

Alan Parker thanks Mary Jeanne Taylor at Vermont Technical College and her staff and Seth the sound coordinator. Round of applause.

Martha Peck introduced Mark Violette as our musician for the weekend. He is from the Northeast Association.

Dick White and David Durfee introduced as parliamentarians

Rona Kinsley is our speak out coordinator.

Presentation of Document D, “Covenant for Dialogue”

As a sign of our acceptance of the “Covenant for Dialogue” at the Annual Meeting of the Vermont Conference, the gathered body read together Document D

Election of Scribes

It is moved and seconded that the Rev. Peter Plagge and Ms. Marvie Domey serve as scribes to the Annual Meeting. Approved unanimously.

Bayley Cobb from First Congregational Church of Newbury, rose for a point of personal privilege, requesting that the conference make sure that it's policy about churches sending delegates meets the requirements of an amendment to the “constitution or bylaws” made four years ago. It is duly noted that the paper work needs to be changed.

The minutes of the Vermont Conference Annual Meeting 2012 have been approved by the Board of Directors. It is moved we accept them. Approved unanimously.

Presentation and Discussion of Resolution B, "To Reduce Gun Violence."

The resolution moved by Christopher Ashley of the Norwich Congregational Church. It is seconded.

C. Ashley: Sandy Hook was a wake up. But in fact there are three Sandy Hooks happening in the United States everyday. If these deaths were caused by other issues a huge uprising would demand action. We have been silent because of fear. We are called to overcome fear with love.

Discussion:

- Mike Marshall, Wells River Congregational Church.

Agrees with the call to prayerfully consider actions that will lessen gun violence. But his service in the military and in police departments leads him to believe this is not a realistic approach to violence which is the real issue. Statistics show that federal bans only create illicit demand.

He also noted that calling all people who carry guns to background checks will only not work as criminals do not submit to background checks, and that it is already illegal to traffic weapons.

- John Holme, First Congregational Church of Springfield

Supports the Resolution but thinks it should be broadened to include the mental health issue. A person can be involuntarily committed if found to be a danger. Does this mean they should not be able to get a license for a gun? Perhaps this resolution is only a first step.

- Ben Lawton, Brandon Congregational Church,

Moves to table this resolution that delegates can return with the issue to churches so they can discuss the resolution. Seconded.

Voice vote was inconclusive. Call for house to be divided to determine accurately whether the 2/3's vote it needs to pass is reached.

Yeas – 49

Nays – 120

Abstentions – 5

The attempt to table the resolution fails. Because of time constraints, discussion for now, is closed.

Mr. Parker introduced the Rev. Dr. Robin Meyers to offer the keynote address. He is the pastor of the Mayflower Congregational Church in Oklahoma City.

Generous round of welcoming applause.

Keynote Presentation – Rev. Dr. Robin Meyers

PLENARY II: STEWARDSHIP @ THE EDGES

Called to order 3:02

Speak-outs

1. Daehler Hayes – Cornerstone Fund: “Do good and do well with your money.”
2. Sandy Daly – Hallelujah Farm: “You're welcome to come for a retreat.”
3. Chris Heinz – Friends of the Vermont Conference: “Put your money to work for the conference. ”
4. Deborah Adams – To show solidarity with the people of Palestine, “purchase a peace lamp for your congregation. ”
5. Mark Mendes – Pension Board Annual Meeting, representative: “If you would like to have anything represented to the powers that be, email me and I will deliver them.”
6. Susanna Griefen – Disaster Resources Table: “Take my materials – they're for you.” Also Loren McGrail missionary to Palestine is willing to visit churches.
7. Marsh Hudson-Knapp – “Do a CROP Hunger Walk.” Bert Marshall will be talking about CROP during supper at the dining hall.
8. Abby Gackenheimer – Cooperative Christian Ministries at UVM: “Thanks to those who support us. Encouragement to collect a special offering to CCM.”
9. Rona Kinsley – A Canadian energy company that wants to send tar sands oil through the Northeast Kingdom in an old pipe. “This is a real threat to Vermont's environment.”

