

Dear Colleagues in Ministry,

Saturday's Special Meeting of the Minnesota Conference began with festive worship and celebration of Holy Communion in the beautiful sanctuary of Wayzata Community Church. [The order of worship and sermon are posted on the website and can be accessed by clicking here.](#) We extend heartfelt thanks to Peggy Johnson of Union UCC, St. Louis Park, who provided musical accompaniment and to Rev. John Ross, Senior Minister, and the staff of Wayzata Community Church, for their warm welcome and hospitality.

First on the docket was an update on 2009 Conference finances and Pilgrim Point Camp enrollment. The 2009 fiscal year ends Wednesday, September 30 (today). As of last Saturday, OCWM receipts are \$783,896 (toward the goal of \$850,000), Per Capita pledges received are \$187,754 (toward the goal of \$220,000) and Friends of the Conference gifts total \$56,061 (the goal is \$70,000). An offering received during the opening worship has added \$2789.57 to OCWM, of which \$969.38 will be forwarded to the national United Church of Christ, and \$1820.19 will be retained for the ministries of the Minnesota Conference.

Budget shown is full year (fy09) budget  
 Variance is a percentage of budget

OCWM	Gifts		3,468
	Pledges	681,806	
	Rec'd on Pledges		780,429
OCWM Total Received			783,896
OCWM Received - Budget			850,000
Unfavorable Variance		-7.8%	(66,104)

PerCapita	Pledges	135,349	
	Rec'd on Pledges		187,754
PC Total Received			187,754
PC Received - Budget			220,000
Unfavorable Variance		-14.7%	(32,246)

Friends	Gifts		55,261
	Pledges	4,650	
	Rec'd on Pledges		800
Friends Total Received			56,061
Friends Received - Budget			70,000

Unfavorable Variance	-19.9%	(13,939)
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We offer profound thanks to all those who made a special effort to forward OCWM, Per Capita, or Friends contributions to the Conference before the end of our fiscal year.

Figures provided by Managing Director of Pilgrim Point Camp, Dee Dressler, indicate that enrollment to date at Pilgrim Point Camp is up by nearly 140 campers. In response to numerous questions about this increase, the reports for programmed and weekend camps [are available by clicking here](#). You will see that the following were the largest contributors to the increase: The Conference Youth Event (October 2008/fiscal 2009) was held for the first time at Pilgrim Point Camp, an increase of 79 campers. A successful young adult weekend camp was held this summer, resulting in 36 new campers. And the Youth Leader’s Retreat, new this year, brought an additional 24 new weekend campers to Pilgrim Point. The clergy camp/minister’s week – also a first-time event -- drew 13 campers. For the most part, these increases were in *weekend* participation. July Family Camp enrollment was up by more than 30. Senior High Camp had 12 additional participants. And Junior High Adventures had 9 more participants than last year.

Moderator Rev. Mark Kuether, (Congregational Church, Detroit Lakes) introduced those present to [Holy Conferencing](#). Secretary Ron Stricker (Union UCC, Elk River) reported that 265 delegates from 73 churches were registered, and a quorum was declared. Rules for the Special Meeting and the agenda were adopted. Rev. Howard Bell (UCC New Brighton) was appointed as Parliamentarian.

The gathered body voted to confirm the [appointment to elected position from the Nominating Work Group](#). Updates from the Board of Directors, the Pilgrim Point Camp Committee (PPCC) and the Outdoor Ministries Team (OMT) were provided by Vice Moderator, Dr. Lisa Lindesmith (Robbinsdale UCC), PPCC Chair, Rev. Paula Northwood (Plymouth Congregational, Minneapolis), and OMT Chair Kathy Itzin (Mayflower, Minneapolis). A celebration followed, giving thanks for the generosity of those who contributed to keeping Pilgrim Point Camp open in 2010 and beyond. Standing together, Pilgrim Point Camp Registrar, Evelyn Henrickson, and I reported that to date \$60,009.56 in cash has been received; an additional \$15,270 has been pledged.

On recommendation from the Board of Directors, Pilgrim Point Camp Committee and Outdoor Ministries Team (the September 11-12 working group), the delegates voted to approve a contribution from the Ashley Endowment of \$50,000 and the use of \$50,000 from the Pilgrim Point Camp 2010 fund to sustain operations at Pilgrim Point Camp in fiscal 2010. The 3% increase in staff salaries recommended by the Personnel Committee, Finance Committee, Board of Directors and September 11-12 working group were reinstated. With these amendments the proposed budget for fiscal 2010 was approved. [Descriptive document is available here](#).

Kim Shaffer (First Congregational, Fairmont) introduced the amendments to the Bylaws proposed by ten or more local churches of the Minnesota Conference. After several amendments from the floor – one to specify “Ida Township in” Douglas County and one to clarify the meaning of the term “members” – the delegate vote failed to meet the 2/3 majority required by the narrowest of margins. 244 votes were cast – 160 for and 84 against; 161 favorable votes were required for passage.

A closing prayer was offered, honoring the Rev. Richard (Dick) Kozelka, Principal Minister at First Congregational (UCC) of Minnesota from 1974-1991, who died recently.

I’ll be out of the office much of next week and a half. We travel to Christ the King Retreat Center in Buffalo tomorrow for an overnight workshop on “Communicating across the Generations,” with Rev. J. Bennett Guess, Director of Communications for the United Church of Christ. Fifty participants from nearly three dozen local churches are signed up

for what promises to be an exciting conversation and learning experience! The CUE (Chicago-United-Eden) Board meets next Tuesday at Chicago Theological Seminary. At this meeting we will say farewell to Ann Moyer, Executive Director of CUE, and vote bylaws changes that will reduce substantially the size of the Board of Directors. I'll travel to Chicago a day early to fulfill several assignments of the CUE transition team, on which I have served. On Wednesday and Thursday I'll be in New York City for a Conference Ministers' Consultation at the UCC Pension Boards. Late in the week I'll go on to Pennsylvania to spend the weekend with my siblings. I'll be back in the office on Monday, October 12.