

New Hampshire Conference of the United Church of Christ

# **ANNUAL REPORTS**

**2012 - 2013**

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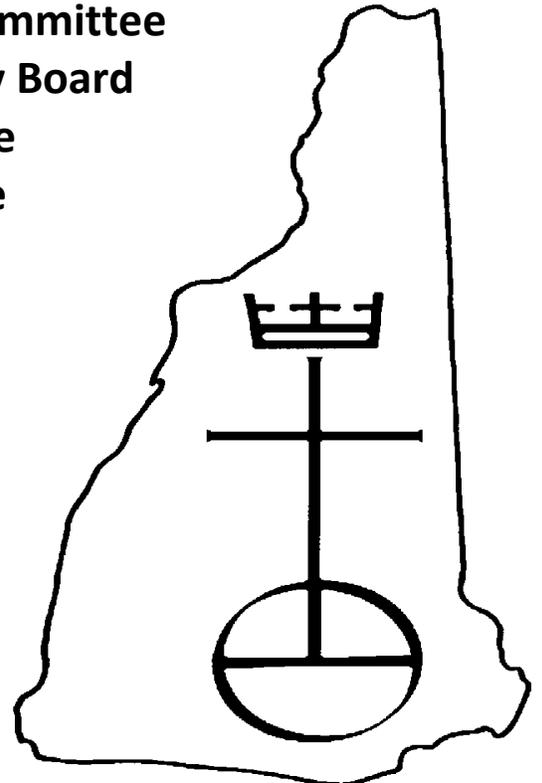
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## Report of the Conference President Laura Sevigny

Welcome to the 2013 Annual Meeting of the New Hampshire Conference, United Church of Christ! It has been a busy year for the Conference Council as we have continued our work contributing to a solid foundation for our new structure which will be effective at the end of this annual meeting. I want to thank all who have volunteered to serve on the Council, the Conference staff and a special thanks to Rev. Schulte and Rev. Slater.

Leadership has intentionally been reviewing programs, their funding and various procedures during the past two years. In 2013 the Conference Council finalized a conflict of interest policy which all Council members signed, adopted a policy for Content of Minutes to ensure that appropriate documentation is included with minutes which are on file at the Conference office, updated guidelines for use of the Pembroke Fund and Grace Scott Fund, and revised the General Synod reimbursement policy. The Resolution Process created in 2012 was reviewed and revised to fit more closely the need for those times when immediate action is needed. Please consult your packet for the specifics of the resolutions and the approved action plans. Council also approved a 2% increase as part of the Clergy Compensation Guidelines review and adopted a policy to recognize anniversaries of Authorized Ministers. As happens each year, our auditors presented results of their 2012 audit at our September 2013 meeting and any action items will be acted on by our Board of Directors.

Council appointed Rev. Christopher Owen to the New Hampshire Council of Churches Board of Directors and supported three statements from NHCC; *Joint Statement Regarding Privatization of New Hampshire Prisons*, *Joint Statement of a Call for Justice Making* and *Joint Statement on Reducing Gun Violence*. We also, with some caution expressed, supported the Divestment from Fossil Fuel Companies resolution that was submitted by the Massachusetts Conference and came before General Synod this past summer. In April we had our annual meeting at HHH where following tradition, the covenant envisioned by former Conference Minister Everett Barrows between the Conference and Havenwood-Heritage Heights was read together. Council also approved the appointment of Cynthia Elizabeth Bagley, Clayton "Skip" Poole, and Mary Stuart Sullivan to the HHH Board.

Many of us had the opportunity to attend GS 29 in Long Beach. It was a very busy week as we worshipped together, conducted business, transitioned to a new national structure and caught up with friends from our wider church. I encourage you to visit [www.ucc.org](http://www.ucc.org) to read about the work done on your behalf and to listen to wonderful worship and music.

Our Transformation Working Group has been working diligently over the past months to help with a smooth transition to our new by-laws and structure. I thank those of you who have served on the working group. I also want to thank all those whose time and talents over the years prepared us to move forward into this new structure!

Peace and blessings,  
Laura Sevigny

## **Report of the Conference Minister**

### **Rev. Gary M. Schulte**

As I write this report, I am mindful of how swiftly the time has passed since our last Annual Meeting. The life of your Conference Minister overflows, so that one day blends into the next, and one event quickly gives way to another, while the paperwork grows exponentially on his desk. This ministry has its challenges, but there are many occasions in which I am surprised by joy and filled with great gratitude for the presence of God in this call. I wish to name some of those memorable, joyful occasions in our life together in this brief recap of the year.

