

History

In June of 1996, the Rev. Dr. W.M. Mkwakwami, President of the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe, was present for the Annual Meeting of the New Hampshire Conference of the United Church of Christ, and witnessed a unanimous vote calling for the establishment of a global partnership between the Conference and that denomination. The purpose of establishing the partnership was to promote a deep sense of friendship (ukama) among the churches of the two settings of the Church of Jesus Christ.



In August of the same year, the Rev. Benjamin C.L. Crosby, one of the Conference Ministers of the New Hampshire Conference, and his spouse/Pastor of First Parish Congregational Church in East Derry, the Rev. Alice M.C. Ling, traveled to Zimbabwe to witness a similar vote by the Annual General Meeting of the Synod of the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe. Rev. Crosby served as one of the New Hampshire Conference Ministers from 1991 until 2003 and emphasized mission throughout his

ministry.

These actions marked the beginning of relationships that have resulted in the “partnering” of dozens of local churches, the exchange of many gifts, and the welcoming of visitors from across the seas in our churches.

The current President of the United Church of Christ in Zimbabwe is the Rev. E. T. C. Ngadziore. The Rev. Edward M. Matuvhunye, the Rev. M.C. Kuchera and the Rev. Dr. Mkwakwami have served as President since the beginning of Ukama/Partnership.



Delegations from New Hampshire have travelled to Zimbabwe in 1997, 1998, 1999, 2001, 2006, and 2007. Delegations from Zimbabwe have travelled to New Hampshire in 1997, 2000, and 2005. Young people from Zimbabwe have shared Christian camping experiences at Horton Center on Pine Mountain in New Hampshire a few summers.



There was a special meeting of Ukama/Partnership leaders held in London, England in November of 2002. The purpose of the meeting was to re-affirm our relationship and develop new guidelines for its administration. Over the course of parts of five days, there was good fellowship and conversation. We also had the opportunity to visit with a number of UCCZ members living in

the London area. The Ukama/Partnership between us is stronger than ever because of our visit!