



**Minnesota Conference  
United Church of Christ**

**2009 Annual Reports**

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## Moderator's Musings *Looking to the Future*

*Hunter-Gatherer, Agrarian, Industrial, Information...*

These are the names of ages in the progression of civilization. Agriculture emerged about 10,000 years ago. The industrial revolution started about 1750 in Great Britain. That's when we began moving off the farm and gathering together in communities to work on assembly lines. Then, in the 1960's, the focus shifted from what could be made to what could be known or shared in data. This technological revolution vastly changed our lives and we're now, in 2009, feeling some of the speed bumps in this new world economy.

For the last 2,000 years, throughout all these changes, the Church has shifted and responded to meet the needs of a different world as it was emerging. Sometimes we did a pretty good job of it. Other times not so much. The United Church of Christ may be seen as a movement that was created in response to a world, and a Church, not attentive to the lives of everyday people. Much has been said and written about how the Church needs to re-envision itself to effectively live and serve in the age of information. In these days of change and uncertainty, it's difficult to discern what is merely a fad that distracts us from faithfully being Christ's Church and what is a faithful response to this ever-changing world. The Church seems to be re-making itself yet again. What the new model for life and the Church will be is not yet clear. We seem to be living in this in-between time. This is very exciting – but not easy.

In his book *The Dream Society* (McGraw-Hill, 1999), Rolf Jensen ponders what the next "Age" will be after this Information Age. It is a book about business and marketing (I'll spoil the ending – the key is to target human emotions), but we in the Church can learn something from it. Jensen believes we are headed for a time when people will *thrive on the basis of their stories, and not just data and information*. He calls the next Age, which we are already moving into today, *The Dream Society*, what might also be known as, *The Imagination Era*.

After we have recovered from our data and technology hangover, we will find our lives empty. We can have any information available to us 24-7, but unless there is something to make sense if it, all we have is a mass of Xs and Os – data. Data does not convey meaning. Technology is impersonal and empty. We cannot live by bread alone.

Storytelling, asserts Jensen, will become increasingly important, because the story is the bearer of meaning and imagination. Those organizations and even businesses that will have a future in this era must have a story – a story to touch the heart, to move the soul, to inspire the spirit of people.

In *The Imagination Era*, things that will matter and attract people are things like adventure, community, generosity, love, care, identity, peace of mind, and convictions.

What all this suggests to me is that while the 20<sup>th</sup> Century may have been owned by science and technology, the 21<sup>st</sup> Century may belong to religion. To dramatically oversimplify Jensen's theory: Whoever tells the best story wins! The Church has a wonderful opportunity to meet the world's need for meaning beyond the data with the best story of all. Competition, however, will be fierce. Disney, McDonald's, Cults, other religions and fads will also be peddling their stories. But we are playing on our home turf. Story, meaning, purpose, compassion, relationship, love, grace – these are central to our identity as Christ's Church. The credibility of our Christian story will be dependent upon how that story is lived out in our individual lives and our lives together as communities of faith.

As we ponder where we're headed, I encourage us to take heart and have faith. I encourage us to trust that God is with us. We DO have the best story to tell, because it is not our story at all. It is GOD'S story. How best to tell it, that is the question – as individuals, as local churches, and as the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ. We might do well to remember that the Christian faith story not only survives, but also transforms and empowers people's lives – it has stood the test of time.

So as we move forward together, let us expect the unexpected. Let us have faith that God is at work in this world and in us, that God is still speaking to us and through us. Let us look forward to

being surprised by God's grace. Let us faithfully say our prayers and offer God's story as best we can. Let us even use words if we need to. This is holy work, friends, and it will be challenging. But what choice do we have? This is our calling.

Grace and Peace,  
Rev. Mark Kuether  
June 2009

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### 2009 Annual Report of the Conference Minister

The third chapter of the book of Ezra describes the rebuilding of the temple after the return of the Jewish people to their homeland. The builders – young Levites from twenty years old and upward – are laying the foundation. The priests in their vestments are praising the Lord. And for a moment it seems that **all** the people are giving thanks. But then Scripture tells us that “many of the priests and Levites and heads of families, old people who had seen the first house on its foundations, wept with a loud voice when they saw this house.” As the passage ends, we read that it was impossible to distinguish the sound of the joyful shouts from the sound of the people's weeping (Ezra 3:10-13).

I think often of that scene, as I reflect on the dramatic changes taking place across the mainline Protestant churches, within the United Church of Christ, and in our own Minnesota Conference. Something new is being built, and we celebrate this. But we are painfully aware also of what has been or is being lost. Praise and mourning are thoroughly intermingled among us.

We rejoice in the **Vitality Initiative Pilot (VIP) Program**, involving eleven local churches of the Conference:

- St. Paul's UCC, Delano;
- Pilgrim Congregational, Duluth;
- First Congregational UCC, Dodge Center;
- St. Luke's UCC, Eitzen;
- Pilgrims UCC, Maple Grove;
- Bethlehem UCC, Maple Lake;
- Linden Hills Congregational UCC, Minneapolis;
- Lynnhurst Congregational UCC, Minneapolis;
- Spirit of the Lakes UCC, Minneapolis;
- Peace UCC, Rochester; and
- St. Paul's UCC, St. Paul.

This year's Annual Meeting theme, *“Together, we will be renewed,”* amplifies our focus on congregational vitality and underscores our shared commitment to strengthen local churches and to go deeper in faith and reach out in new ways. These endeavors are made possible by a partnership with Local Church Ministries of the United Church of Christ and a gift from the Enduring Fund of Chapel Hills UCC, Edina. But they rely also on assets from the closed Congregational UCC of Granada. As we nurture new life in some congregations, we walk with others like the Granada church and the Congregational UCC, Madison, as they end their ministries and close their doors. Rejoicing and grieving intermingled.

We look forward to the formation of two new program entities, expanding our expression and embodiment of love for the neighbor. An **Immigration Task Force**, to be convened by Rev. Loren McGrail, seeks to implement resolutions of the General Synod and our Annual Meeting. A **Global Partnership Team**, under the able leadership of Rev. David Lindsey, anticipates strengthening our partnership with the Southeast Mindanao Jurisdiction of the United Church of Christ in the Philippines and developing additional international partnerships. At the same time we lament changes that result

in the elimination of the CUE (Chicago-United-Eden) Team and change for the Outdoor Ministries Team.

We give thanks for the opportunity to gather each fall to discern the still-speaking God's contemporary calling. Two years ago we welcomed the Rev. Anthony (Tony) Robinson, who challenged us to think about "The UCC at Fifty: Where are we going? Who will we become?" Last September, the Rev. Richard (Dick) Hamm led us in reflecting on Recreating the Church for the post-modern era. This October the focus will be on "***Becoming an Intergenerational Church.***" October 1-2, we will gather at Christ the King Retreat Center in Buffalo, where Rev. J. Bennett (Ben) Guess will help us to increase our understanding of "*Communicating across the Generations.*" On October 30, Rev. Carol Howard Merritt will be with us at United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities to lead a workshop on "*Ministering to the Missing Generation.*" A generous Brown Grant makes possible this year's programming. There are 80 million "millenials" in the US (born 1976-2000). Yet a recent report reveals that young Americans are dramatically less likely to go to church or to participate in any form of organized religion than their parents and grandparents. How do we become a church that ministers faithfully to people across the lifespan, a church that reaches out to and engages all people?

Another indication of dramatic change is revealed in the cessation of the publication of a paper edition of United Church News and the Minnesota Conference insert, The Voyager. These days we rely almost exclusively on electronic communication – a **greatly-improved weekly edition of COMMAntary and a spiffed-up website**. We hope soon to develop an on-line edition of The Voyager. Because ongoing communication is vital to the well-being of the Conference, our challenge is to transfer readership from monthly paper mailings and a bi-monthly newspaper to a host of web-based vehicles. Please help us by making sure we have your e-mail address (send to [Alisonb@uccmn.org](mailto:Alisonb@uccmn.org)) and by frequently visiting [www.uccmn.org](http://www.uccmn.org).

We exult in our **new staff members**. Associate Conference Ministers, Rev. Rick Wagner and Rev. Elena Larssen joined the team last October. Both are highly gifted, able and energetic. Quickly and with skill and grace they have developed relationships with local churches and pastors. Adding their presence to that of Ashley Minister, Wade Zick, and Pilgrim Point Camp Managing Director, Dee Dressler, we have been able to have a local church presence in several places every Sunday since the last Annual Meeting. Administrative assistants, Alison Bents and Marita Karlisch, and business associate, Ted Hovey are also new to the staff since last year's Annual Meeting. And more recently, Rev. Larry Boatman became our Financial Development Consultant. Jim Collins is absolutely right that all "good-to-great" leaders begin by getting "the right people on the bus." Daily I hear words of praise and thanksgiving for the staff's work, and each evening I give thanks for the good spirit that prevails in the office.

Because Collins is also right that we must "confront brutal facts" and "focus on our core mission," I am deeply grateful for a strengthened Board of Directors, thanks in particular to Donald Clark, Nationwide Special Counsel for the UCC, who last October provided "best practices" training for the Board.

With an excellent staff, a competent and committed board, and clear strategic priorities, the Conference is well-positioned to make difficult decisions and to exercise faithful leadership in a time of unprecedented change in the life of the church. Several years ago, we agreed that the Conference must be a transformational regional body:

- driven by mission rather than maintenance;
- committed to spiritually-enlivened strategic initiatives rather than to survival;
- focused on Christian formation and discipleship of adults, youth, and children;
- directed toward the identification and nurture of gifts and the leadership development of clergy and laity;
- devoted to strengthening, building and inviting congregations; and

- dedicated to prophetic witness.

This fall the Board and staff hope to review and assess those commitments and to develop implementing steps and set achievement measures for those that we continue to affirm. Rev. Steve Sterner, Executive Minister for Local Church Ministries, will facilitate our conversation.

Please join me in expressing profound thanks to the staff and the Board and all the volunteers who give generously of their time and talents to the Minnesota Conference UCC through active participation on committees, work groups, teams, and task forces. The ministries of the Conference are made possible by many partnerships, including the participation of almost 200 people from more than half of our local churches who serve in various capacities.