My trip to visit our mission partners in the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe (UCCZ), November 12-21, 2012, was the highlight of the year for me. The Installation of the Rev. Ephraim Ngadziore, the trip to Mount Selinda, and the hospitality of Mrs. Bertha Jambaya, Director of Jekesa Pfungwa / Vulingqondo, are enduring memories that will last a lifetime. In Zimbabwe, I found brothers and sisters in Christ, who live with great joy amid much adversity and many losses. These friends are engaged in faithfully witnessing to the power and promise of the Gospel. It will be wonderful to welcome a delegation of twelve UCCZ members at our Annual Meeting. There will be great joy!

There is much rejoicing in the rebirth of Horton Center and your ministry with children, youth, young adults, and grandparents. By all accounts, it was an amazing summer. You are to be commended for the trust and financial support you have provided for this ministry. Our ministry in the outdoors continues to be a source of hope for the church in New Hampshire and far beyond.

I experience glimpses of joy weekly as I visit in your local churches. Our 138 congregations are distinct, yet united in a desire to worship, serve, and grow together. Our churches desire to reach out and to be relevant in their communities. They seek to change the world with news of God's love for everybody and all creation. I have personally experienced the extravagant welcome, continuing testimony, and the manifold ways that lives are changed in our churches. At the heart of our life together, there is joy.

Your ministerial staff's consultation work with local churches through the Search & Call process has increased dramatically. A number of our authorized ministers have chosen to retire this year. Transition time creates anxiety and stress in many settings. We are blessed with strong, compassionate interim pastors, and we continue to have a steady stream of ministerial profiles coming to us. The Spirit is drawing new ministerial leaders to our local churches. It is a privilege and joy to be able to work with local church search committees and candidates as new relationships are formed for the future. In the endings and beginnings, sustaining, even surprising joy is born.

This has been a year of transformative change in the Associations of our Conference. The ending of the Sullivan Association has led to new vision and vitality in the neighboring Associations. With the new configurations comes a new sense of mission and excitement about the future. In this ending, joy is evident.

With respect to your Conference staff, we made some significant decisions about "Staffing for Ministry" in 2013. We initiated a new staffing model in July. While we are still growing into the new model, it is already functioning well. There is joy and an appreciation for one another and for the important work that we are called to do together. Your staff is here to serve and to help us be connected in vital ways.

Over the past two years, we have received a major gift, \$326,466.41, from the estate of Richard and Marguerite Edmunds, who were gracious and generous members of First Congregational Church, UCC, in Concord. This gift has been placed in the Conference's Consolidated Investment Fund (CIF) and the proceeds will be used for Conference operations, according to the Edmunds' wishes. Such generosity and commitment to the church is worthy of our consideration and emulation. Planned giving is a way of sharing the gift of joy with future generations.

Yes, we have some challenges to face. The implementation of the new structure in 2014 will require considerable time, patience, and prayer. Many things are not settled. I am grateful to all who have agreed to serve on the Board of Directors; and those who are willing to be appointed by the Board to serve on the six Ministries of the Conference. The mission groups will depend on Conference members following their passions for various kinds of service. My hope is that everyone will find a place to use their talents in the Conference structure. I pray that this organizational structure will lead us to larger visions and greater faithfulness in the times yet to come.

I am grateful for the amazing gifts that local churches and individual church leaders give in support of the Conference and wider settings of the Church. Our Church's Wider Mission (Basic Support) is the major component of our income stream. As we receive and use these gifts, I am ever aware that these are gifts that are consecrated: they have been prayed over, set apart for God's service in the world. We will use them faithfully. These gifts bring great joy to those who have given them, as well as to those who receive them. It's all about joy—surprising joy—the joy that comes as God brings new futures and new life.

Thank you for your prayers, your encouragement, and your commitment to be the New Hampshire Conference of the United Church of Christ. You are the Conference. May joy abound.

Respectfully submitted,

*Gary M. Schulte*

The Rev. Mr. Gary M. Schulte, Conference Minister

## **Treasurer's Report**

### **Mike Gfroerer**

At Annual Meeting last October, an operating deficit of \$96,000.00 at calendar year-end was projected. Our final operating results for 2012 were somewhat better, finishing the year with an operating deficit of \$79,555.00. We also addressed our precarious cash position by liquidating \$100,000.00 of endowment assets in September of 2012, as authorized by vote of the Conference Council, thus eliminating the need to tap our line of credit and incur interest expenses on the borrowed funds.