Report from Vermont Conference Treasurer, David Damkot.

David thanks the staff and the gathered delegates of the Annual Meeting for a wonderful experience, as this is his last report. The financial books are kept in a clear and transparent fashion.

Highlights:

- Last year we voted to pay off the mortgage for the Conference office about \$155,000.
- Staff in the office 4 days a week instead of 5. Everyone likes it.
- Invested assets gaining slowly, as economy improves.
- Funding for departments tight as income continues to erode.
- Combined operating budgets of all churches \$12.7 million. Last year far short of the goal of churches giving 10% to OCWM.
- Last year the Annual Meeting approved a budget that passed through 35% of OCWM money to the UCC National Office. It would be amazing what we could accomplish if we could honor our commitments.
- Thank you for the opportunity to serve as you treasurer. Standing round of applause offered by the house.

Report from Jim Thomas, Budget and Financial Resolutions

Jim offered his personal thanks to David Damkot for all he had done for the conference.

Mr. Thomas noted that the Vermont Conference budget was below expectations for both income and expense, leaving a smaller than anticipated deficit of about 1%. The conference has seen an overall OCWM decrease for the fourth straight year. It was observed that if churches actually accomplished what is voted at the annual meeting, the Conference would have an income of \$1.2 million and not the received \$374,000.

The 2014 Budget (Doc. E) expects a modest recovery from the last four years, but is still well below 2008 levels. As a result staff compensation is increased only to allow for the increases in health care costs with no other cost of living increase.

On the positive side, we do so much good with the money entrusted to the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ:

- Disaster relief
 - Vermont Academy of Spiritual Training
 - Resource Center
 - Support of Pastors
 - Camping experiences for children
 - Vermont Congregational Home (Newbury)
 - Low Income Advocacy Council
 - National Youth Event
 - Staff to help churches and pastors, workshops, planning, etc.
 - Search and Call and Crisis support for pastors and churches.
 - To name just a few of the highlights.
- **Document F – “Resolutions Recommended by the Board of Directors Pertaining to the 2014 Budget,” Presented by Jim Thomas**
 1. That the division of undesignated Basic Support for Our Church's Wider Mission Income for 2014 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 2014 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 2014 Vermont Per Capita be set at \$12.08.
 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 2014.
 7. That the Board of Directors be authorized to adjust the 2014 operating budget as unforeseen circumstances require, within the spending limits established within the budget.
 8. That the conference adopt an operating budget of not more \$683,028 in expense and not less than \$683,028 in income, with the goal of ending 2014 with a balanced budget.
- Rev. Deborah Ingram moves these recommendations as presented in Document F by Jim Thomas. Seconded. Conversation and vote on these recommendations will take place during Plenary V on Sunday, June 2.

Moved and seconded to accept the financial reports (not resolutions) as presented by Jim Thomas. Approved with one negative vote.

PLENARY III: STORIES FROM THE EDGE

6:50 pm – The body is called to order by Alan Parker

Speak-outs

- Dee Keller – Global Ministries: “We’d like to get a picture of all the mission efforts of churches in VT.”
- Ned Davis – Floral Ministries: Offering his services to do a sermon dealing with numbers in nature.
- Charlie Purinton – Seminary Support and Vermont Veterans Memorial Cemetery: “Support your seminaries. Take a walk to see the cemetery!”

State of the Conference – Rev. Dr. Lynn Bujnak

“Behold what you are. May we become what we receive.”

When I think of faith at the edges – what I think about is trying to become what I receive and to be in those places where the one I follow is.

