2021 New Hampshire Conference United Church of Christ
Proposed Mission Income & Spending Plan (MISP)
Annotated

We are the New Hampshire Conference of the United Church of Christ. With 133 local churches and over 16,000 members in covenant with one another, our collective ministry is a strong presence in New Hampshire, and throughout the world. Our world continues to need compassion, justice and peace for all people and a church that meets people where they are on life’s journey. We are a church that offers all this while providing opportunities to be with God where we are. Through our ministries, the Gospel of Jesus Christ comes to life with vibrancy and joy, reaching out to all.

The 2021 Mission Income & Spending Plan (MISP) is presented to the members at the Annual Meeting of the New Hampshire Conference of the United Church of Christ by the Board of Directors after careful discernment, input and review by the Budget Committee, Conference Ministries, and the Board of Directors. This Plan seeks to balance purposeful expenditures and accountability for the workings and administrative support of the Conference and includes the ongoing administration of the Conference, Outdoor Ministries (Horton Center) and the six Conference Ministries:

- Christian Formation Ministry;
- Clergy Support Ministry;
- Finance Ministry;
- Local Church Support Ministry;
- Justice & Witness Ministry; and
- Wider Church Relations Ministry.

The fiscal reality facing us as a Conference reflects the reality many of our member churches are facing – changing demographics are hurting the financial bottom line. In the midst of a pandemic it is expected that our projected income and anticipated expenses going into 2021 will be impacted by what is happening in our New Hampshire communities and nationwide.

Last year we voted to adjust the percentage of OCWM (Our Church’s Wider Mission) shared with our National Church and increase our membership dues. Encouraged and energized by the new life being breathed into Horton Center, we anticipated that the Friends of Horton Center appeal would bear greater fruit, allowing for less of a deficit in this vital ministry. We also projected that the cell tower on Pine Mountain and the empty rooms in the Conference Center would provide increased rental income. These decisions have left us in a good position as we face some still uncertain times.

For the first time in a number of years, the 2021 MISP being presented is a balanced budget. Despite a projected level of revenue and expenditures showing no change from 2020, this will still fully support the work and activities of our NH Conference. The narrative that follows will show the recommended income and expenses needed to fully support the extensive range of programs and mission activities that form the wide-reaching work of the New Hampshire Conference. The MISP does not reflect spending for Conference events and activities that are projected to have balanced revenue and expenses (e.g., costs associated for the Conference Annual Meeting does not appear either in the Revenue or the Ministry & Mission Expenses in this
plan). The Conference Board of Directors intends this document to illustrate how OCWM, Membership Dues, Friends of the NHCUCC Appeals, and other revenue, as well as carefully planned expenditures, support the vision and mission of the New Hampshire Conference.

**Mission Expenses for 2021**

Our six ministries that embody our community and spirit utilize the gifts that have been given to us and transform them into offerings of service, support and compassion.

**The Christian Formation Ministry** is the arm of the Conference that “promotes spiritual and educational development for persons of all ages by providing conference-wide experiences for local churches.” The Christian Formation Ministry provides opportunities for members of the NH Conference of the United Church of Christ to listen for God and to be challenged, encouraged, and supported as they grow and develop in their individual faith as experienced in traditional and non-traditional settings.

Many being served by this Ministry are youth and children. Christian Formation teaches young people to listen and to act while we discern from them how our teaching methods can become more effective while encouraging their faith formation. Programs include camping at Horton Center, Campus Ministries, the educational resources and conversations afforded through our partnership with the New England Association of United Church Educators and the Earth Stewardship Mission Group. Other initiatives include efforts to maintain the success of the Waysmeet Center at UNH Durham.

**The Finance Ministry** is the branch of the Conference that “develops the means to strengthen generosity through education and advocacy and steward the assets of the Conference; and shall interpret Our Church’s Wider Mission Basic Support (OCWM) as a means of covenantal faithfulness.” This Ministry works towards the enrichment of the Conference and local churches across New Hampshire by supporting OCWM initiatives and by creating OCWM promotional materials. This Ministry seeks to explore new initiatives through social media that promote greater engagement between the Conference and our local churches. The investment consulting agreement with the Connecticut Conference continues, as the Consolidated Investment Fund is managed through the Connecticut Conference at no additional cost.

The Finance Ministry reflects the OCWM offerings shared with the National Setting. The percentage of OCWM shared with national is 35%. However, there is a commitment to share net revenue (bottom line) at a 50% rate with the National Setting if the Conference has a surplus at the end of the year.

**The Clergy Support Ministry** is committed to strengthening the clergy of our Conference by “providing opportunities for continuing education and support to augment the work of the Conference Minister and the Association Committees on Church and Ministry.” The Ministry continues to facilitate a wide variety of clergy support initiatives which engage and empower all authorized ministers in a variety of settings. Key initiatives include a Clergy Spouse Support Group, support to Committees on Church and Ministry (CoCM), Fitness Review training, investigation and adjudication and support the Professional Development Resource Mission Group (formerly named NH School of Ministry) which has taken on the responsibility of Boundary Awareness Training. The Ministry sponsors other programs including Clergy Convocation and Interim Ministry Activities, which are self-funded and Pastoral Leadership Development Groups, sponsored by the Grace Scott Fund.
The Local Church Support Ministry is called upon to “create programs which strengthen and enrich congregations in cooperation with the Conference Minister and Association Committees on Church and Ministry.” This Ministry is committed to strengthening, supporting, and sustaining our 133 local churches around the state, while also engaging in the mission of renewing churches. This Ministry sponsors an annual program for Administrative Professionals and supports the A New Thing Task Force (Mission Group) which helps churches confront the reality of ministering in communities which are primarily unchurched as they discern how God might be inspiring them to pursue unique responses to their circumstances.