The 2013 operating budget approved by the gathered Conference included a projected operating deficit of \$45,000.00. We made a conscious commitment to bring our Outdoor Ministries programs back to health by carrying significant administrative costs for Horton Center management fees. Camp programs budgeted a modest surplus of operating revenue for 2013.

As this Report is being prepared in mid-September 2013, the Outdoor Ministries program has come up short, with an operating deficit of approximately \$11,000.00. This occurred primarily because the projected number of campers did not materialize this past summer, following a year of suspended operations in 2012.

On the other hand, our principal sources of contributed revenue (OCWM and fellowship dues from our member churches) are up by nearly \$32,000.00 over 2012 year-to-date, and very nearly equal to where we were at this time in 2011. This is an encouraging trend.

Staff reorganization is also resulting in savings in the budget, and Conference mission activities are also faithfully working within their respective budgetary constraints. Our cash position has been healthy, with no draws on our line of credit and consequently no interest expenses incurred.

The proposed 2014 budget, if adopted by the Conference, again includes an operating deficit in excess of \$22,000.00, and continues to subsidize the management of Horton Center. In order for our Outdoor Ministries program to thrive in the future, and (perhaps) to carry its own weight, the local churches need to support the program by encouraging their youth to participate in church camp.

On a personal note, it has been my privilege and pleasure to serve as your Conference Treasurer for the past 4 ½ years.

Respectfully submitted,  
Michael G. Gfroerer, Treasurer

# Commission for Congregational Life

Chair: Rev. Mark Rideout

The Commission for Congregational Life (CCL) has been blessed with an active complement of 13 members, lay and clergy, who have been present at monthly meetings and involved in planning, leading, or participating in events over the past year. Rev. Gary Schulte represents our Conference Ministry team.

This year, we have been working under the “old” NH Conference By-laws, which states: The **Commission for Congregational Life** (CCL) “shall be responsible for the support and nurture of the ministries of the local church. One of the fourteen (14) members shall be a representative of the State Women’s Fellowship Board.”

With the implementation of the newly adopted By-laws approved by the gathered Conference at last year’s Annual Meeting, the work of CCL will be separated out under working groups known as Ministries, which include: Christian Formation, Clergy Support, Finance, Local Church Support, Peace and Justice, and Wider Church Relations. As the “new” By-laws state: “Each Ministry shall establish its own Rules of Procedure, its own relation with and oversight of its Mission Groups, and shall be accountable to the Board of Directors.” Continuing CCL members have been asked to serve under the newly emerging Ministries, or on Mission Groups.

In June CCL met with Rev. Gayle Whittemore, chair of the Transition Team. Gayle helped us understand the team’s process, and how the present “work” of CCL will unfold in and through the newly adopted By-laws as they are implemented. We are encouraged that the liaisons presently in place will find a home within the above named Ministries. As this is a work in progress, I will not try to name the connections here. Suffice it to say that CCL is confident that present programs, and those yet to be discerned by the Holy Spirit, will find a place in the continuing work of the gathered Body of Christ represented in the NH Conference of the United Church of Christ.

Quite an introduction to a review of what CCL has been doing since the last Annual Meeting!

CCL has maintained a liaison with the following committees/working groups of the NH Conference. Each working group meets separately from CCL, discerning it’s own direction and coming to life through events and workshops in Local Churches, Associations and the NH Conference as a whole. We give thanks that communicating the work of each group, and inviting participation (often through the on-line registration process) is done so easily through the NH Conference website.

## CCL liaisons with:

**Conference Council** so that we are aware of, and can support the unfolding work of the Conference in all of it’s settings.

**Accessibility Committee** meets regularly, and facilitates awareness and learning opportunities that the church in all of its settings will be accessible to all.

**Clergy Convocation** Committee plans for theme, and publicizes widely.

- Rev. Dr. Greg Mobley from Andover-Newton, presented the “Back Stories of the Bible”, a fresh perspective on familiar stories.
- 10/21-23 Rev. Dr. David Reynolds, “Called Back to the Well”

**Interim Ministry Group** meets regularly for mutual support and learning.

**Prepared to Serve** has a committee that plans this event. In February 12, 2013 there were over 400 people in attendance

**Christian Education** : CE e-letter and CE section on the NH Conference website, wonderfully facilitated by Ann Desrochers. Confirmation Roundtable continues to meet with concurrent conversations asking the question, "How and Why of Church Membership?" A NH Conference wide Confirmation Retreat is being offering on October 4-5, 2013, facilitated by a separate planning committee.