Some of the edges of the VTUCC that I see:

- Mission – (Global Ministry partnership, Prison Ministry, Vermont Ecumenical Council, long-term relationships with Methodists and Baptists, also now around Episcopal diocese in terms of justice issues and continuing education to both clergy and laity, Disaster recovery, VLIAC, Childrens summer lunch, CCM at UVM, Vermont Interfaith Action, LGBTQ Justice Work.)
- Ministry – (Work outside the church, Theology on Tap, Ripple, Saturday Nights, Street Communion, Emerging Faith Communities, Conference conversations like Faith @ the Edges)
- Relevance – (Faith in the Public Square, Spiritual but not Religious, Environmental Justice work, Climate Revival.)

- Money – (OCWM giving in last five years – precipitous drop off. The good news is that we're ahead of where we were last year, and some big increases in pledges.)
- Demographics – (Nearly 70% of our churches have less than a hundred members. Up in the 300+ category, not many at all. Regardless of size, “Do we want to grow? Are we open to change?”)
- Spiritual Wellbeing – (Jesus came to give life and life more abundantly, more joyfully. The vitality issue is addressed in the discovery that individual churches are often a mix of legacy, vital and emerging. Helping ask the question of what is a faithful response at this time in the life cycle of a church. We're about resurrection and not resuscitation. Some may want to go back (resuscitated) to the old glory days. That's not what we're about.)

L. Bujnak asked the house to break into small groups to discuss these issues and then return to the full group with a nugget of wisdom from their conversations.

1. Mission – Jesus is about Mission.
2. Ministry – Ministry outside the church is key to the future and everyone is a part of that ministry.
3. Demographics – Most churches are not representative of communities in which they do ministry, even though they're doing ministry to those communities. Also issue of multiple churches within the same demographic area.
4. Relevance – “The first temptation is the temptation to be relevant.” – F. Beuchner. That said, we are relevant, but how do we help others see that relevance.
5. Money – Essential to achieve our visions. Are thriving churches tithing?
6. Spiritual Witness – This is foundational to what we are and it depends on trust, which can be scary.

Debate on Gun Resolution

- Gary Crosby, Warren United Church

1 – My uncle was chief of police – the last thing you want in your house is a loaded gun.

2 – We hear about the slippery slope that if they are going to take away our guns, they're taking our right to fight against the government. We've lost that. We're not going to use weapons to obliterate tyranny.

3 – This resolution is not a silver bullet. We have more gun violence in this country than any other country in the world. This is one perspective in the many perspectives we need to work on to stem this tide.

- Bayley Cobb, First Church of Newbury

I could refute every point in the resolution. But we do need to talk about it. I did twenty years in the military as an electronics technician. I also had the opportunity to become qualified with many guns. I know what can be done with weapons. I'm licensed to carry guns and I could get one if I wanted.

My family would have problems though. I've been diagnosed with having clinical depression. Until the conversation looks at all aspects, it's pure noise.

- Gail Compton, First Congregational Church, Burlington

This is a very divisive issue. Also something that everybody says we've been talking about this for years, when are we going to do something about it. This is our chance. Perhaps we can take this year and discuss this in churches and at the conference. By passing this resolution it says, we are followers of Christ and we don't believe in violence. This has nothing to do with whether someone is going to take your gun away. It has to let people know who we are.

- Tom Steffen, pastor emeritus, 2nd Congregational Church of Bennington

I'm surprised that I'm here. But I believe that process is important. If you let people feel that they've been heard, it's a lot different. We do need to address the violence. That's the overarching issue.

- Martha Perkins, Charlotte Congregational Church

We've had one discussion after church on this issue. I'm an eighth generation Vermonter and I know about guns and we had guns in the house. I think one of the things bothering people is that they feel like people are taking away their rights. If someone says that to us, perhaps we should think about the many rights we already have. I want to say that for those who are in favor of this resolution and resolving the gun violence issue. Do not be fearful or afraid to speak out. I hope you can make the discussion happening in our own churches.