Our partnerships are many and varied:

- As part of the national United Church of Christ we are engaged in local, wider, and justice ministries across the country and around the world. This year Rev. Steve Sterner, Executive Minister for Local Church Ministries, was with us for “A Celebration of Generosity,” honoring giving to Our Church’s Wider Mission and the special mission offerings of the UCC. Rev. Jane Heckles, Minister for OCWM Development, provided training to the staff and OCWM team. And the offices of Rev. David Schoen, our guest at this Annual Meeting, join us in work on congregational vitality.
- The Minnesota Council of Churches (MCC) links us with the mainline Protestant, historic Black, and Orthodox judicatories in this state and with the Joint Religious Legislative Coalition that includes the Jewish, Christian and Muslim faith communities of Minnesota. Through the MCC we carry out boundary training for our clergy and fulfill our commitment to “A Minnesota without Poverty.”
- For a third year St. Paul Family Resources has provided Heritage Grants to local churches of the Conference, making possible life-giving ministries among seniors.
- We are the second-largest user of The Resource Center for Churches, relying on that jointly-sponsored service to provide educational materials that individual local churches could not secure on their own.
- The North Central Ministry Development Center assists us in assessing candidates for authorized ministry and providing developmental and evaluative counseling for practicing pastors. With United Theological Seminary of the Twin Cities we make theological education available to more people in more places through the Academy for Vital Christianity. And United Ministries in Higher Education is on several campuses on our behalf.

We give thanks and praise for the generosity of the people and local churches of the Minnesota Conference. Last year Minnesota’s Conference giving increased in every category:

- \$823,478 for Basic Support – up \$7,741
- \$97,000 for One Great Hour of Sharing – up \$2,548
- \$20,000 for Strengthen the Church – up \$4,259
- \$50,000 for Neighbors in Need – up \$6,286
- \$56,000 for The Christmas Fund – up \$11,091
- \$60,000 for CUE (Chicago-United- and Eden) – up \$7,191.

At the same time Phil Hatlie’s Treasurer’s Report reveals patterns to which we need to be attentive, including particularly the decline in the value of the Ashley Endowment and in other critical indicators. We know that during the last twenty years all Conferences of the United Church of Christ have experienced a reduction in the number of member churches, the average decline being 13%. Additionally, during that same period all Conferences of the United Church of Christ have experienced a reduction in membership, the average decline being 30%. And the median decline in giving to Our Church’s Wider Mission (OCWM) across those years, when corrected for inflation, has been 40%. In a summary of a leadership conversation on the adaptive changes needed by middle

judicatories and other wider settings of the United Church of Christ, General Minister and President Rev. John Thomas said: “The United Church of Christ has been declining in membership at the rate of 1% per year since 1965, but institutionally we have not adapted to our smaller reality. Now there is a growing sense that the viability of some of our Conferences is in peril and the capacity of all of our Conferences to sustain their accustomed roles is in question.”

There is little to be gained from denying these realities, but they need not to lead inexorably to despair. Instead, we are challenged to re-examine our core vocation(s) and to imagine new models for leadership and governance and fresh approaches to resource allocation and sharing.

This is the context in which the Board of Directors has addressed questions regarding our ministry at Pilgrim Point Camp, a source of celebration at this Annual Meeting for fifty years of vital ministry **and** a primary source of anguish as we make difficult choices and anticipate a changed future. Under the Bylaws of the Minnesota Conference UCC, the Board of Directors is charged to plan, coordinate and evaluate the program of the Conference and has authority over the raising and disbursing of Conference funds. The Annual Meeting will provide opportunity to discuss the Board’s decision and to celebrate a half century of ministry at Pilgrim Point Camp. Throughout, it will be helpful to remember Rev. Rich Celley’s observation that “a ministry ended is not a ministry failed.”

As the Ezra text reminds us, “weeping and rejoicing” have long been intermingled in the lives of our community of faith. New occasions teach new duties, and the revealed and revealing character of God is to have yet more truth and light to break forth from the Word – to be doing a new thing. In this spirit, we offer thanks for all that has been, and we commit to listen for God’s calling in this time.

With thanks for the vocation of Christian ministry and the gift of serving,  
Rev. Dr. Karen Smith Sellers  
Conference Minister

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**To: The Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ**  
**From: The Rev. Elena Larssen, Associate Conference Minister**  
**Regarding: Annual Report**  
**Date: May 2009**

### **Introduction**

*Since beginning my work with you on October 6<sup>th</sup>, 2008, I have come to know and love a new part of the United Church of Christ. I have been welcomed warmly with hotdish and hospitality; I have been greeted with excitement about the direction of the Conference toward mission-not-maintenance; occasionally, I have been greeted with anger and complaints over the failures and shortcomings of the United Church of Christ. But in all settings, I have met new friends, folks who are committed to their faith and their church. And so I know that my dream for the Conference, to see more thriving churches and more thriving pastors, is one that the Holy Spirit holds out to us as a possibility. It is an honor and a joy to be part of the UCCMN team, listening and following where the Spirit leads.*

**Work with Local Churches and authorized ministers (70%):** My work is highly focused on local churches and our authorized ministers, including: Search and Call (training and coaching search committees, viewing and approving profiles and employment listings, representing the Conference to candidates, referring candidates and congregations to one another); Preaching and worship visits/church events/Council meeting visits; pastoral care and coaching for clergy, vitality and conflict resolution resourcing, Committee on Ministry and the Sub-committee for Authorized Ministry, installations, ordinations, Ecclesiastical Councils, and connectional activities for clergy.

**Prophetic Ministries (10%):** I staff the Emmaus Team (Sacred Conversations on Race) and Justice and Witness.

**Church Growth and Renewal (10%):** I am working with seven churches (Spirit of the Lakes, Lynnhurst, Linden Hills, Dodge Center, Eitzen, Peace Rochester, St. Paul's on Summit) as they participate in the Vitality Initiative Program. It is a primary task for me to resource congregation in their goals for health and growth.

**Faith and Spiritual Development Ministries:** I staff the Professional Development of Authorized Ministers, which is responsible for researching compensation guidelines, and addressing clergy wellness through retreat, education, connectional, and worship opportunities.

**Regional, National, and Ecumenical Work:** I staff the Ending Sexual Misconduct in Religious Communities Committee of the Minnesota Council of Churches (which is responsible for Boundary Training), and will begin work with the United Ministries in Higher Education.

**Churches Receiving Direct Consultation and Visitation:** Austin, Eitzen, St. Charles, Winona, Wabasha, Lake City, Cottage Grove, Rochester Congregational, Peace Rochester, Dodge Center, Medford, Faribault Congregational, Faribault St. John's, Lewiston, Northfield, Peace Minnesota Lake, Mapleton, St. John's Fairmont, Fairmont Congregational, Sherburn, Mankato, Le Sueur, Gaylord, Henderson, Glencoe, Chaska and Norwood, Savage, Wayzata, Excelsior, Hopkins, Edina Morningside, Colonial Edina, Chapel Hills Edina, St. Louis Park, Plymouth Minneapolis, St. Paul's on Summit, St. Paul Park, Clark Memorial, Robbinsdale, Cherokee Park, Falcon Heights, Mayflower, Spirit of the Lakes, Lynnhurst, Lyndale, Linden Hills, First MN, All Nations, Mendota Heights, Maple Grove, Maple Lake, Hazel Park, Minnehaha, Cannon Falls, Zumbrota

**Emerging Trends.....Search and Call:** Pastors are increasingly unable to relocate, mostly because their spouse (often the breadwinner) cannot relocate. This means that we have a saturation of clergy in the Twin Cities, and have a harder time finding clergy to serve rural areas; this is a dynamic across the entire denomination, which we see very sharply because our population distribution is so weighted in one geographic region. **Infrastructure in local congregations:** I have talked to many congregations who are weary under the burden of their committee and governance structures.

**Finances:** churches that have been living off endowments are struggling in the current economy, and those who live off pledges are just fine.

*In closing, we know that we are living in a day and age when the culture no longer provides members for us. It is, therefore, the role of the Conference to enhance and express the ministry of local church, providing resources to promote health, faith, and mission while, in turn, coordinating and magnifying the voices of local churches in our broken-yet-beautiful world, witnessing to our unique United Church of Christ discipleship of equality, unity, and community. It is, indeed, a privilege and blessing to work among you!*

*Respectfully Submitted,*

*The Reverend Elena Larssen, Associate Conference Minister*

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## **2008 Report of Associate Conference Minister, Rick Wagner**

It has been my pleasure to serve among you as an ACM since October 6, 2008.

I provide search and call guidance for approximately half the congregations in the Conference, most of which are north and west of the Twin Cities. So far, I have worked with the search committees or congregational leadership of 17 different parishes (21 UCC congregations) in various stages of transition.

There are 7 clergy clusters (Twin Cities East, Twin Cities West, and those that meet in Anoka, Morris, Brainerd, Moorhead, and Duluth) that I try to attend on a periodic basis in order to consult with and support clergy. When I go to these meetings in Greater Minnesota, I typically try to schedule additional appointments with individual clergy, search committees, or ecumenical partners who are in the vicinity. Travel is a significant issue in terms of time and cost. On average, I drive 1800 miles per month on business, and frequently rent a car for trips in excess of 250 miles because it is much cheaper to the Conference than being reimbursed at the IRS rate.

In an effort to be proactive in the areas of evangelism and church development, I have received training and sought out resources from both the UCC and other denominations that I would

love to share with any interested congregations. To that end, I have spoken or met with people trying to start “house churches,” which are small groups meeting for worship, discipleship (personal/spiritual growth), and community service (mission). I also celebrate those congregations that are taking evangelism seriously and creating new “Outreach,” “Ready, Set, Grow,” or “Vitality” teams. I encourage anyone with an interest in new church development to contact me. New churches can be started without buildings, property, or subsidies.

Many of our churches in Greater Minnesota are involved in what we call “ecumenical shared ministry.” Tighter finances and a shrinking number of authorized ministers willing to serve smaller congregations in small towns have led to increased ecumenical cooperation. I work with bishops, executive presbyters, district superintendents and other judicatory staff to try to find appropriate pastoral leadership in many parts of the state. I actively recruit authorized ministers to serve in these areas, and serve on the leadership team of the LDM (Leadership Development for Ministry) Program in Willmar that trains people for licensed ministry.

My other official areas of responsibility include staffing the Preparation & Ordination subcommittee of the Committee on Ministry, the Conference Response Team that investigates allegations questioning ministers’ fitness, the ONA/LGBT Team, and serving as the Conference representative on the Board of North Central Ministry Development Center. I also staff the Evangelism and New Church Development Teams, but they have not met this year as we consider creating something like a new “congregational vitality” team that might focus the purposes of the existing teams as well as incorporate new ideas and best practices from the Vitality Initiative Pilot program.