**Women's Fellowship** Spring Forum 4/13/13 Rev. Craig Cowing, "Pilgrimage to the Holy Land", Betsy Kelley and Janet Simmon on Human Rights in the Occupied Palestinian Territories; Fall Forum October 18-19, 2013, 2-day Taize Prayer Service experience.

**A New Thing** This working group's *"purpose is to assist the churches of NH Conference in confronting the reality of ministering in communities which are primarily unchurched, to assess their unique setting to inspire creative responses, and to offer support as transformation evolves."* They are offering a workshop, "How to Reach New People", with Rev. Paul Nickerson, November 9-10, 2013

Working groups that have, or will still emerge through planned events:

- ***Chaplain Support Group, Clergy/Authorized Minister-Life Partner Retreat***
- ***Church Administrator/Office Worker/Secretary Support Group***
- ***Boundary Training for Church Secretary***

At our meetings we also discuss applications for grants and loans, receive updates and queries from the subcommittees/working groups and attend to our own responsibilities such as reviewing and making recommendations for Clergy Compensation Guidelines. CCL has also facilitated events that have been open to both clergy and laity. We have found when appropriate, the combining of authorized ministers and laity has provided a wonderful sense of connection and collaboration. CCL has facilitated or approved the following events for the shared life of the NH Conference churches:

- **Mid-Lent Retreat Day** "Grounded and Rooted in Love" held on 3/14/13, hosted at South Church, Concord, facilitated by Rev. Patrice Ficken. Fewer in attendance than we hoped, but a wonderful opportunity for guided reflection.
- **A Festival for Luke** April 30, 2013, facilitated by Rev. Maren Tirabassi
- **Advent Lectionary Workshop** with Rev. Dr. Walter Brueggemann, is set for October 3, 2013. We are being hosted at Tad's Place on the Heritage Heights Campus, and are presently close to being oversubscribed for the space!

In addition, we oversee and process applications for grants from several restricted funds. The fund names, number of approved applications (since the last Annual Meeting), and amount of funds distributed include:

- Authorized Ministers Continuing Education Fund [2 grants, \$612.00]
- Lay Leadership Development Fund [1 grant, \$1000.00]
- Strengthen the Church (STC) Youth Ministry Grants [1 grant, \$4200.00]
- Local Church Revolving Loan Fund [1 loan, \$25,000.00].

Sincere thanks to the commission members, our Conference Ministers, and the dedicated folks who work in the conference office whose various ministries weave together to God's glory and praise!

## Commission on Witness and Action

Chair: Rev. Dr. Mary E. Westfall

The Commission for Witness and Action has been a principal program body of the New Hampshire Conference with a mission to witness publicly and visibly to the Gospel of Jesus Christ by:

- Assisting in leadership development that fosters covenantal relationships;
- Providing resources that encourage individual and congregational participation in local, Conference, national and global missions;
- Encouraging reflection and action around the Biblical mandate *“to do justice, love kindness and walk humbly with God.”* (Micah 6:8)

Over the years this mission has taken many forms and currently is visible in numerous working groups/ministry teams that carry out this mission on behalf of and with the support of the Conference. Those working groups include:

- Economic Justice
- Congregational Health and Wellness
- Immigration
- Open and Affirming
- Spirituality and Earth Stewardship
- Peace with Justice
- Zimbabwe Global Partnership

Through these groups an incredible amount of mission and ministry has taken place. This past spring CWA and its Working Group/Ministry Teams provided major leadership for the Prepared to Serve event both in planning worship and providing numerous workshops on a range of peace and justice themes. Throughout the year additional dollars have been used to support the Chaplain at Goffstown Women’s Prison, the work of the Zimbabwe Partnership, sending youth and CWA members to General Synod, the creation and distribution of a brochure and educational material regarding immigration, as well as helping sponsor several immigrant rights events. Along with funding these important areas of ministry and mission, CWA has worked to bear public witness through resolutions relating to the environment and the expansion of Medicaid, as well as providing a visible witness and public testimony at the State House on many occasions on issues relating to biblical justice and fairness.

Many people have participated in this work and it is the hope and prayer of the Commission leadership that many will continue to carry out this work in the new structure. New occasions teach new duties. As the mantle of leadership is passed, it is the hope and prayer of the Commission that the Conference be intentional, bold and creative in continuing to bear witness to the gospel of Jesus Christ, and to find dynamic and transformative ways to be God’s people in these times.