- Wendy Farrell, College Street Congregational Church, Burlington

I've fired a weapon once in my life and it was a lot of fun. The reason I'm speaking against is that I haven't heard any substantiation of the action that were suggested. People who have never had guns think that it will make them better. This resolution might make us feel better, because we've done something. Perhaps we should talk to law enforcement about how we can help them make the work a better place.

- Mary Brownlow, Norwich Congregational Church, responding informatively as sponsor of resolution.

This resolution was brought to us by a member of my congregation who is not here right now. We have learned that the specific acts in this petition are supported by 700 mayors and police chiefs from around the country.

- Betty Edson, Bethany United Church of Christ, Randolph

Looking at what the resolution says, I note that it says nothing about taking guns away from people. We do speak our conscience. We do not merely represent a vote of our congregation. I question

whether we would be in a more knowledgeable place next year than we are now if we were to table this resolution until next year.

- Marsh Hudson-Knapp notes in point of order that we do not applaud the outcome of the vote. Mr. Parker agrees and asks for agreement from the gathered body.
- Barbara Purinton, South Hero Congregational Church

The resolution isn't taking us to the edge. We need to look at the system where people misuse drugs and live in violence. We're asking other people to do for us something about this issue.

- Lee Ann Lee – United Church of Hardwick

My husband was a federally licensed firearms dealer. Neither of us are in favor of having assault weapons in homes. Yes, violence will happen but the issue is about trying to limit the carnage. I voted against tabling, because I felt that we should have the right to be able to talk about it in this forum.

- Carrie Youngblood, Montpelier Bethany Church, UCC

The issue of gun violence in the US can be closely compared to drunk driving. Over the last fifty years, we have spent much money and time researching the issue of drunk driving, passing legislation regarding it and mounted numerous campaigns against drunk driving. Over the years we have lowered the blood alcohol level that defines drunk driving. There are a lot of different actions that need to be taken to address the issue of gun violence in the United States. Conversations, resolutions, legislation addressing specific issues. I don't know what the answers are, but there are a lot of actions littler actions that need to be taken in order to address the large whole. Yes this is not all of it, but it is one of the many things that needs to happen. To vote against it because this is not going to answer the whole problem misses the point. It's *one* of the things we can do.

- Lee Moore, Bethany United Church of Christ, Randolph

I am a retired UCC pastor, from Newtown, CT. It was five years ago that I left that church. My heart would break if tomorrow or the newspapers or the television news reported that the Vermont conference voted down a resolution to prevent gun-violence.

- Tracy Weatherhogg, Grace Church, Rutland

I move to amend this resolution by putting a period after line 49 and striking everything following. Seconded.

- Peter Cook, First Congregational Church Burlington

I rise to speak against the amendment. I feel these three items, the banning of assault weapons, background check and trafficking have been widely and deeply debated. Every time we get up to this point, we soften and water it down and then we stop. I'm tired of that. There's a lot of research that suggests these are things we need to be doing and to commend these to our congregations for active and spirited debate. It is important to name and address this.

- Mike Marshall, Wells River

One of my objections of the three parts is that it already is a federal felony for gun trafficking. I would like to see these things enforced. The answer is to ask federal prosecutors to do their job.

- Jeanne Zammataro, Second Congregational Church Londonderry

I appreciate Tracy's attempt to make a compromise. I think it's equivalent to tabling the resolution. I am opposed to the amendment.

- Bayley Cobb, First Congregational Church of Newbury

What exactly is an assault weapon? I'm not sure we could agree. There is a confusion of terminology in this resolution. It'll be worse if you pass something and all of a sudden you have churches split and you have churches that can't do anything. Yes we have to compromise; it's a political action. But sometimes you have to do what is really feasible and continue the fight.

- Jeanne Zammataro – Second Congregational Church Londonderry

Assault weapons require a separate squeeze from automatic. In my understanding, the distinctions that Mr. Cobb made are inaccurate.

A motion made to call the question. Seconded. The question is called with several dissents.

There is a call for a divided house in the vote on the ammendment.