I enjoy this work and am very pleased to be part of an excellent Conference staff that is “ahead of the curve” in addressing the major challenges confronting middle judicatories these days.

Respectively,

Rev. Rick Wagner, Associate Conference Minister

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### **Annual Report for Wade Zick Ashley Minister of Faith Formation for Children and Youth**

Looking over my calendar from this past year brings to mind many joyous and amazing experiences. A highlight was participating in Sunday morning worship with 30 congregations in the MN Conference through either giving a conference greeting, a children’s moment, a morning message or simply being present. Several of those Sunday visits included meeting with children or youth leaders, CE boards and parent groups. There were also dozens of lunch, dinner and coffee visits with lay and clergy children and youth ministers over the year. The ministry of connecting our churches with the resources and opportunities of the broader UCC is one that, I believe, brings greater vitality and commitment to our Faith Formation with children and youth.

A few of the past year’s highlights of conference programs and larger time commitments;

- National Youth Event in Knoxville, TN (nearly 100 youth and adults from 20 churches)
- Two High School CYEs @ Pilgrim Point Camp and United Theological Seminary
- Middle School Road Tour with 4 stops (many thanks to 1<sup>st</sup> Congregational Mankato, Wayzata Community Church, Fergus Fall Federated and Peace Duluth for hosting)
- GLAUCE Church Educator Conference in Chicago
- Our Whole Lives Sexuality Course @ United Theological Seminary

Greater leadership development, both in youth and adults who work with children and youth, is a major goal. There was some success in this area, especially seen in having co-directors (of a youth and adult) in charge of the high school Conference Youth Events. Matt Bauer and Alyssa Miller, as youth, were outstanding in taking on the challenge and Mary Gilbertson and Tim Mann, adult leaders, provided mentoring, support and great role modeling. Leadership development can also be seen in the Conference Faith Formation Team for Children and Youth, the only team which currently have

youth serving as well as a young adult as the chair person. Other places this goal is being realized is through a Youth @ General Synod trip with a service project component and an August 2009 Youth Ministry Leaders Training and Retreat.

There were several gatherings over the past year for leaders of children and youth. Many thanks to host churches Plymouth Congregational, Minneapolis, Mac-Plymouth, St. Paul, Mayflower, Minneapolis, and Union, St. Louis Park. We will continue those gatherings next year as well as finding times to gather leaders in areas outside the metro locations. Two already scheduled non-metro gatherings will be this November with Ken Ostermiller, the national UCC minister for curriculum, at 1<sup>st</sup> Congregational of Moorhead and Austin.

Much of the program logistical support that happens is because of a great assistant, Michele Borne and through fantastic administrative and communication support in Alison Bents. Thank you Michele and Alison for consistently doing an outstanding job!

This year has been exciting with welcoming Elena Larssen and Rick Wagner, the two new ACMs. The increased communication and synergy that has come with their presence creates a broader approach in how children, youth and their leaders are served. It is a privilege to be in ministry alongside all of the staff and among the 139 churches of the MN Conference.

Blessings and Peace,  
Wade Zick, Ashley Minister of Faith Formation for Children and Youth

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**Pilgrim Point Camp**  
Dee Dressler  
Managing Director

Pilgrim Point Camp is open and ready for you to come and enjoy a week, a weekend, or a day, or even a whole summer of growing closer to God and growing closer to each other as the people of God. This is what Pilgrim Point Camp has been doing for fifty years and many of you can attest to the power of leaving your everyday life and separating yourself from the everyday cares and dedicating a week, a weekend, etc. to being in community with each other. God's presence is felt in unique ways and lifelong friendships are formed. As a result – this special place has become sacred space.

Many of our members and leaders in local congregations talk fondly of their time at Pilgrim Point Camp. Many of our Pastors, whether, it was Pilgrim Point Camp or any other camp in any other UCC conference or other denomination point back to their summer camp experience as formative in their feeling of call into the ministry. Surely the Minnesota Conference has benefited in many ways from the vision that folks had - over 50 years ago - to set aside this sacred space for ministry.

As I wander the grounds and woods this Spring, after a relatively short time as your Managing Director, I can feel the presence of those good people who had the original vision for Pilgrim Point Camp. I can feel the presence of thousands upon thousands of campers who came back year after year after year for the fun and the fellowship and, yes, the worship at the Point as well as the swimming, the hiking, and most of all, the friends that they made among the people of God.

The wildflowers I found on my hikes are the ancestors of the wildflowers that those campers trampled underfoot as they hurried to catch up with their counselors and their cabin mates. They survive today as a testament to God's providence and God's love for all of creation. The Barred Owl that calls to us from the treetops, the loons on Lake Ida, the mother duck that patiently sits - for almost a month - in the cold and the heat of the changing seasons - speaks of God's continued presence in this place and in our lives.

Hold fast to the knowledge that God is in our midst in the best of times and in the worst of times. God is with us when we feel like we are being trampled underfoot and when we sing from the treetops, shouting that Spring has come.

As I look forward to your visits this summer it makes me want to sing from the treetops.

See you soon,



Dee

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### Report of the Chairman of the Board of Directors

I begin by expressing my heartfelt gratitude to the faithful members of the Board of Directors, a terrific group of people who selflessly give of their time, talent, energy and resources. They also give up a lot of Saturdays, in good weather and bad. When you have the opportunity I hope you'll join me in thanking them for so generously giving of themselves. In addition, I extend a warm thank you to the churches who hosted us this past year. Your gracious hospitality has not gone unnoticed, and has made our sometimes difficult work a little easier. Thank you!

At all our meetings we receive reports from the four committees of the Board – Committee on Ministry, Development, Finance and Personnel. Together we've explored a wide range of matters that are a part of the work of these committed volunteers. We dealt with things from Fitness Reviews to Friends of the Conference, from Ashley Funds to staff evaluations and much, much more. I extend my sincere appreciation to the excellent work done by the faithful members of all four of these Committees. In addition, the Board regularly receives reports from our Conference Minister, Associate Conference Ministers and Program Ministers.

Our initial meeting of the year was immediately following the 2008 Conference Annual Meeting on Sunday afternoon, June 8. Following a warm welcome to all and a brief orientation, we discussed the ongoing search for Associate Conference Ministers. We acted on the recommendations from the Nominating Work Group for appointments to Ministry Teams and Ecumenical posts. We decided to explore dates in early 2009 for the Board to engage in anti-racism/multiculturalism training.

We met August 2<sup>nd</sup> at Macalester-Plymouth in St. Paul where we reviewed the report sent to UCC General Minister and President John Thomas dealing with the governance of the National Setting of the Church. We voted to approve the recommendation of the Search Committee, welcoming Elena Larssen and Rick Wagner as our Associate Conference Ministers. We discussed 2009 Conference Annual Meeting plans with Sharon Fazel. We voted to change the Conference Volunteer Mileage Reimbursement Rate. We said *Thanks and Godspeed* to Judith Youngman.

September 13<sup>th</sup> found us at Mayflower in Minneapolis where we considered a proposal for Church Vitality and New Church Starts. We agreed in principle to enter into an agreement with Paul Nickerson of Nickerson Coaching. We reviewed Pilgrim Point Camp finances and operations. We decided to return to St. Ben's for the 2010 Conference Annual Meeting. We said *Thanks and Godspeed* to both Jonathan Morgan and Howie Tobak.

We were at Emerson in Richfield on October 4<sup>th</sup> where we welcomed David Kettering to the Board as Liaison to the Committee on Ministry. Part of the day was spent with Don Clark from the National Setting of the Church who helped us explore issues of good governance, basic responsibilities of the Board as a collective group and individual responsibilities as members of the Board. We discussed

various aspects of camp operations with Dale Dressler. We approved the revised New and Renewing Churches Proposal.

Robbinsdale UCC welcomed us on November 8<sup>th</sup> where we discussed letters sent out from Conference Leaders regarding Dale Dressler's transition to Dee Dressler. We continued our conversation around Pilgrim Point Camp, including camp governance and finances. We approved, in principal, the formation of two Board Committees: One for Pilgrim Point Camp and one for Program Ministries. Task forces were appointed to recommend appropriate language to make these changes in our Bylaws. We talked further about Don Clark's presentation at the October meeting regarding Board Leadership, and about the *Recreating the Church* event led by Dick Hamm. We addressed the Conference Annual Meeting Resolutions process.

We were at the Mount Olivet Retreat Center in Farmington on January 2-3 where we spent most of Friday being led by Herb Perkins and Tim Johnson in Anti-Racism training. On Saturday we named Mary Kulberg of Detroit Lakes as the Honored Laywoman of the Minnesota Conference. After extended conversation around Pilgrim Point Camp and wider-reaching Outdoor Ministries issues, the Board accepted David Kettering's offer to draft a preliminary Business Plan. We voted to recommend a bylaws change to be presented to the Annual Meeting in June 2009 to enhance the governance of Pilgrim Point Camp by creating a Pilgrim Point Camp Committee. We approved changes to the Personnel Policies Manual. We received the report from the Finance Committee that the value of the Ashley Fund was down from an initial value of \$6.2 million to \$5.22 million. We adopted the UCC Flexible Spending Account Plan for the Conference.

On March 7 we met at Linden Hills in Minneapolis where we welcomed Larry Boatman as our new Financial Development Consultant. We discussed an initial draft of a business plan for Pilgrim Point Camp. A subcommittee was formed to make recommendations regarding the Camp. Recommended Bylaw revisions were approved. We looked ahead to the 2009 Annual Meeting with Sharon Fazel and Maureen Engelhardt.

We were at Falcon Heights in St. Paul on May 2 where we approved a 2010 budget to be forwarded to the Conference Annual Meeting. This budget includes the suspension of operations at Pilgrim Point Camp at the conclusion of the 2009 camping season. At the end of March the Ashley Fund had a value of \$4.8 million. We looked ahead to the Conference Annual Meeting. We approved the 2008 Conference Minister Performance Review. The Global Partnership Team was created, as was the Immigration Task Force. We voted to have 2009 Annual Meeting offerings support Congregational Vitality Initiatives.

Rev. Mark Kuether, Chairman of the Board of Directors

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### **Conference Personnel Committee**

The members of the Conference Personnel Committee were: Joann Arny, Dawn Baker, Conee Biggs, Reverend Hank Campbell, Joseph Crowe, Martin Erickson, Reverend Lanny Kuester, Luke Malloy, and Dawn Schilling.