Shalom,

The Rev. Dr. Mary E. Westfall, Chair

## Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM)

Chair: Nora Larsen

COVENANT calls us to support one another in all settings of the United Church of Christ. Our Church's Wider Mission (Basic Support), the giving of the local church to the wider settings, is the life blood of that Covenant. As that life flows, congregations are empowered and individual lives are changed. Our contributions to OCWM (Basic Support): strengthens local churches; supports pastors, church educators and seminarians; provides resources for worship and stewardship; connects us with mission partners around the world; makes possible church camp experiences at Horton Center; helps us to stand for justice and work for peace; it keeps the lights on at our conference center, pays staff salaries and so much more! OCWM Basic Support giving is vital to the Ministry and Mission of our New Hampshire Conference and our National Church.

Throughout the current program year the OCWM Committee has sought to educate and encourage covenantal giving to OCWM Basic Support through a range of approaches including: a presentation to the Conference Annual Meeting, our annual OCWM Basic Support Appeal Letter, a Pastoral Letter to the churches, and active monthly usage of the Conference Weekly News emphasizing a wide range of issues related to OCWM. Additionally, we have updated the OCWM page on NHCUCC.org, lifted up the importance of OCWM Basic Support giving at Prepared to Serve and created a new brochure and booklet to enhance understanding among our congregations of the importance of giving to Basic Support. We are also currently discussion the potential for a traveling OCWM Basic Support Road Show for clergy gatherings or Association Meetings.

We have been busy but we need your help because the reality is that a volunteer committee of 5 cannot do this important work by itself! We need every member of the New Hampshire Conference to serve as advocates for OCWM Basic Support giving in our local churches and our Associations. Working together through Our Church's Wider Mission we, the New Hampshire Conference of the United Church of Christ, can continue the vital ministry and mission of Jesus Christ...changing lives.

Our Church's Wider Mission Contribution Range Chart – 2012 – Conference Council

# of Churches in Category	Annual OCWM Basic Support Contribution Range	Total Annual OCWM (Basic Support)	Percentage OCWM Total
0	\$100,000-\$80,000	\$0	
0	\$79,999-\$40,000	\$0	
2	\$39,999-\$20,000	\$59,140	9.13%
0	\$19,999-\$15,000	\$0	
7	\$14,999-\$10,000	\$25,679	3.7%
5	\$9,999-\$5000	\$27,760	4.3%
8	\$4,999-\$1000	\$20,500	3.16%
3	\$999-\$500	\$1,800	.2%
0	\$499-\$100	\$0	
0	\$99-1	\$0	
0	\$0	\$0	

# Outdoor Ministry Board Report

Chair: Jonathan Gray

*Do not remember the former things,  
or consider the things of old.  
I am about to do a new thing;  
now it springs forth, do you not perceive it?  
I will make a way in the wilderness  
and rivers in the desert. Isaiah 43: 18-19*

On May 31, 2013 when the sun came up *a new thing* officially began at Horton Center.

Some say there are no coincidences and I believe them! This 'A new thing' curriculum was used by Outdoor Ministry sites near and far this year. It was an especially great fit for Horton Center as we immersed from our fallow year. This year was one of unexpectedly rich creativity and growth. Campers, counselors, Deans, staff, directors and board alike learned much from the scripture on the page and the scripture found in sky and Pine and Mountain. We hope to share our insights with the larger Conference as together we seek to be faithful to God's call to embrace new possibilities.

We are halfway through the *new thing* of Conference collaboration between New Hampshire and Maine, recognized throughout the United Church of Christ as a creative extension of funds and friendship. The sharing of staff, ideas, encouragement and Board / Committee wisdom energized both programs. Two staffs – one spirit was the watchword and training on all levels was facilitated by the relationship. Bryan Breault and Mollie Landers, our gifted leaders, worked together in a seamless team to inspire everyone. The symbol of the partnership, "The Best of Both Worlds," a Middler camp that allowed campers to spend half a week at each camp was an unqualified success.

There is even a new trail at Horton Center. A small section of the existing Appalachian Mountain Club trail has been diverted off the main part of camp to give campers more privacy. The impetus behind this high-energy task was the Friends of Horton Center on Pine Mountain, a non-profit group self-organized to help with the physical site.

