

2023 Development Committee Report

Nancy Swanson, Development Committee Chair

Throughout the past year, the Development Committee has continued our fundraising work within the framework of the Conference's 2020 strategic priorities, focusing our efforts on connecting and communicating with churches and individuals regularly in-person, by mail, phone, email, COMMAntary articles, and through other activities.

For Minnesota UCC churches, contributing Per Capita dues and giving to Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) via the MN Conference expresses our most basic covenantal commitment to our denomination and the desire to participate in building a more peaceful and just society and world for all. (A commitment we share with other Conferences and bodies of the United Church of Christ.) This generosity – along with participation in all four special mission offerings of our UCC – One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS), Strengthen the Church, Neighbors in Need, and the Christmas Fund – leads to a "5 for 5" designation for local churches, an accomplishment many congregations look forward at the end of each year. THANK YOU, member congregations of the Minnesota Conference!

Development Committee members also reach out to many of the individual donors in the Conference to thank them for their gifts to the Friends of the Conference (Annual Fund). The Friends of the Conference contributions provide additional critical support to the core mission and activities of the United Church of Christ in Minnesota, and make up a significant portion of the Conference's annual receipts. THANK YOU, Friends!

Individually and together, our commitment, gifts, and encouragement of each other reminds us of the key role we all have in spreading the news that God is actively working in and among us - and that the ministry efforts of churches, the Conference, and the national setting do TOGETHER is crucial work. THANK YOU, everyone!

Even as we report on the Committee's work, we also note changes for our Committee and the Conference. Bob Olsen, who served as our Conference Generosity Officer, wrapped up his ministry among us at the end of February. We are grateful for Bob guidance and steady oversight of our efforts. Now stepping into what is another interim position in the Conference we welcome Keren Lowell and continue our work in support of the MN Conference with her assistance.