We were staffed by Conference Minister, Karen Smith Sellers.

The committee met quarterly at Mayflower UCC in Minneapolis and we thank them for their willingness to provide meeting space for us.

Key accomplishments include:

- Updated Conference Personnel Policy Manual
- Reviewed salaries and recommended a budget for FY10 increases
- Developed policy for personnel files

Reviewed Conference staffing needs  
Developed a Personnel Committee annual work plan  
In partnership with the Moderator, conducted performance review for Conference Minister  
Provided oversight of reviews for Conference personnel  
Provided advice and counsel on various personnel matters

This has been a fantastic committee and everyone has agreed to return for another year.  
Respectfully submitted for the Personnel Committee  
Conee Biggs

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## **Report of the Committee on Ministry to the Minnesota Conference Annual Meeting**

June, 2009

The Committee on Ministry (COM) is authorized by the Conference Bylaws (Section VI.D.) to exercise nurture and oversight for the authorized ministers of the Conference. Its work is guided by the United Church of Christ Manual on Ministry, the Conference By-laws, and policies developed by the COM and approved by the Conference Board of Directors.

The COM meets quarterly to review the work of subcommittees, adopt policies and procedures, and consider various matters pertaining to authorized ministers. Since the full committee had 30 members, some tasks – notably Ordination Examinations, Privilege of Call Examinations, and formal Fitness Reviews – are assigned to panels of approximately 7-10 members. COM members, along with Conference staff, participate in ordinations and installations throughout the year. During the 2008-09 program year, the Committee held two Fitness Reviews in response to allegations of misconduct on the part of authorized ministers; in both cases, authorization was terminated.

All the work of the committee benefited from a time-and cost-saving improvement made this year: the development of a secure website where documents can be viewed online. We thank Marita Karlisch and Alison Bents, of our Conference support staff, for helping us to reduce the paper, copying, and postage expenses of circulating those documents in the past

The other work of the COM is accomplished through three regularly meeting subcommittees: Covenant, Preparation & Ordination, and Authorized Ministry.

The Covenant Subcommittee (Brigit Stevens, Chair) invested their energies in 2008-2009 in devising and testing various formats to conduct Periodic Support Consultations of authorized ministers. The purpose of these consultations is to provide direct contact between the COM and the authorized ministers of the conference in order to strengthen and support their ministries. Twenty-seven people met with members of the Subcommittee in 2008; this number is expected to be 50-60 in 2009.

The Subcommittee also planned the 2009 Information Review (now in process), which gathers information from authorized ministers about their current ministry settings and activities. This year the Subcommittee also revised the teaching document regarding common practices about the relationship of ordained, commissioned and/or licensed ministers to former parishes, revised the guidelines for Exit Interviews for authorized ministers who are leaving their ministry settings, and began conversations about ways to offer nurture and oversight to local churches.

The Preparation and Ordination Subcommittee (Clyde Steckel, Chair) interviewed six persons for in-care status this year, and approved them all, one for commissioned minister, five for ordained ministry. One was a re-instatement to in-care on appeal. Currently there are twenty-nine persons in-care of the Minnesota Conference, acting as an Association.

Two policy changes by the Committee on Ministry took effect at the beginning of the year: 1) All candidates for ordained ministry will have a pre-ordination examination interview with the Prep. and Ord. Subcommittee. The Subcommittee conducted six such interviews, recommending that each go forward to the full ordination interview. 2) All persons applying to come in-care are now required to take the Phase I assessment and discernment process with the North Central Ministry Development Center. Costs are shared by the applicant, the applicant's local church, and the Minnesota Conference. And all in-care persons are required to take the NCMDC Phase II assessment and discernment, with the Center's report becoming part of the file of the candidate. This cost is shared by the candidate and Minnesota Conference. These requirements have both screening and developmental purposes, so that the covenant partners in discernment will be better able to judge a candidate's fitness for ordained or commissioned ministry.

In addition, the Prep. and Ord. Subcommittee continues its annual review of reports made by in-care persons, their advisors, and their local church pastors

The Subcommittee for Authorized Ministry (Jeff Palmer, Chair) continued their practice of receiving transfers of standing into the Conference for UCC clergy who have been called to ministries in Minnesota or have chosen to retire here, as well as applications by ministers from other denominations seeking Dual Standing, Ministerial Partner Standing (Christian Church, Disciples of Christ), or Privilege of Call in the Conference. This Subcommittee also has responsibility for licensing and re-licensing the lay ministers who serve a number of our local churches. This year, a new policy was instituted that allows these licenses to be renewed for three-year terms (rather than one-year) under certain circumstances.

The Subcommittee is responsible for working with clergy seeking endorsement as hospital, nursing home, or military chaplains; this year, that responsibility was extended as accrediting agencies implement policies that require periodic updates for these endorsements.

This year the Subcommittee reviewed the authorization of all authorized ministers in the Conference, with particular attention to individuals who are no longer engaged in ministry requiring ordained ministerial standing, or whose whereabouts are not known to the Conference. In the coming months, the Subcommittee will contact these individuals, and in some cases, take further steps.

Finally, on behalf of the entire Minnesota Conference, I want to thank the members of the Committee on Ministry. This is a demanding committee, with regular day-long meetings, a yearly retreat, and a significant amount of reading and preparation for each meeting. The responsibility is considerable: we act on behalf of the whole United Church of Christ in many of our decisions, and the future of the UCC will be shaped by the people we authorize for ministry in and for our church. We ask your continued prayers and blessings for all their efforts.

Submitted by Sandy Johnson, Chair, Minnesota Conference Committee on Ministry

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## **Our Church's Wider Mission Team, MN Conference Annual Report for 2008-09**

The major work and accomplishments of the OCWM team this year include:

- The team held a retreat day to begin the year, and set plans and goals for its work.
- The team determined a framework of key dates for promoting OCWM special offerings through the Conference newspaper and email newsletter.

- Along with the Conference staff, the team met with Rev. Jane Heckles, National UCC Minister for OCWM Development, for a training session in November. Rev. Heckles presented a strategy for strengthening OCWM giving by cultivating relationships with key congregations. In partnership with the Associate Conference Ministers, the team is in the process of piloting this relational strategy with two congregations in the conference. We anticipate building on this work in the coming year.
- The team assisted in organizing a “celebration of generosity” in November, which honored local churches who give to OCWM. The event featured Rev. Steve Sterner from the National UCC as the speaker.
- The team coordinated the sending of OCWM pledge forms to churches. Members of the team made calls to each church to remind them to send in the pledge form. They sent personal thank-yous to those churches who returned their pledge forms.
- The team is in the process of planning a display table for the annual meeting, as well as a workshop on best practices in local church stewardship. This workshop will include a panel presentation from pastors and church leaders.
- The team is planning for the production of videos for OCWM and Friends of the Conference. These will be short testimonials from individuals that tell stories of why the wider UCC is important in the lives of our members, and why we give to support its mission.

Respectfully submitted, Rev. Jane McBride, chair

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**REPORT OF FINANCIAL DEVELOPMENT CONSULTANT**  
**May 15, 2009**

The Development Committee, and the new Financial Development Consultant, the Rev. Larry Boatman, continue their efforts of generating increased financial resources for the Minnesota Conference UCC.

Development Committee Chair, the Rev. Jeffrey Sartain, continues to provide strong leadership in planning and implementation of the development program. Part of this effort has been numerous “Friends of the Conference” cultivation events, hosted by church members throughout the Conference. These events have helped to establish and strengthen relationships between church members and the Conference and have provided an opportunity for Conference Minister Rev. Dr. Karen Smith Sellers to share stories of the significant ministries of the Conference with those assembled. More events are being planned.

The Conference continues to invite “Friends” to support the ministries of the Conference through financial gifts. While these are challenging economic times in our country and world, we believe the continuing generous support of our “Friends” will help us reach our FY 2008-2009 goal of \$70,000.

Growing our list of “Friends of the Conference” is the primary thrust of our development effort at this time. Our new on-line giving opportunity from our Conference website, [www.uccmn.org](http://www.uccmn.org), provides another way for “Friends” to make their gifts. We are beginning to develop a planned giving program which will assist our church members to address their own estate planning issues while helping them to consider and structure deferred gifts for the benefit of their local church and the Conference.

The dedication of our “Friends”, church members, clergy and Conference staff across the Minnesota Conference is awesome and reflects forcefully the assurance that “God is still speaking, . . .”

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**Professional Development of Authorized Ministers Team  
Annual Report, June 2009**

The Professional Development of Authorized Ministers Team seeks to support and assist authorized ministers of the Minnesota Conference of the UCC in pursuit of excellence in ministry by encouraging their professional, personal, and spiritual development. The team also encourages all churches in the Minnesota Conference, as well as institutions in Minnesota that employ United Church of Christ clergy, to be committed partners in fostering professional excellence.

During the past year the team has focused on three aspects of its charge to support and assist excellence in ministry.

### **1. Update of Compensation Guidelines for Authorized Ministers**

The new compensation guidelines adopted at the conference annual meeting in June 2008 were updated. As was the case in 2008, these comprehensive guidelines will be available at the conference annual meeting in June. They are also available online at <http://www.uccmn.org/Ministry%20Resources/Forms/AllItems.aspx> and have been accessed 114 times since the new website was launched in February 2009. As a body responsible for promoting both just compensation and excellence in the profession of authorized ministry, we strongly recommend that the guidelines be thoroughly read and considered every year as compensation for clergy is established.

Considering the current economy, the team did not increase the dollar amounts in the salary grid. However, the guidelines presented do note the 2009 recommended salary increase of 2% put forth by the Minnesota Council for Non-Profits. Serious consideration of a salary increase should be made, most especially in the case of ministers who had no salary increase last year.

### **2. Continuing Education**

#### *Written Communication:*

As part of our effort to promote continuing education for clergy, our team authored three extensive articles on continuing education opportunities available to clergy. Associate Conference Minister, Reverend Rick Wagner assisted by contributing an excellent continuing education article on Appreciative Inquiry. Additional continuing education suggestions are found on the conference website ([www.uccmn.org/ministrygroups/pdoam](http://www.uccmn.org/ministrygroups/pdoam) - see the link to the Iowa Conference UCC website). The professional development team continues to seek information from clergy about quality continuing education programs in which they have participated. Please contact Eliot Howard (612-927-4603, [eliotoward@msn.com](mailto:eliotoward@msn.com)) with information about excellent continuing education experiences. We plan to share continuing education resources through COMMAntary, the conference website, printed brochures and displays at Annual Meetings.