The newest thing at Horton Center was the new Deans / Counselors / Staff structure. Deans are volunteers and active in New Hampshire Conference churches who led each weekly camp, recruiting volunteer counselors for programming and twenty-four hour adult supervision. We had a wonderful team of enthusiastic Deans whose follow-up evaluations have been uniformly positive and filled with excellent ideas to implement next year. Contrary to popular rumor all Deans are not required to participate in "Slip and Slide."

Was everything new? Of course not! We kept precious traditions such as the Shalom circle, bedtime stories, and Pinkham Ledge sleep outs, retired some traditions that had gone past their "date sold", and added new traditions, such as ice cream time, and, oh, did we mention – "Slip and Slide." There are challenges as well, which will begin the new planning year as Mollie and Bryan seek a more helpful registration organization – sorry to anyone who had trouble with the online system. That improvement will be immediate. Two of the new camps – "Grandparent and Me" and "Best of Both Worlds" were very well-attended. Another camp "Senior High Service Week" was canceled because of short attendance. New possibilities for adult outdoor experiences will be explored.

The Outdoor Ministries Board has been inspired by Mollie and Bryan's leadership and has become a close-knit group. Hosting Merle Cole's family after the death of his wife helped the group re-

commit to the ministry component of 'Outdoor Ministries. As "new things" happen with the governing structure, we are committed to finding and enriching a new identity in service to the churches and campers, younger and older, of the New Hampshire Conference. We are experts in Transformation and we are grateful to the Conference for the opportunity to make ministry in God's good creation a reality this year and for many, many years to come.

Some special thank-you's are extended. Facility improvements were important. Harry Carter finished the electrical work in Hope and Gil Healey contributed a screen to Spirit Lodge greatly improving movie nights when the rain keeps us inside. Of course, Merle brought electrical and sewer lines to Hope and it came in the context of his ongoing "above and beyond" service. No matter how hard I try I cannot come up with enough words to adequately thank the members of the Outdoor Ministries Board. This wonderful group of people have handled the challenges of the past few years with an amazing can-do attitude and a willingness to roll up the sleeves at a moment's notice. We deeply appreciate the gifts of Board members who are retiring this year Stacey Kullgren, Clint Brooks and Cathleen Miller. It would be wonderful to list all the amazing counselors and Deans and the supportive churches, but there were so many no annual meeting attendee would have time to read the other reports!

Horton Center is not a mission option to support, nor is it a product to be consumed. Every church in the New Hampshire conference is a part of this ministry. Each church member should understand it as "my church's summer camp" in partnership with their church's local efforts in spiritual development and Christian education.

As we sing each evening at Horton Center around the Peace Pole, to them and to all in the New Hampshire Conference -- Shalom, my friends!

Jonathan Gray  
Outdoor Ministries Board Chair

## **Stewardship Development Committee**

**Chair: Bernie Burditt**

The Stewardship Development Committee's mission has been to assist churches of the New Hampshire Conference to grow faithful stewards by providing educational opportunities and resources for their lay members and clergy. We continued this year to train and make available the Stewardship Resource Team, a group of volunteers with a demonstrated passion for Christian stewardship, who were willing to work with local church leaders to enhance their stewardship ministry. The design was for the SRT team member to start by listening to the history of the congregation, considering the unique character of their ministry and what goals they have established. At the invitation of the local church, they make a commitment to "walk together" in the work of growing faithful stewards in that community of faith. We have found that all local church settings are somewhat unique, but that "faith formation" is the foundation of the generous church. We had the opportunity to work with several churches this year and want to thank both the pastors and lay leaders that we had the opportunity to work with. Special thanks to Matt Van Wagner, Dr. Sam Sanzone and members of the Committee for their time and effort in this important work. It is our hope that under the new structure that the SRT can be expanded and find rebirth as a mission group.

The committee sponsored and staffed this year "The 10<sup>th</sup> Annual Clergy Gathering" which explored the vision for the NH Conference as outlined by our Conference Minister at the 2012 annual meeting and a workshop at "Prepared to Serve 2013" titled, Inspiring Generosity: People give to change lives, not pay bills". We also had a member on the Northeast Ecumenical Stewardship Council which planned a two day stewardship event held on March 15 & 16, "Liberating Generosity, Because Generosity is Liberating!" with keynote speaker Mike Piazza. The event featured 20 workshops and was well attended by members of the NHCUC.