Yeahs – 26

Nays – 95

Abstentions – 0

The amendment is defeated.

After no further conversation, the resolution is called for a vote. The resolution is passed with several nays.

SUNDAY, JUNE 2

9:00 – Worship

PLENARY IV SERVING @ THE EDGES

9:18 – Call to Order by Mr. Alan Parker

Speak outs

- Gail Compton, First Church Burlington – Vermont Ibutwa Initiative: We are working for health and safety of women and children in the Republic of the Congo. Perhaps next year's offering from our meeting could go to this group.
- Judy Joy, 4/1 Earth: "Let us not let this movement end. We have contacted the UCC in Cleveland encouraging them to turn this project into a movement."
- Bayley Cobb, First Congregational Church of Newbury: "I am standing here to say goodbye. You are like a family and like all families there comes time to separate. We don't always agree, but we're always willing to listen with love and understanding. Time for me to say so, long, farewell."
- Bert Marshall, Church World Service: Since 1946, CWS has been working to alleviate hunger and poverty in the world, and that working together with the poor we can do this. The CROP hunger walk is one of the ways we can do that. I invite you to ask me about it. Thank you to all of you. God bless.
- David Durfee, Bennington – Boundary Awareness Training: On September 21 in Randolph, The Department of Church and Ministry will train leaders of associations for Boundary Awareness Training for training local churches and lay leaders.
- Diedre Goldenbogen, United Church of Underhill – Flapping Free Stoles: "Stoles for sale, including duct tape stoles because sometimes ministry gets messy!"
- Kevin Goldenbogen, Underhill – 5K run: "This year was a success. There will be another run next year (maybe not in the orchard!)." The run raised \$127 for the 217 drive.
- Judy Waible, One Billion Rising Initiative: There are 7 billion people in the world. Half of those 7 billion people are women, and one third of all women are raped or violated in their life-time. Twelve people learned the dance last night to remember these women and raise awareness about this epidemic.
- Mary Nelson Abbot, Mallet's Bay Congregational Church: On Wednesday June 12 at 7 pm, at First Congregational Church in Burlington the Matins choir from Des Moines IA, will perform. I was in this choir as a youth and it changed my life. They are amazing. Attend the concert.
- Sherry Baer, United Church of Northfield – Quilt Squares for the Department of Mission: We have received 13 squares over the year. We will put it into a real quilt. If you are willing to help Sherry finish the quilt, be in touch.
- Deborah Adams presents a peace lamp from the Palestinian Christians to the Christians of the Vermont Conference. D. Adams presents this lamp to the Conference, with the reminder that we are the underground church and that we have a commitment. We are asked to take the

lead in peace in the Middle East.

OCWM and 5-for-5 presentations, Jim Thomas

24 5-for-5 churches. Almost twice that number of churches who are 4-5! This is easy to turn into 5-for-5. Let's do it.

- Second Congregational Church of Bennington
- Congregational Church of Bradford
- Brandon Congregational Church
- Charlotte Congregational Church
- United Church of Craftsbury
- Danville Congregational Church
- United Church of Dorset and East Rupert
- East Corinth Congregational Church
- First Congregational Church of Essex Junction
- First Congregational Church of Fair Haven
- Greensboro United Church of Christ
- Second Congregational United Church of Christ, Jeffersonville
- First Congregational Church of Lyndonville
- Bethany Church, Montpelier
- First Congregational Church of Morrisville
- New Haven Congregational Church
- First Congregational Church of Newbury
- United Church of Northfield
- Pawlet Community Church
- Richmond Congregational Church
- Grace Congregational United Church of Christ, Rutland
- South Hero Congregational Church
- Waitsfield United Church of Christ
- Weybridge Congregational Church

Churches that met basic OCWM support goals in 2012:

- Bradford Congregational Church
- First Congregational Church, Brattleboro

- Danville Congregational Church
- Dummerston Congregational Church
- United Church of Newport
- First Congregational Church of Randolph Center
- Federated Church of Rochester
- United Church of Underhill
- Williston Federated Church

Mission Department Presentation

Vermont Low Income Advocacy Council, Karen Lafayette

Religion, politics and taxes! That's what I'm all about!