Last year the team intended to research sources of financial support for clergy wanting to participate in continuing education events and experiences. We did not complete this task but will tend to this during the year ahead.

#### *Sponsored Clergy Events:*

The team hosted two retreats. An overnight Fall retreat organized by Reverend Rosemary Rocha was held at the ARC Retreat Center. Jeff Strickler, former film critic for the Star Tribune facilitated discussion on how religious leaders have been portrayed in film over the past 5 decades. A day long

spiritual retreat, led by team member Reverend T. Michael Rock was held the week prior to the start of Lent. Thanks to New Spirit UCC in Savage for hosting this event.

In October we hosted a gathering for ministers new to the Minnesota Conference. The event, organized by Eliot Howard was an opportunity for clergy to meet the conference staff, visit the Minnesota Church Center, receive an orientation to conference and other UCC related ministries, and engage in conversation and worship with current and new clergy in the conference. The 2009 New Clergy Event will be held Thursday, October 22<sup>nd</sup>. New clergy and partner/spouse are encouraged to attend. Complete information will be available in September editions of *COMMAntary*.

During Holy Week 35 clergy gathered at Olivet Congregational UCC, St. Paul for a Renewal of Ordination Vows ceremony. Reverend Anne Swallow Gillis, Interim Minister at Olivet organized the event. Conference Minister, Karen Smith Sellers, and Associate Conference Ministers Rick Wagner, and Elena Larssen presided at the service. A luncheon hosted by members of Olivet followed the service.

**Work is currently underway for Clergy Camp! Clergy, their partners, spouses, children are invited to attend Pilgrim Point, August 16-21. Along with the usual fun and relaxation camp offers, this event will include an opportunity for clergy continuing education led by Rev. Dr. Rich Swanson of Augustana College in Sioux Falls S.D. He will lead clergy in a spirited study of Matthew (upcoming lectionary year C). The sessions will be based on his books, published by Pilgrim Press. Ecumenical clergy colleagues are encouraged to participate. Camp Directors are Reverends Rosemary Rocha and Elena Larssen. Contact them, or visit [www.pilgrimpoint.org](http://www.pilgrimpoint.org) for more information.**

### **3. Armstrong/Voss Scholarships**

The Minnesota Conference has established the Armstrong/Voss Scholarship made possible by and honoring Winifred L. Armstrong of Comfrey, Minnesota and Andrew K. Voss, who served churches in the Minnesota Conference, to fulfill their desire to assist seminary students in their preparation for ministry in the church. In addition, the conference also has a loan program for seminary students. For the first time in recent memory, no applications were received in 2009 for this scholarship. During the year ahead the team intends to review criteria and parameters of this program in order to determine whether or not changes might be made to maximize outreach to qualified students.

In closing, I wish to thank members of this team for their efforts on behalf of professional development of clergy in the Minnesota Conference UCC. Thanks also go to the entire conference staff for their willing and able assistance. We are very pleased to have Associate Conference Minister, Reverend Elena Larssen serving as staff to our team. The time and energy she has given to our work is greatly appreciated.

Respectfully submitted,  
Eliot N. Howard, Chair

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**Justice and Witness Team  
Annual Report: June 2008-May 2009  
MN Conference UCC**

The purpose of the Justice and Witness Team is to seek to provide a Biblical understanding of prophetic ministry and to equip congregations in the MN Conference UCC with the knowledge and skills necessary to shape social policies in keeping with God's vision of a just and loving society. The duties of this Team include educating churches on matters of peace and justice, encouraging public policy advocacy, serving as a resource to the Conference, organizing and administering the Justice and Witness offering, responding to grant requests, and recognizing churches which have engaged in areas of social justice.

Team members: Rev. Don Britt, secretary Jack Chandler, Rev. Jo Clare Hartsig, Rev. Dr. Chris Smith, Mike Willoughby, Rev. John Guttermann, Dwight Wagenius, staff advisor Rev. Judith Youngman replaced by Rev. Elena Larssen, National Covenanted Ministries representative Dan Tysver (no longer serving in 2009), and chairperson Rev. Dr. Gary Titusdahl. We applaud the services of Mike (2 years), Gary (4 years), and Jo Clare (6 years) who are leaving the Justice and Witness Team at the 2009 Annual Meeting.

### **Highlights of the 2008-09 Year**

- Co-sponsored with the Emmaus Anti-Racism Transformation Team the 2008 resolution, "Regarding the State of Minnesota's 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary and the Establishing of Ongoing Relationships with MN Native American Communities."
- Co-sponsored with the Emmaus Team a related resolution for 2009.
- Met 5 times at various locations for our team meetings.
- Hosted Tadd Johnson, Special Counsel for Government Affairs for the Mille Lacs Band of Ojibwe, in his presentation to the MN Conference UCC 2008 Annual Meeting on the Fundamental Principles of Sovereignty pertaining to American Indians.
- Approved \$1,000 to support the Nov. 7-9, 2008 anti-racism retreat with Victor Lewis initiated by Peace UCC in Rochester.
- Approved \$200 for New Ulm's UCC Native American workshop/march.
- Approved \$800 for packets on American Indian issues of sovereignty.
- Focused attention to ongoing justice issues including climate change, immigration, just peace, and torture with all its local and global ramifications.
- Recognized "Accessible to All" and conservation-minded congregations.
- Administered the yearly Justice and Witness special offering in January.
- Developed website access to the new grant forms and peace/justice issues.
- Implemented a 3-tiered system (Green/Earth/Earthwise) to honor eco-churches.
- Supported the creation of the newly-authorized Immigration Task Force.
- Administered the Just Peace Fund of the MN Conference UCC.

Please stop by our educational booth at the MN Conference UCC Annual Meeting. There is information on a variety of social and justice issues. Check out the UCC national website [www.ucc.org](http://www.ucc.org) and the UCC state website [www.uccmn.org](http://www.uccmn.org). See Alison Bents at [alisonb@uccmn.org](mailto:alisonb@uccmn.org) for the weekly email newsletter on the latest UCC news.

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## **2008-2009 Annual Report**

### **Open and Affirming/Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender (ONA/LGBT) Team**

Submitted by Chair, Kathleen Remund

During this second year of the ONA/LGBT Team, we have continued to meet every other month. Rick Wagner, Associate Conference Minister, has served as the staff liaison to the Team and has been particularly helpful when we have needed to clarify questions related to finances.

This has been a consolidating year. As we have begun to function more effectively as a Team and have continued to articulate for ourselves the difference between our mission and that of the MN

Chapter of the UCC Coalition for LGBT Concerns, we have identified those particular areas where we can support the MN Conference in its ONA commitments. These are: 1) Supporting the work of the ONA consultants; 2) Welcoming and affirming new ONA congregations; 3) Providing resources to support the ONA ministries of congregations who have declared themselves Open and Affirming; and 4) Reaching out throughout the MN Conference to support LGBT people and allies who may be otherwise isolated from emotional, spiritual, and institutional support and resources. To help us meet these goals, we will continue to organize the annual ONA worship service and the annual ONA Gathering at the Conference annual meeting.

We are particularly aware at this time of the need for already declared ONA congregations to find ways to be more affirming of their LGBT members, and for those same congregations to work on becoming more welcoming and affirming of transgender individuals.

Because we are all volunteers with complicated professional and personal lives, our vision of what we hope to accomplish continues to exceed our capacity in the short term. However, as the vision is becomes clearer, we begin to see how it can be built upon from one year to the next.

We have identified the primary accomplishments of this '08-'09 year as follows:

1. The addition of four new ONA congregations.
2. Increased outreach to parts of greater MN through the participation of Gina Powers (Moorhead) and Steve Strickler (Rochester).
3. The establishment of a blog that can serve as a place for discussion, sharing concerns, asking questions, and learning about resources and opportunities. This blog and related contacts will soon be accessible through links on the MN Conference website.
4. Provision of resources on transgender issues to Conference staff.
5. A very successful annual ONA worship service, attended by 85 participants, with an excellent workshop by Dr. Carolyn Pressler on biblical resources for positive sexuality.
6. Ongoing clarification of the nature of the partnership between the Team and the MN Chapter of the UCC Coalition on LGBT Concerns.
7. Planning, organizing, promoting and leading a second annual Gathering for LGBT people and allies in conjunction with the MN Conference annual meeting.

We are grateful for the opportunity to serve the Conference as we all seek to live out a vision of God's justice and mercy.

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**Report to the Minnesota Conference**  
**Anita L. Bradshaw**  
**Conference Representative to the Office of General Ministries Board**  
**April 23, 2009**

The Office of General Ministries (OGM) Board has continued in its oversight responsibility for the common ministries of the United Church of Christ national setting like personnel, finance, and meeting services. In addition, the Board oversees the UCC's efforts in ecumenical and interfaith relationships, as well as the StillSpeaking Initiative and Proclamation, Identity and Communications which produces UCNews, press releases, website, the annual report and a myriad of other creative and identity-strengthening communications. The Board decided this year, due to the growing costs, to cease publication of UCNews. There will be two more issues – in July and in the fall. The major focus of our work this year, however, has been continued participation in the denomination-wide conversation regarding the possible restructure of the national setting.

This conversation was begun three years ago when the Collegium of Officers made a case for problems, which had become evident after the last restructure. The ability of responding quickly

when decisions for the denomination have to be approved by five separate and autonomous boards is virtually impossible. There are not clear lines of authority for the General Minister and President and yet, the expectation is that that position will have authority within the denomination and especially within its administrative structure. No person or Board was delegated the responsibility for evaluation of programs or ministries overall within the 2000 restructure. There is also a financial cost to a governance structure with five boards with over 250 persons meeting twice a year.

All of the Covenanted Ministry Boards, along with the Executive Council, voted at their fall meetings to agree to the principle that there should be one unified board overseeing the UCC's ministries. The process continued and a new proposal was brought to all of the Boards and Executive Council this past March. The Boards and Executive Council were asked to vote to send the idea and proposal to General Synod for conversation. All of the Boards agreed to this except Justice and Witness Ministries. The meeting was difficult and subsequently, several conferences have passed resolutions to ensure that the proposal will reach Synod in June in Grand Rapids.

I appreciate the opportunity to represent the Conference at the national setting of the church. I have served as the chair of Personnel for the OGM Board for four years and have now been asked to serve as Chair of the Board. In that capacity, I will also serve on the Executive Council and I will also be serving on the Council for Ecumenism as an Executive Council representative. I am happy to answer any questions or provide additional information as needed.