The Stewardship Development Committee continued to support the mission of the OCWM Committee by affirming the importance of the pastor's task of interpreting the local church's covenantal responsibilities regarding basic mission support. We worked in our local churches and in other settings to communicate the mission of the New Hampshire Conference and the many reasons it was worthy of support. These continue to be challenging times when it comes to funding our ministries at all levels, but the stories of generosity from both individuals and churches continue to encourage and inspire us. We held our last meeting on September 11 and although we will no longer function as a committee, we are individually committed to be and grow faithful stewards wherever we are called to serve. It has been a pleasure working with and learning from every member of the committee which this year included Rev. Jim Chaloner, Rev. David Keller our Scribe, Rev. Steve Silver, Phil Warren and Sylvia Sleeper. I want to acknowledge their many contributions along with those of our Conference Minister, Rev. Gary Schulte.

Bernie Burditt, SDC Chair

## **Report of the Ukama Advisory Board**

### **Kim McKerley, Local Church & Global Ministries Coordinator**

It is with deep gratitude that I offer this report of the activity of the Ukama Advisory Board for the year since our last Annual Meeting. With each passing year the depth of our love for our hama (family) in Zimbabwe grows and our commitment to a shared ministry in Christ deepens.

In November, 2012 four people traveled to Zimbabwe to attend the installation of the Rev. Ephraim Ngadziore as president of the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe. Joining me in the travel delegation were our Conference Minister, the Rev. Schulte, Ukama Chairperson Kathryn Blair and Nancy Boyle from First Parish Church Congregational in Dover. In addition to attending the installation we met with the Ukama Committee in Zimbabwe, chaired by the Rev. Richard Gomendo, Superintendent of the Western Conference with the Rev. Decent Mugari, pastor of Eastlea UCCZ as Coordinator. Together we revised our Ukama covenant, made plans for the year ahead, and enjoyed getting to know each other a little better. It was a wonderful gift.

The year also brought Zimbabweans to New Hampshire. Former UCCZ President the Rev. Edward Matuvhunye was granted a three-month sabbatical by Common Global Ministries of the UCC and the Christian Church, Disciples of Christ. Much of that time was spent in New Hampshire. From January through March, Rev. Matuvhunye visited many churches, bringing news from the church in Zimbabwe and lifting up our Ukama Partnership. He also led workshops at Prepared to Serve. And he survived a New Hampshire winter! Another visitor was Dr. Charles Pfukwa from Gweru UCCZ, who spent a couple of days with his partners in Hooksett after attending a conference in Boston in January. The Rev. Fungayi Mutsumbei is in his last year at Andover Newton Theological School and is a frequent guest preacher in NHC churches. And the Rev. Albert Mhururu was invited by First Congregational Church, UCC in Wakefield to serve as pastor for three months during the sabbatical of their pastor. The Rev. Andy Jepson and Lindley Kinerk returned from Zimbabwe after two years of volunteer service on behalf of the UCC in Zimbabwe. Their work in Pfidza and Chikore touched so many. We appreciated their regular reports in the NH Conference Weekly News and are grateful for their ministry among our sisters and brothers.

Betty Gilman from North Church of Portsmouth and the Rev. Michele Bagby Allan from the UCC North Hampton joined the Ukama Advisory Board this year. Both bring wonderful gifts and enthusiastic participation for all things Ukama.

South Newbury Union Church, UCC became our 44<sup>th</sup> partnered church and we continue to encourage other NHC churches to consider pairing with a local church in the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe. By far the most energy and excitement during the year went into planning for the visit of the twelve Zimbabweans who are with us now. Face-to-face visits are at the heart of our relationship. There is nothing that compares to the opportunity to worship together, to stay in each other's homes and meet families, to learn more of culture and experience so much that is new...in short, to be hama together. In these wonderful days together we have celebrated the richness and wonder of Ukama in countless ways. Deep appreciation is extended to Ukama members in New Hampshire and Zimbabwe for all their effort and care in the year-long planning for the visit.

We thank the members of the New Hampshire Conference for your support of Ukama and we thank our sisters and brothers in Zimbabwe for their faithful witness and friendship in Christ. Let us continue to work, pray and serve God together.

Rev. Kimberly S. McKerley  
Local Church – Global Ministries Partnership Coordinator

# Report of the Investment Committee: Consolidated Investment Fund

Chair: Don Hill

The Investment Committee oversees the Consolidated Investment Fund (CIF) which is the vehicle for investing NHCUCC endowment assets and is also open to local churches and affiliated organizations as an investment option. Since April of 2005, assets have been invested with United Church Funds (UCF), a national ministry of the United Church of Christ. As of June 30, 2013, total CIF assets exceeded \$35 million, with the NHCUCC's endowment assets representing approximately 28% of the total and the balance representing investments from 81 local churches and 23 affiliated organizations.