This year we celebrate our 41st year of activity in Montpelier to help people in poverty achieve self-sufficiency.

I want to thank all of you for your continuing generosity and support. You have been with us from the beginning on the fight for economic justice. This year the 2013 budget presented extraordinary challenges. The state had it's own challenges. The childhood poverty rate increased by %50. At the same time the state is experiencing dramatic need for emergency assistance money.

The administration had termed these programs as unsustainable. VLIAC supports fairer budget and tax policies. We need to get at the root causes of poverty and invest in those programs that work. We need jobs, training, childcare and support for struggling Vermonters that want to work.

We had many success this year in attempting to prevent roll-backs. But we have much to do. Advocacy is the key. We greatly value your partnership. Thank you.

Presentation of Nominating Committee, Skip Dickinson, co-chair.

Thanks to all who serve the conference and the churches in our work together. I also want to thank all of the people who have said yes to serve in the upcoming year.

Mr. Dickinson points out that all positions on Vermont Conference Boards and Committees are filled, except for a vacancy in the Nominating Committee. Mr. Dickinson asks for any volunteers to fill that slot and make the slate whole.

Skip Dickinson moves the slate of nominees from Revised Document G. This will be voted on in the next plenary session.

Presentation, Discussion and Vote on Ministerial Compensation Report, David Durfee

On behalf of the Ministerial Compensation Committee, I move the compensation figures, as presented in the report of the Ministerial Compensation Committee, for your acceptance.

The figures are approved unanimously.

Necrology Report, Lynn Bujnak

Rev. Charles Chamberlain – former Conference Minister. Hal Harrison speaks a few words in his memory. “That rich wonderful laugh is now silent. He did so much for all of us.”

Necrology:

Rev. Gaston M. Carrier

Rev. David Chevrier

Rev. David B. Johnston

Rev. Murdale Leysath

Rev. Gordon Prue

Rev. Ernest Rueter

Rev. Donald Van Dreser

PLENARY V “PUSHING THE EDGES”

Speak-outs

- One speak-out guest from had scheduled earlier but was not able to be here speaks now in this special slot: Ann Peck – Help Kids India

“We are faced with unbearable situations, young girls working in the fields, raped. Young mothers who leave their children unattended to work and come home only to have alcoholic husband take it from them. No hope – she sets herself on fire. This is common. We are supported by four UCC churches. We have opportunities for connections – put your faith on the edge. Contact us.”

Discussion and vote on Budget and Financial resolutions

This resolution has already been moved and seconded. We are now taking questions. No questions

There was no conversation. The budget passed with only a few nays.

Discussion and vote on the Nominating Slate

There are no additional nominations to add. The slate is approved unanimously as presented in Revised Document G.

Presentation of Gifts of Thanks to Guest Participants – Rev. Rona Kinsley

- Rev. Dr. Robin Meyers, Keynote Speaker – presented with a stole “Faith@The Edges” made by the Rev. Amy Pitton.
- Mark Violette, musician – R. Kinsley asked Martha Peck about a gift he might actually use. It was recommended that he be given a gift certificate to Parker Pie. Mr. Violette: “Thank you.

It's the coolest place in the Northeast Kingdom."

- L. Bujnak read a letter thanking the conference for their work in Irene recovery. Requests for assistance have stopped and the recovery fund still has some money left. The Board has recommended that we donate \$5,000 to the Rev. Dr. Meyer's church's ministry along with our "heartfelt prayers for the people of Oklahoma."

10:43 – Alan Parker asks for a motion to adjourn this meeting of the Vermont Conference, at the conclusion of worship.

The motion to adjourn was made from the floor.

Worship – Rev. Dr. Robin Meyers preaching.