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### **Wider Church Ministries 2008-2009**

The work of the WCM board this year focused on nurturing our partnerships and solidarity with churches and church organizations around the world. Many of our partners are faced with difficulties due to human caused and natural disasters. Partners in Sri Lanka and South India are affected by the war between the Tamil Tigers and the Government of Sri Lanka. Pastors and lay church workers in the United Church of Christ in the Philippines are still facing harassment, kidnappings and death because of their association with peace and justice causes that the government deems threatening. The economic crisis has affected us all, but especially our partner churches throughout Asia, Africa and South America. Because of all this, our support, prayers of solidarity and political advocacy are more important than ever.

Through Global Ministries, we continue to send and support mission personnel in 27 countries to work with our partner churches and organizations in healthcare, education, capacity building, and more. Like all other aspects of the church, we have seen declining revenue which has caused us to do more with less, and the staff in Cleveland and Indianapolis continue to do amazing work on our behalf with very little in the way of support staff. Though money is in short supply, we remain committed to the ministry of "critical presence" throughout the world.

Once again, this year much of our time at both of our meetings was dedicated to the work of discussing and debating the proposal to streamline the UCC governance structure. From the beginning, the WCM board has been supportive of the single governing board model, recognizing its critical utility in better facilitating the ministry to which the church is called. This spring's joint board meeting brought together all four of the covenanted ministry boards, Wider Church, Local Church, Justice and Witness, and Office of General Ministries, to discuss and vote on the proposal put forward by the Executive Council of the church. The hope was that the proposal would be adopted by all four boards and could then be brought to General Synod this summer, and, if passed be implemented in 2011. The Justice and Witness board voted against adopting the proposal by a narrow margin (the other three approved adoption) so the process will continue at least until General Synod in 2011.

In August my wife Monica and I will be moving to East Timor, where we will be serving as Global Ministries missionaries with the Protestant Church of East Timor, so I have resigned from the WCM board. It has been an honor and a privilege to serve as Minnesota's representative.

With Gratitude,  
Tom Liddle, Peace UCC, Duluth

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**Minnesota Council of Churches Program Commission Report**  
**Rev. Tim Johnson, Cherokee Park United Church**  
**Representing the MN Conference UCC**

There is no shortage of reasons why the MN Conference UCC is a fully engaged partner with the MN Council of Churches. To begin with the mission of the MN Council is a strong extension of the values and the ethos that are core to the UCC. Stated simply the mission of the Council is to manifest unity in the church and common good in the world.

The MN Conference UCC comes to the table with Lutherans, Baptists, Methodists, Presbyterians, Congregationalists, Disciples; the list goes on. Together representatives of these many faith communities identify ways in which a unified witness to Christ is given flesh by addressing particular and specific needs in our state.

Through the unity of the Council the Minnesota Conference UCC is present in providing crucial support to newly arrived refugees, welcoming the stranger in our midst. Through the mission of the Council the UCC in Minnesota is an active participant in on going interfaith dialogues among Jews, Christians and Muslims. Through the Council we joint together to prevent clergy sexual misconduct. Through the Council we participate in a vision for the state of Minnesota to end poverty by 20/20 in a program called Minnesota Without Poverty. Through MN Council partnerships we partner with MN Food Share with direct services to end hunger and we partner with other faith traditions in the Joint Religious Legislative Coalition to end the causes of hunger and to insure health care for all. When concerns about flu epidemics emerge the Council immediately serves as a clearing house in providing partners and congregations with essential information. Presently the Council is exploring something called a Benefit Bank, which offers a creative opportunity for matching individual needs with resources.

Again and again the values, ethos and work of the Minnesota Council of Churches resonate with the heart and soul of the United Church of Christ. Our common witness, however, does not end with Minnesota. The Minnesota Council of Churches and the leadership offered by Executive Director, Peg Chamberlin has drawn national recognition. In November 2009 Peg Chamberlin will be installed as the new President of the National Council of Churches. Peg Chamberlin has also been appointed to President Obama's Advisory Council on Faith Based Neighborhood Partnerships.

Dr. Karen Smith Sellers serves on the Board of the Council. Other members of the Minnesota Conference UCC serve in various dimensions of the Council's life. The Program Commission on which I serve meets four times a year in support of the Council's mission. It is an honor and a privilege to represent the Minnesota Conference UCC with the Minnesota Council of Churches.

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**2008 Directors Report**  
Resource Center for Churches  
By Ginger Stemme, Executive Director

DVD use by the UCC went from 100 in 2007 to 151 in 2008. This increase clearly demonstrates the commitment of churches to provide adult education in a DVD curriculum format and our increased

ability to stock titles that meet the need. The use of print is decreasing among all denominations and other formats remain stable. We believe that a single DVD checkout actually often impacts multiple sessions of multiple learners and may reflect more activity than most print checkouts. Our overall increase in patron activity across denominations is 6%.

The Nest Families children's videos, which are gradually being replaced by DVDs, are the most popular for children. The Nooma and Veracity series are popular with youth. Nooma are also popular with adults and if you are not familiar with these, please ask us for a preview!

Adult DVD use varies widely, but anything by the Living the Questions producers has been very popular. In 2008, Eclipsing Empire, a newer title by the Living the Questions producers became the number 1 requested title. Join preeminent New Testament scholars Marcus Borg and John Dominic Crossan on location in Turkey as they trace the Apostle Paul's footsteps throughout the Roman Empire in this 12-session course of study.

There is an increasing call for media on justice issues such as the environment, hunger, racism and immigration. While we have a lot of new media in these areas, we are always open to new suggestions and new donations. Call us at 612-870-0861 or 888-293-9901 and we'll help you put together a program. It is a great idea to do that even if you are computer literate and use our online catalog at [www.resourcesforthejourney.org](http://www.resourcesforthejourney.org). It is easy to miss some great stuff with this particular database which is very unforgiving regarding punctuation and spelling.

We received generous grants for 2008 from Wayzata Community Church (for shelving) and from the House of Hope Presbyterian and The Episcopal Diocese of Minnesota (Granner Fund) for updating the collection, especially purchasing DVDs. In late 2007 an Ashley Fund grant of \$4,000 was received, which was spent in our 2008 budget. As a result we have significantly improved our holdings for children and youth in both media and literature. We also have updated Bibles, curriculum and worship resources. See our conference display or our WEB Site for details on this grant.

A significant print purchase in 2008 is the new curriculum: Worship for Life, a comprehensive ecumenical series. We have the full set and extra copies of Communion, Baptism, and Confirmation. Grants are quite targeted, so we sometimes struggle with covering the basics of salary, rent, etc. The RCC appreciates the continued support of the United Church of Christ and the renewal of the Ashley Fund Grant in Oct. 2008.

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Jesus' message to Christians about helping the poor, the least of those among us, is abundantly clear. As a denomination, we support many programs that help those less fortunate. As individuals, we give to programs to help those experiencing poverty.

What is different and exciting about the "**A Minnesota Without Poverty**" (AMNWOP) movement is the coming together of the following constituents to work together to not only support those experiencing poverty but to eliminate poverty in Minnesota:

- ◆ communities of faith,
- ◆ business leaders,
- ◆ the state government,
- ◆ non-profit organizations,
- ◆ educators,
- ◆ community leaders,
- ◆ people experiencing poverty,
- ◆ foundation

At the 2008 Annual Meeting of the Minnesota Conference of the United Church of Christ the resolution: "A Minnesota Without Poverty" passed. This resolution contained the following elements:

- ◆ Everyone present at the Annual Meeting be invited to review *A Common Foundation* and consider signing the petition – *Done June 2008*
- ◆ Signed petitions be forwarded to A Minnesota Without Poverty - *Done June 2008*
- ◆ Congregations represented at the annual meeting be encouraged to provide opportunities for their congregations members to sign the petition – *Three churches were visited by Nancy Maeker of A Minnesota Without Poverty, Jim Puffer has done presentations at his home church, and a presentation was made by iCan in 2008.*
- ◆ The Conference Minister send a mailing to each congregation in the conference including various information about A Minnesota Without Poverty movement – *Done July 2008*
- ◆ The petitions to be combined with those of other groups and be presented to Minnesota's Governor and Legislators

James Puffer (Robbinsdale United Church of Christ) and Jodi Pfarr (Minnehaha United Church of Christ) represent our denomination on the State-wide Organizing Team for AMNWOP. The purpose of the Organizing Team is to: build, organize and mobilize a statewide, interfaith movement to end poverty in Minnesota by 2020. AMWOP is also a program of the Minnesota Council of Churches.

One of the things the organizing team will be doing during the next several months is continue to create and refine materials, programs and guest speakers to help local congregations become part of this movement to end poverty in Minnesota.

To learn more about this movement and get ideas for how your church can help to end poverty:

- ◆ Visit the AMNWOP web site: [www.mnwithoutpoverty.org](http://www.mnwithoutpoverty.org),
- ◆ Contact the director: Rev. Nancy Maeker ([nancy.maeker@MNChurches.org](mailto:nancy.maeker@MNChurches.org), 612-230-3222)
- ◆ Contact James Puffer ([pufferjamese@hotmail.com](mailto:pufferjamese@hotmail.com) or 763-577-0781)
- ◆ Contact Jodi Pfarr ([jpfarr@povertylexicon.com](mailto:jpfarr@povertylexicon.com) or 612-339-5217)

Look for more information in COMMAntary issues to come.



Minnesota Council of Churches

*Celebrating 150 Years of Unity and Justice*

Get Involved: [www.mnchurches.org](http://www.mnchurches.org) 612-870-3600 | 24 Regional Denominational

Leaders representing 1.1 million members strengthening and renewing communities.

*"...My father would have thought it was really cool to see all these different cultures come together."*

Justina at Interfaith Prayer Service Commemorating the 35W Bridge Collapse

**200** forums and workshops about faithful citizenship, ending poverty, and environmental health.

**566** individuals assisted with immigration applications.

**12,000** persons added to health insurance rolls because of JRLC's advocacy.

**100%** of enrollees are self-sufficient after 180 days in Refugee Early Employment Program.

**9** successful "listening sessions" around the state for Legislative Commission to End Poverty by 2020.

**110** people provided Power and Boundaries Trainings in 2008

**6,000+** people signed A Common Foundation: Shared Principles for Work on Overcoming Poverty.

**255** refugees welcomed into new lives of freedom, hope and opportunity in Minnesota.

**500** volunteer hours for Refugee Services.

**14,300** people are part of JRLC's network, participating in action alerts, writing and visiting legislators.

**8** Refugee Speakers Bureau members offering stories of determination, tragedy, joy, wisdom and hope.

**13** Greater Minnesota counties served by two workshops for rural churches.

**9,052,885** pounds and dollars raised for the food shelf system in Minnesota.

**PROGRAMS OF THE MINNESOTA COUNCIL OF CHURCHES**

**A Minnesota Without Poverty**

A Statewide, Interfaith Movement to end poverty by 2020.

