

Council Minutes  
New Hampshire Conference, United Church of Christ  
March 27, 2008

Present: Fred Atwood-Lyon, Michelle Bagby Allen, Doug Brenner, J. Bodine, Jim Christensen, Paul Cullity, Bob Curry, Diane Durgin, Luther Durgin, Margi Galabrun, David Goodnow, Doug Hatfield, Bill Hoystradt, Carolyn Keilig, Joyce Lovejoy, Wayne Martin, Deb Moore, Les Norman, Cindy Naiditch, David Richardson, Gary Schulte, Carl Vitters,

The Community Gathers

Les Norman called the meeting to order at 4:00 p.m. and introduced the new agenda format

Bob Curry, Interim Associate Conference Minister was introduced to council members.

The Community Shares It's Story

Gary Schulte led us in devotions and a reflection on where the New Hampshire Conference was walking in what Paul describes in Romans as "the newness of life."

The Community Discerns God's Vision

Minutes of the February 21, 2008 meeting were accepted as amended

*Budget and Finance* – Carolyn Keilig reported on the new steps in the budget process. Requested that budget numbers be turned in or phoned in to Bill Hoystradt as soon as possible in order that a worksheet be prepared. Bill Hoystradt noted an increase in maintenance expenses and added that generally our pattern in holding.

*Nominating* – Les reported for Art Urie that Patricia Welsh was nominated to the Committee on Witness and Action. Motion passed.

*Annual Meeting Planning Committee* – Michelle Bagby-Allen reported that thus far only 1 resolution had been received and therefore it would be brought to the floor of annual meeting. The committee would maintain connection with the Smith Center for the purposes of exhibits and bookstore. There will be one round of workshops this year. The committee is continuing to look at venue possibilities, date and time for next year's annual meeting. Suggestion was made that this be presented as a resolution at the June annual meeting. Suggestion also made that individual invitations to churches that don't usually attend be offered. Michelle thanked Jean Clarke for her assistance to the annual meeting planning committee.

*Conference Minister* – Gary Schulte relayed that on March 6, 2008, he was informed that the lawsuit, which had been filed against the Conference in

October 2006, has been resolved. The specific details are confidential. He continues to hold in his daily prayers all those who have suffered much in this process.

Gary has been working to revise the Interim Ministry/Search & Call protocols, a process which will continue over the next several months. A presentation on this will be forthcoming in July or August.

Looking forward to the Gathered Conference meeting and the vote to call Rev. Richard Slater as our settled Associate Conference Minister on Saturday, March 29, 2008 and reminded us that all Conference Council members, along with all members of Standing Committees are members of the Gathered Conference and are entitled to vote.

The Director of Outdoor Ministries Search Committee will have an initial meeting on Monday, March 31. Janet Heslam and Emily Clement have agreed to serve on the committee, bringing their extensive Christian Education experience to this process.

Over the past three weeks, the investigation of the UCC by the IRS and the preaching of the Rev. Jeremiah Wright have focused attention on the denomination. Gary expressed gratitude for the pastoral word that has come from our national UCC leaders and from the local leaders in pulpits and pews of our congregations.

Gary has been signing OCWM certificates, each feeling like a prayerful response. Suggestion was made and consensus agreed to let those gathered around the conference table take the certificates personally to their churches. All things considered, it feels like the dawn of a new day – Easter Day – in the New Hampshire Conference of the United Church of Christ. I am grateful for the gift of new life! Christ is risen!

*Interim Associate Conference Minister – Bob Curry*

Bob acknowledge the duress Gary has been under. He has enjoyed meeting with other church and ministry committees, noting that fitness reviews were a fairly recent development. Bob has met with the Outdoor Ministries Board and with Beth Martindale noting that John Tostenson's resignation was accepted with regret. His tenure as Interim Associate Conference Minister ends on the last day of June and he is working to ensure a smooth transition.

*Director of Outdoor Ministries – Bob Curry* reported for Beth that a wonderful retreat resulted in a new mission and vision statement for Outdoor Ministries. Two retreats have been planned; one of which is a high school retreat scheduled for May. Website development for the Horton Center is underway. She is meeting with NHCUCC ministers willing to staff at camp this summer. A summer volunteer training program is in place and is paramount and mandatory. Beth is talking with schools, etc. in Gorham and Berlin about summer mission possibilities; working on summer curriculum, attending Camp Expo in Massachusetts, has attended 14 meetings and a camp retreat.

*Paul Cullity* reported that the new Outdoor Ministries Statement reflects the embodiment of all 12 who were present; he was pleased with the outcome of this

fluid document. Council members were asked to review the statement and provide input next month.

*Faith Formation* – Les Norman provided copies of a proposed vision statement for faith formation in the New Hampshire Conference noting that this process actually began at the council retreat at the Horton Center. Several suggestions were offered, noted and will be given to the Faith Formation Task Force at their next meeting.

*Council President* - Les reminded all about the meeting of the Gathered Conference on March 29, 2008 at Brookside. Ballot counters were needed and recruited from conference council. The next meeting of the council will be held at Havenwood Heritage Heights (Heritage Heights, 149 Eastside Drive Concord) from 4 – 5:30 p.m. at which meeting the covenant will be recited.

#### The Community Reflects

Discussion about the 'agenda' format. Suggestion made to title the agenda 'ordering of our service.' Further suggested we sing a hymn before departing. Also suggested that we can't lose sight of the fact that we need to do business in an effective and efficient way.

After singing "Alleluia" the community was sent forth at 5:55 p.m.

*Faithfully submitted,*  
*Deb Moore*