

# COMMAntary: an e-newsletter of the Minnesota Conference - United Church of Christ

God is still speaking,

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## News of the Conference

### Message from the Conference Minister

**\*\*The link to the [Quarterly Donor letter](#) has been inserted at the bottom of this message. My apologies for missing that in the first go-round.\*\***

Dear Colleagues in Ministry,

This week's message is comprised mostly of updates on the life and ministry of the Minnesota Conference, including particularly Pilgrim Point Camp.

We promised to keep you apprised at the end of each month of enrollment at and fundraising on behalf of Pilgrim Point Camp. Camps completed in July included:

Camp Title	2008	2009	Difference
Junior High Adventures	15	24	+9
July Family Camp	64	95	+31
Junior High	41	29	-12
Senior High	63	75	+12

Counting only our programmed camps, it appears that to date we have had an overall increase of seven campers when comparing participants this year against participants last year. Estimates of Managing Director, Dee Dressler, anticipate an end-of-season increase of a total of eight campers in our programmed camps than last year. Estimates for weekend attendance (based on reservation forms) show an increase of about 125 participants.

At the end of July, contributions to the Pilgrim Point Camp 2010 Fund were \$14,070 from 65 individual donors and 5 local churches. We understand that many are still considering their response to the fundraising letter sent in early July and that a number of local churches are engaged in fundraising. Accordingly, the Board of Directors has asked me to request the following:

*That donors and local churches send their contributions and/or report to the Conference Office their intended pledge amount to the Pilgrim Point Camp 2010 Fund by August 31. This is the amount that will be reported at the Special Meeting of the Conference set for Saturday, September 26 at 1 pm at Wayzata Community Church.*

Donors should be aware that by vote of the Board of Directors a temporarily-restricted, donor-designated fund

called the Pilgrim Point Camp 2010 Fund has been established. Contributions to this fund are for the purpose stated in the solicitation letter: "to keep Pilgrim Point Camp open in 2010 and beyond." Contributions to this fund can be used only for the purpose specified.

The Board of Directors took several other actions related to Pilgrim Point Camp and the Special Meeting of the Conference:

- a) Reviewed a "Frequently Asked Questions" document, describing the Floyd C. Ashley Endowment Fund and authorized its posting to the website, following several revisions. We hope to have it posted by the middle of August.
- b) Discussed the presentation of the budget and authorized the preparation of two summary narrative documents showing sources and uses of funds in the budget proposed by the Board of Directors and that as amended by the Annual Meeting, prior to the vote to postpone. For those wishing additional detail, a pdf document will be available for electronic mailing upon request. Paper copies will be available at the meeting. We hope to have those available and posted no later than September 1.
- c) Extended an invitation to the Pilgrim Point Camp Committee and the Outdoor Ministries Committee to join with the Board in an overnight retreat at Pilgrim Point Camp in early September. The facilitator for this conversation will be Rev. Steve Sterner, Executive Minister of Local Church Ministries of the United Church of Christ.

The Board of Directors, on recommendation from the Nominating Work Group, also approved the appointments to a number of teams and committees of the Conference. On recommendation from the Evangelism Team, they approved expenditures from the "Strengthen the Church" fund to support the participation of up to two persons in Web University and to bring back to the Conference a report on the advisability and feasibility of sponsoring such an event in the Minnesota Conference UCC. The Board also approved expenditures from the "Strengthen the Church" fund to support the participation of up to eight persons in "Equipping Leaders for Generous Congregations: Fundraising and Financial Transformation." Financial support is contingent on participants bringing back a report to the staff and/or Board, offering support to each other as they seek to implement these practices in their local churches, and providing a workshop at next year's Annual Meeting on what they learned and how it is making a difference in their local church.

Finally, the Board of Directors discussed the matter of posting Board minutes on the website. A survey of all 38

Conference of the United Church of Christ and of other mainline judicatories in Minnesota (Episcopal, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, Methodist) revealed that this is not common practice. Only four Conferences post minutes, and in most instances the postings were dated. The Board recommended that matter be included in anticipated discussions about an effective communication strategy for the Conference.

One final word: Last week we sent the quarterly letter to local churches, reporting on contributions to and through the Minnesota Conference UCC through the end of June 2009. The letter expresses thanks and reports on the many ministries made possible through your generous contributions. A copy of this letter is available [by clicking this link.](#)

Karen Smith Sellers  
Conference Minister

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