### **Ending Sexual Misconduct in the Religious Community**

Intervenes in current and past cases, and prevents future cases.

### **Healthy Homes, Healthy Congregations**

Empowers congregations and faith-based organizations to make positive choices that minimize exposure to toxic chemicals in children, families, congregations.

### **Joint Religious Legislative Coalition (JRLC)**

Guided by God's vision of the common good as reflected in Jewish, Christian, and Islamic traditions, JRLC mobilizes religious communities to influence public policy in Minnesota.

### **Minnesota FoodShare**

Minnesota FoodShare fights hunger by raising resources to food shelves, education, and advocacy.<sup>1</sup>

### **Minnesota Interfaith Darfur Coalition**

Ending genocide in Darfur through advocacy and humanitarian aid.

### **Rural Churches, Rural Communities**

Churches working together to strengthen local communities.

### **Unity and Relationships**

Unites churches by broadening and deepening the ties among all of the Christian traditions in Minnesota, and builds bridges of understanding between Christians and people of other faith traditions.

### **Partnerships with American Indian Communities**

Building relationships and reconciliation among churches, tribes, and communities.

### **Refugee Services**

Refugee Services is an ecumenical ministry welcoming persecuted people from around the world into new lives of freedom, hope, and opportunity in Minnesota.



## **► Annual Report for Support Received in 2008 ◀**

**Thank you, churches of the Minnesota Conference, for your support in 2008 for Chicago, United and Eden Seminaries: \$59,663.00 from 65 churches. This is a significant increase in support over 2007. Thank You!! Total 2008 support received from churches throughout the CUE region was \$826,492.**

Thanks to your support, Chicago, United and Eden Seminaries of the UCC continue to offer **vital gifts** to the church:

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<sup>1</sup> Minnesota FoodShare is a program of the Greater Minneapolis Council of Churches, co-sponsored by the Minnesota Council of Churches.

- ▶ Preparation in the UCC tradition of individuals for leadership in our churches and beyond
- ▶ Continuing education and renewal for the current leadership of our churches
- ▶ Resources and support for congregational growth and worship vitality
- ▶ Staffing to and support of local lay theological education programs
- ▶ Leadership to conference and association annual meetings

In these difficult economic times for all of us, Chicago, United and Eden Seminaries are especially grateful for your continued, faithful support!

**Special thanks to the following churches whose support in 2008 was 2% or more of their expense budget or included gifts totaling \$1,000 or more:**

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| *Congregational UCC, Ortonville        | Lynnhurst Congregational UCC, Minneapolis |
| Pilgrim Congregational UCC, Benson     | United Church of Christ, New Brighton     |
| Congregational Church, Detroit Lakes   | First UCC, Northfield                     |
| Pilgrim Congregational UCC, Duluth     | Emerson Congregational UCC, Richfield     |
| First Congregational UCC, Fairmont     | Hazel Park Congregational UCC, St. Paul   |
| First Congregational UCC, Grand Marais | Mayflower Community Congregational        |
| Union Congregational UCC, Hackensack   | Church, Minneapolis                       |
| First Congregational UCC, Hutchinson   | Congregational UCC, Rochester             |
| First Congregational UCC, Mankato      | Olivet Congregational UCC, St. Paul       |

**Special recognition also goes to the following (and \* above) churches who provided new or increased support in 2008:**

- |                                     |  |
|-------------------------------------|--|
| First Congregational UCC, Anoka     | Plymouth Congregational Church, Mpls.    |
| New Spirit UCC, Savage              | First Congregational UCC, New York Mills |
| First Congregational UCC, Baudette  | Friedens UCC, Norwood Young America      |
| Edina Morningside Church, Edina     | First Congregational UCC, Princeton      |
| Congregational Church, Excelsior    | Peace UCC, Saint Cloud                   |
| Saint John's UCC, Fairmont          | Saint Anthony Park UCC, St. Paul         |
| Glyndon Congregational UCC, Glyndon | Community UCC, Saint Paul Park           |
| First United Church, Little Falls   | First Congregational UCC, Sherburne      |
| United Church, Mapleton             | Clark Memorial UCC, South St. Paul       |
| Grace UCC, Millville                | First Congregational UCC, Wadena         |
| Minnehaha UCC, Minneapolis          | Circles of Faith UCC, Waubun             |

Ann S. Moyer, Executive Director – PO Box 122 • De Forest, WI 53532 • Ph: 608-846-4025 • Fax: 608-846-7881 • [asmoyer@centurytel.net](mailto:asmoyer@centurytel.net) | Michelle Turnau, Financial Administrator – PO Box 120357 • St. Paul, MN 55112 • 651-255-6117 • [mturnau@unitedseminary-mn.org](mailto:mturnau@unitedseminary-mn.org)



**CHURCH WORLD SERVICE**

Church World Service (CWS) Minn-Kota Regional Office  
 2008 Outreach Ministries Report to the MN Conference UCC Annual Meeting

Submitted by: Deb Braun, Field Assistant

122 W Franklin Ave. #622, Mpls. 55404-2455

1-888-297-2767 (CWS-CROP)/612-230-3277

[mk@churchworldservice.org](mailto:mk@churchworldservice.org)

**CROP Hunger Walks:** In 2008 an estimated 3,761 walkers participated in 48 events and raised a total of \$374,749.52. Once again Don Aarestad, a member of Union Congregational UCC in Elk River, was the Number One CROPWALKER for our 3-state region, raising a total of \$3,091.00. Another 12 Walkers joined him on the “Cream of the CROP” list of CROPWALKERS who raised \$1,000+. Of the 28 walks in our region that had UCC participation, 25 were held in Minnesota, with 42 MN Conference UCC congregations actively involved. Is your congregation a CROP Hunger Walk church? If so, thank you! If not, we hope you’ll join your local CROP Hunger Walk. If there isn’t one, please consider helping us start one. You may even participate as an online walker or sponsor @ [www.cropwalkonline.org](http://www.cropwalkonline.org) We ask for your help in growing the CROP Hunger Walk in your community. This event continues to be the primary community fund-raising program of CWS. It is also an unique opportunity for the interfaith and secular community to come together annually to raise awareness and funds that will address hunger and poverty issues at grass-roots levels, and provide long-term self-help sustainable development support, refugee assistance and emergency relief internationally as well as support local hunger/poverty programs. **CROP** is... **C**ommunities **R**esponding to **O**vercome **P**overty.

**Walking From A to Z....** CROP Hunger Walks currently being planned in Minnesota for this coming fall and spring include:

(Fall 2009) **Anoka Co. (10/11); Baudette; Birchdale; Brainerd Area (10/4); Cannon Falls; Central Fillmore County; Cuyuna Range (Crosby) (10/4); Crow River Area (Hutchinson Area) (10/4); Duluth (10/4); Faribault; Grand Forks/E Grand Forks (10/7); Grand Rapids (10/4); Laurentian Area (Aurora); LeRoy; Mankato; Minneapolis Metro (10/11); Mora (10/4); New York Mills; North Central Suburbs (Circle Pines Area) (10/12); Northfield (9/28); NW Suburbs (Plymouth Area); Pelican Rapids; Red Wing (10/4); Rochester (10/4); Rock County (Luverne Area); St. Paul (10/11); St. Peter (10/11); South Washington County; Steele County (Owatonna Area); Swift County (Benson); Williams; Winona; and Zumbrota.**

(Spring 2010) **Elk River; Fargo/Moorhead; Montevideo Area; New Ulm/Brown County; Princeton; South Arrowhead Region.**

Will you volunteer? Help plan the CROP Hunger Walk in your community! These communities are in particular need of new or additional leadership: Brainerd; Faribault; Mankato; Minneapolis Metro; Mora; New York Mills; Pelican Rapids; St. Cloud.

**Blankets+:** In 2008 a total of **\$ 99,666.57** was raised for this CWS program that provides tools, blankets, seeds, micro-enterprise loans, wells, reforestation, water buffalo, literacy training, emergency relief and more... **\$ 14,859.38** of the above total was raised through our alternative giving catalog, “The Best Gift.” In response to requests for blankets, 9,150 woolen blankets, 24,500 lightweight blankets and 600 Baby Blankets were shipped out for domestic and international destinations. Shipping Reports and resources are available online @ [http://www.churchworldservice.org/site/PageServer?pagename=blankets\\_reports\\_2008](http://www.churchworldservice.org/site/PageServer?pagename=blankets_reports_2008)

Our new “**Blankets +**” Congregational Kit and promotional materials are now available – and they’re free! If you haven’t yet received a copy of the Kit, please pick one up on our display table, contact our office @ 1-888-297-2767 or order it online @ [http://www.churchworldservice.org/site/PageServer?pagename=blankets\\_kit\\_main](http://www.churchworldservice.org/site/PageServer?pagename=blankets_kit_main)

**CWS Kits:** **\$16,535.58** Kits funds, **\$2,672.00** Processing/Shipping Funds and In-Kind donations of Kits valued at a total of \$18,088.75 were received from Minn-Kota Region donors in 2008.

Requests for the kits remained high throughout the year. A total of 9,914 Emergency Clean-up Buckets, 56 Personal Care Kits and one foot locker of donated school supplies were shipped

domestically. A total of 82,111 School Kits, 208,952 Hygiene Kits, 28,243 Baby Kits, and 17,776 Kids Kits were shipped both domestically and internationally. In addition, 975 Sewing Kits were shipped overseas. The 2008 report can be found online @

[http://www.churchworldservice.org/site/PageServer?pagename=kits\\_reports\\_2008](http://www.churchworldservice.org/site/PageServer?pagename=kits_reports_2008)

Last year a few changes were made to the CWS Kits program in response to program and partner needs. A copy of the new Kit Program brochure is included in your Annual Meeting Packet.

CWS also provided program and financial support to the Minn-Kota Region in 2008, including: **CROP Hunger Walk 2008 local allocation funds** to food shelves and community hunger programs totaling **\$92,940.61**.