Presentation of the Gavel

Alan Parker presents the gavel of the moderator to Rev. Rona Kinsley. "I have been incredibly proud of the United Church of Christ, as I have looked after it." A standing ovation of thanks for outgoing moderator Alan Parker

Rev. Rona Kinsley offers a Resolution of Thanks

WHEREAS the 218th Annual Meeting of the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ convened at Vermont Technical College June 1-2, 2013 and there worshipped, lived together in community, and conducted business; and

WHEREAS we gathered at the edges, told stories from the edges, and were inspired, not only to serve and continue serving at the edges, but to push the edges of our ministries *and* our comfort zones; and

WHEREAS so many worked so hard to plan and carry out all the many tasks that made this Annual Meeting not only possible but wonderful;

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

WHEREAS we were blessed with the opportunity to remember, celebrate, and *emulate*, the boundary-breaking, edge pushing spirit of Jesus Christ, whose Way we seek to follow;

THEREFORE be it resolved that we, the delegates and visitors to the 218th 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 the Vermont Technical College and especially Mary Jeanne Taylor and her staff, who have welcomed us, provided for us with efficiency and grace, and made our stay so enjoyable;

TO the members of Annual Meeting planning committee: Rev. Kevin Goldenbogen, Chair, Ms. Gail Compton, Ms. Ann Vivian, Ms. Joanne Hardy, Rev. Martha Peck, Mr. Hal Drury, Mr. Ned Davis, Rev. Abby Gackenheimer, Mr. Alan Parker, Rev. Emily Heath, Rev. Rona Kinsley, and conference staff members, Ms. Lynn Thomas, and Rev. Lynn Bujnak, who labored all year long to bring the vision for this meeting to such wonderful fruition;

TO Sybil McShane and Lynn Thomas for their fine work coordinating registrations and room assignments and for patiently answering all the many questions we threw at them;

TO the Vermont Conference Board of Directors, and Chair Amy Pitton, for their vision, guidance, and support;

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

TO the Rev. Dr. Robin Meyers, our keynote Speaker and Preacher, who so accurately described the mess we are in, who assured us that being miserable is a god thing, and who then inspired and challenged us to become the church that we would be if we were really serious about following Jesus;

TO our Musician, Mr. Mark Violette, whose gifts at keyboard and choir direction enhanced our worship in so many ways;

TO Ned Davis, who once again amazed us with his ability to make our Annual Meeting theme visible with his glorious and edgy floral designs;

TO the members of all the Conference committees whose work leading up to this meeting is so central to our purpose and actions;

TO our Parliamentarian Dick White, Scribes Marvie Domey and Peter Plagge, and our timekeeper, Kevin Goldenbogen, who were on hand to ensure propriety, accuracy and a good record of our proceedings;

TO our Chaplain, the Rev. Peter Cook, and to our child care providers, the Rev. Robin Junker-Boyce and Bethany Randolph Youth Group;

TO our remarkable Vermont Conference Staff: Conference Minister Lynn Bujnak, Associate Conference Ministers Pam Lucas and Mr. Jim Thomas, Administrative Assistant/Placement Secretary Lynn Thomas, and Communications and Resource Coordinator, Sybil McShane, who work well beyond the edges of all our expectations to support the ministry and mission of the individuals, local churches, associations, and committees who comprise this Vermont Conference, United Church of Christ;

AND with heartfelt thanks to our outgoing Moderator, Mr. Alan Parker, who gave generously of his time and talents in planning and guiding us through this meeting with warmth, humor, and the patience of an accomplished cat-herd,

To all of these, as well as an I have neglected to name and whose forgiveness I beg for so forgetting, we offer our deep and sincere gratitude. In humble appreciation, I move this resolution.

The resolution was seconded and approved unanimously.

12:37 – The 218th Annual Meeting of the VT Conference of the United Church of Christ adjourned.

Respectfully Submitted

Peter Plagge and Marvie Domey, Scribes