Performance in 2012 was strong on both an absolute and relative basis. The one-year rate of return as of December 31 was 13.1% compared to a policy index benchmark of 12.3%. (All performance figures given are net of fees.) CIF is broadly diversified across multiple asset classes and there were many sources of positive returns and almost all managers exceeded benchmarks for the period. Equity managers outperformed fixed income managers.

Longer-term performance, while modestly trailing the benchmark, was also positive. The average annual rate of return over three years was 7.8%, compared to a benchmark of 8.4%, and the average over five years was 2.6%, compared to a benchmark of 3.3%. Performance over five years is positive despite the substantial losses of 2008.

While the five-year performance falls short of the absolute return goal, results are broadly consistent with market benchmarks. Anyone tempted to abandon investment markets for the security of guaranteed protection of principal should remember that such investments also guarantee the loss of purchasing power over time due to inflation. There are no risk-free investment options.

The Investment Committee meets on a quarterly basis. Committee members include Don Hill, Chair, Mike Gfroerer, Ken Gould, Joe Jacobs, Bob Moses, Laura Sevigny, Gayle Whittemore, and Norma Willard. A major responsibility of the committee is the development of the Investment Policy, which was substantially revised in 2011 and adopted by the Governing Council in September of that year. The policy is posted on the Conference's web site and can be found at [www.nhcucc.org/ConferenceMinistries/ConsolidatedInvestmentFund/](http://www.nhcucc.org/ConferenceMinistries/ConsolidatedInvestmentFund/).

Since the adoption of the policy, the Committee has been focused on carefully monitoring the performance of UCF as our Partner Organization and further developing the relationship, particularly with regard to reporting as outlined in the Investment Policy. In the second half of 2011, UCF revised equity allocations to reflect world market weights, which resulted in a significant increase in international holdings.

The Committee noted in the 2012 report that long-term performance has been lagging key benchmarks by modest, but fairly consistent amounts, for a sustained period of time. The committee has been monitoring this carefully and, as noted above, performance relative to the benchmark has improved recently. While this has not yet had a significant impact on the three- and five- year performance intervals, the Committee believes that appropriate measures have been adopted by UCF to address performance concerns. The Committee will continue to monitor CIF performance against policy goals, but anticipates continuing the partnership with UCF.

The Committee is considering how it can best support the needs of local churches and welcomes any input.

For the Committee,  
Don Hill, Chair

# **Report of the Prudential Committee**

**Chair: Rev. David Jadlocki**

The Prudential Committee oversees the use of the Ministerial Relief Fund, (MRF), by authorizing the use of income money for three programs

1. Medicare Supplemental Insurance contributions for eligible ministers and their spouses or domestic partners;
2. Monetary loans / grants to ministers who request them and demonstrate need for them;
3. Emergency grants to ministers who need emergency financial assistance.

For information about the eligibility criteria for participation in the Medicare Supplementary Insurance program contact one of the Conference ministers, the Conference Financial office or a member of the Prudential Committee.

The Prudential Committee meets quarterly to review assistance requests and facilitate the management of the MRF. In 2013, the committee met on January 14, April 8, July 8, and October 11. The 2013 Annual Retired Clergy Luncheon was held on October 11 at Grappone Center in Concord. The Prudential Committee sponsors this annual luncheon, with tremendous support from Conference staff.

Throughout 2012, the Prudential Committee worked hard to revise the distribution policies and practices for the Medicare Supplemental Insurance benefit in response to changing market conditions for the Ministerial Relief Fund. As a result of these revised practices, the Prudential Committee was able, in 2013, to provide much needed assistance to eligible retired clergy throughout New Hampshire while not making any withdraws from the principal of the fund. This important administrative change has been vital in ensuring that this valuable support ministry will remain available and posed to respond to the needs of NH's clergy for many years ahead. The Prudential Committee has sent out enrollment forms once again this year to all clergy who are eligible for the Medicare Supplemental Insurance Program, and we look forward to another year of service and support in 2014.

If you are an ordained clergy in good standing and serving in the New Hampshire Conference or a retired UCC clergy, and you have a financial emergency with which the Prudential Committee may be of assistance, please contact Conference Minister Rev. Gary Schulte or Associate Conference Minister Rev. Richard Slater who can put you in contact with the Prudential Committee.

Rev. David Jadlocki  
Chair, Prudential Committee