**Kits and Blanket shipments:** 150 lightweight blankets and 210 Hygiene Kits to Twin Ports Action Coalition in Duluth, MN for homeless and families in need; 150 donated baby blankets, 100 heavyweight blankets, 140 Hygiene Kits and 30 Baby Kits to Olive Presbyterian Church in Platte for distribution on the Pine Ridge Reservation. Primary recipients were grandmothers caring for children and grandchildren; 1,020 Hygiene Kits for distribution through Monte Sinai United Methodist Church in Deming; 300 Hygiene Kits and 90 School Kits to the CWS refugee resettlement affiliate office, the Minnesota Council of Churches Refugee Services, for distribution to incoming refugees.

Since the formation of the United Church of Christ more than 50 years ago, the UCC has worked with CWS (founded in 1946) to accomplish more than it could alone. As an active member of CWS, the UCC works in partnership with 34 other denominations all around the world, endeavoring to eliminate hunger and poverty through works of justice and peace. It is about giving gifts of life, empowerment, hope and love. **THANK YOU** for your ongoing support of these programs. We couldn't do it without you.

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## **2009 REGISTRARS' REPORT**

By Eugenia Williams/Jeff Palmer  
(June 1, 2008 – June 1, 2009)

### **SECTION I**

#### ***ORDAINED MINISTERIAL STANDING, ORDAINED MINISTERIAL PARTNER STANDING or DUAL STANDING***

*Total number of clergy holding Standing (as of June 1, 2008)* 339

#### **Removed**

##### Deceased

Henry Gustafson, Arden Johnson, Bernard McLain, Gunnar Wikstrom

##### Standing transferred out of Conference

James Peck, Richard King, Frank Rodgers, Cara Hochhalter, David Shoobridge,  
Elizabeth Johnson, Ron Bonner, Jill Warner, Susan Adams

##### Standing Terminated

Steve Shannon (without prejudice), Don Horner (with prejudice)

##### Dual Standing ended

Michael Owens, Barbara Lindgren, Karl Johnson

**Total removed ...18**

#### **Added**

##### Standing transferred into Conference

Loren McGrail, Jennie Ott, Bonnie Forsman, Susan Thornton, Desiree Gold,  
Sara Morse, Richard Fylling, Barbara Martin, Richard Eick, Elena Larssen,  
James Brasel, Luis Alvarenga

##### Received Standing by ordination

Janet Stark, Lyle Avant, Hillary Freeman, Brandon Perrine

Granted Dual Standing  
Leah Ntuala  
Re-instatement of Standing  
James Clausen

**Total added ...18**

<b>Total number of ordained ministers with Standing (June 1, 2009)</b>	<b>340</b>
<b>Commissioned ministers</b>	<b>3</b>
<b>Licensed ministers</b>	<b>9</b>
<b>Total number of authorized ministers</b>	<b>351</b>

*PERSONS IN-CARE OF THE CONFERENCE*

<b>Total number In-Care (as of June 1, 2008)</b>	<b>27</b>
In-Care status terminated	
Gail Antonson (without prejudice)	
LeMonte Graham (with prejudice)	
Removed from In-Care Status (Ordination)	
Janet Stark, Lyle Avant, Hillary Freeman, Brandon Perrine	
Granted In-Care Status	
Chester O’Gorman, Joann Bell, LuAnn Suilmann, Jeanne Bringgold-Pro	
<b>Total number In-Care (as of June 1, 2009)</b>	<b>25</b>

**PERSONS IN-CARE**

<u>Name</u>	<u>Church Membership</u>	<u>Rec’d In-Care</u>	<u>Seminary</u>
Grace Anderson	Macalester-Plymouth, St. Paul	3-16-2000	UTS
Obadiah Ballinger	First Congregational, Moorhead	2-2-2005	Yale
Danielle Bartz	Congregational UCC, Rochester	2-2-2005	Eden
Joann Bell	Macalester-Plymouth, St. Paul	10-23-2008	Chicago Theo.
Frank Bennett	Wayzata Community Church	4-17-2008	UTS
Rebecca Bernu	Robbinsdale UCC	9-16-2004	UTS
Rex Beyer	Spirit of the Lakes, Minneapolis	4-20-2000	UTS
Lindsey Braun	Zion UCC, Le Sueur	8-28-2007	U of Chicago
Jeanne Bringgold-Pro	Macalester-Plymouth, St. Paul	1-15-2009	UTS
Catherine Duncan	Plymouth Cong, Minneapolis	8-26-2007	UTS
Doug Federhart	Spirit of the Lakes, Minneapolis	11-18-2004	UTS
Robert Fellows	Linden Hills Cong, Minneapolis	3-23-2006	Harvard
Kathleen Itzin	Mayflower, Minneapolis	4-17-2008	St. Paul
Victoria Johanneck	WayzataCommunity Church	10-21-2004	UTS
Wilma Lawrence	Mayflower, Minneapolis	4-16-1992	UTS
Patti Mogren	St. Peter’s UCC, Stillwater	8-19-1999	UTS
Shuji Moriichi	St. Mark’s UCC, Bloomington	4-19-2007	UTS
Chester O’Gorman	Lyndale UCC, Minneapolis	6-19-2008	UTS
Herbert Perkins	Cherokee Park United, St. Paul	5-20-2004	UTS
Jodi Pfarr	Minnehaha UCC, Minneapolis	5-18-1995	UTS
Kathleen Remund	Minnehaha UCC, Minneapolis	11-17-2005	UTS
Luann Suilmann	Union Congregational, Elk River	10-23-2008	UTS
Dwight Wagenius	Mayflower, Minneapolis	4-19-2007	UTS
Wick Moore, Amy	Union Congregational, Elk River	4-21-2005	UTS
Wunsch, Vicki	Mayflower, Minneapolis	1-18-2007	UTS
	In Discernment for Commissioned Ministry		
Dawn Carlson Conn	Robbinsdale	10-23-08	UTS

**SECTION II**  
**OTHER ACTIONS OF CHURCH AND MINISTRY COMMITTEE (June 1, 2008 – June 1, 2009)**

**LICENSURE**

**Licensed**

Danielle Goette

**License Renewed for 1 year**

Richard Abel, Don Kain, Jennifer Sandstrom, Rob Sandstrom, Cindy Lemke, Sarah Yetter,  
Catherine Duncan

**License Renewed for 3 years**

Karen Evenson

**APPROVAL OF ECCLESIASTICAL ENDORSEMENT**

Suzanne Cekalla

Joel Greenfield

**APPROVAL OF CONTINUED ECCLESIASTICAL ENDORSEMENT**

Jeanine Dorfman

Susan Thornton

LaDonna Benes

**APPROVAL OF THREE/FOUR-WAY COVENANTS**

Ron Hunt (4-way)

**AFFIRMATION OF STANDING AFTER LEAVE OF ABSENCE**

Duane Lookingbill

**LEAVE OF ABSENCE GRANTED**

Eric Nelson

**ECCLESIASTICAL COUNCILS**

November 13, 2008	Hillary Freeman	Plymouth Congregational, Minneapolis
December 11, 2008	Rebecca Bernu	Robbinsdale UCC, Robbinsdale
	Brandon Perrine	Plymouth Congregational, Minneapolis
January 31, 2009	Robert Fellows	Linden Hills Congregational UCC, Mpls
May 12, 2009	Kathleen Itzin	Mayflower Community Cong'l, Mpls
May 26, 2009	Shuji Moriichi	St. Mark's, Bloomington

**SERVICES OF ORDINATION**

September 6, 2008	Janet Stark	Lyndale UCC, Minneapolis
November 23, 2008	Lyle Avant	First Congregational UCC, Alexandria
November 29, 2008	Hillary Freeman	Plymouth Congregational, Minneapolis
February 7, 2009	Brandon Perrine	Plymouth Congregational, Minneapolis

**SERVICES OF INSTALLATION**

June 22, 2008	Don Kain	St. Paul's UCC, Minnesota Lake
September 21, 2008	Wendy Ward	St. James UCC, Barnesville
November 23, 2008	Leah McDowell	St. Paul's UCC/ELCA, Lewiston
January 11, 2009	Barbara Martin	First Congregational UCC, Cannon Falls
March 8, 2009	James Pennington	Spirit of the Lakes UCC, Minneapolis
May 3, 2009	Sara Morse	Hazel Park Congregational, St. Paul
May 17, 2009	Richard Fylling	Granite Falls UCC

**SERVICES OF FAREWELL/CLOSURE**

July 6, 2008	Mark Arbisi	Wabasha UCC, Wabasha
July 27, 2008	Michael Owens	Minnehaha UCC, Minneapolis
August 17, 2008	Frank Rodgers	Circles of Faith, Waubun
September 28, 2008	Rick Wagner	Union Congregational UCC, St. Louis Park
October 5, 2008	Eric Nelson	First Congregational Minnesota, Mpls
	David Shoobridge	Congregational UCC, Medford
March 1, 2009	Jane McBride	Falcon Heights UCC, Falcon Heights
April 26, 2009		The Congregational Church UCC, Madison

**SECTION III**  
**CHURCH STANDING**

<b>Total number of churches holding Standing (as of June 1, 2008)</b>	<b>139</b>
Churches with UCC Standing . . . . .	125
Church with Minnesota Conference Standing, Schedule II (Plymouth, Mpls.) . . .	1
Churches with Dual Standing . . . . .	13
Faith United Church, Ada (UCC/UMC)	
Colonial Church of Edina, Edina (UCC/NACCC/CCCC)	
The Federated Church, Fergus Falls (UCC/PCUSA)	
Glenwood United Parish, Glenwood (UCC/UMC)	
United Church of Grand Meadow, Grand Meadow (UCC/UMC)	
St. Paul's UCC/ELCA, Lewiston (UCC/ELCA)	
First United Church, Little Falls (UCC/UMC)	
The United Church, Mapleton (UCC/ABC)	
The Federated Church, Morris (UCC/UMC)	
The Associated Church, Owatonna (UCC/PCUSA)	
Cherokee Park United, St. Paul: (UCC, PCUSA)	
Macalester-Plymouth. St. Paul (UCC, PCUSA)	
United Protestant, Silver Bay: (UCC/UMC/PCUSA/ABC, and CC/DOC)	
Number of churches added since June 1, 2008 .....	0
Number of churches closed since June 1, 2008 .....	1
<i>Total number of churches with standing as of June 1, 2009</i>	<b>138</b>