The Local Church Support Ministry supports MissionInsite and pays the annual fee for a software program that provides detailed information on demographics in the chosen area. Local churches are provided free access to the program. In 2021, the Ministry will continue to explore the possibility of creating a Stewardship Mission Group.

The Justice & Witness Ministry in its coordinating mission, collaborates with its seven Mission Groups as prophetic branches of the Conference working for justice, peace and the well-being of the planet. The Justice & Witness Ministry “commits to being an agent of transformation informing and inspiring a revolution in ourselves, our churches, and our conference that is rooted in the gospel values of peace, justice and creation care.” This Ministry is a touchstone for the communication of, and action for, essential faith issues. The Mission Groups of the Justice & Witness Ministry stand as a voice for change and a beacon of hope, and they exemplify the vibrant ways that God is working in and through the New Hampshire Conference of the United Church of Christ.

Many of the Mission Groups are aligned with local and statewide groups with similar goals and values (i.e., Faith in Action and NH Peace Action Justice & Witness). Justice & Witness sponsors conferences, workshops, vigils, marches, and other actions. The Mission Groups include Economic Justice, Environmental Justice, Racial Justice, Opioid, Open and Affirming, Immigrant and Refugee Support, and Peace with Justice Advocates. These Mission Groups work tirelessly on behalf of the Conference to witness, educate and advocate for justice not only in New Hampshire, but around the world.

The Wider Church Relations Ministry “seeks and promotes the means for congregations and persons to engage the needs and opportunities of the world; engages Jesus’ prayer ‘that they all may be one’ and finds the means for action.” This Ministry reaches out to the Wider Church through its commitment and support of the New Hampshire Council of Churches, the UKAMA Partnership in Zimbabwe, General Synod and Disaster Response.

General Mission work and service completed on behalf of the ministries of the NH Conference are supported and sustained by the Conference leadership and through the use of the New Hampshire Conference Center facility. The General Mission area of the budget of the Conference represents the churches, associations, and the wider settings of the United Church of Christ and as such, the Conference leadership offers an essential link between these entities. Through their connections and communications, they greatly enhance the effectiveness of our Wider Church leadership, and give voice to the mission and vision of the New Hampshire Conference of the United Church of Christ. Expenses associated with the General Mission have implications for the overall effectiveness of our Conference structure. For example, the salaries paid to the ministerial and support staff assist the work of every Ministry and Mission Group in the Conference as well as the Local Churches and Associations. The Conference Center facility continues to provide our Ministries and Mission
Groups with a welcoming and centrally-located location with remote-access capabilities to accommodate and support numerous activities, events and meetings.

Projected Conference Income for 2021

The mission of the NH Conference that is lived out through the life and work of its various ministries and mission groups is powerful, but it is only part of the story. Gifts of time and funds (made possible through the generosity of our local churches and the members and friends of the NH Conference) offset some Conference expenses and extend the mission of the Conference and local churches. Conference revenue is achieved through six main sources - Our Church’s Wider Mission Basic Support (OCWM), Association Fellowship Dues, Friends of the NHCUCC Appeals, Investment Income on Funds Invested for the NHCUCC, Rental Income and Other Income.

Our Church’s Wider Mission Basic Support (OCWM) is the covenantal contribution made by the 133 local churches of the Conference that support the ministry of the Wider Church. Our Church’s Wider Mission Basic Support (OCWM) is the primary revenue stream for the New Hampshire Conference. As mentioned previously, the 2021 MISP reflects the New Hampshire Conference retaining 65% of these gifts and forwarding 35% to the National Setting of the United Church of Christ for use nationally and internationally in God’s work in the world. In 2019, OCWM generated about 52% of our total revenue.

In addition to the annual offering made through OCWM, the NH Conference of the United Church of Christ is supported by Association Fellowship Dues. These contributions are based on local church membership and are collected by the treasurers of the seven Associations in the NHCUCC. Each Association has its own per capita assessment. In 2021 the New Hampshire Conference’s portion will continue to be $12.00 per member. Fellowship dues accounted for 15% of revenue in 2019.

Each year, the Conference is blessed by the generosity of many friends through the Friends of the NHCUCC Annual Appeal. Beginning in 2017, two requests were made to individuals participating in the ministry of the New Hampshire Conference and to those who have experienced its significance in the life of their associations and local churches. In 2019, Friends Appeals accounted for 2% of revenue.

Investment Income on Funds Invested for the NHCUCC has become a very important part of the Conference’s revenue. The Conference is very fortunate to hold a variety of invested funds that represent a wonderful legacy given to the Conference by those who have come before us. The offerings that have been made over the years to the NH Conference funds have been instrumental in supporting the life and ministry of the Conference. The New Hampshire Conference holds invested funds, which are prudently managed to provide present dividend income and be an asset for the generations to come. This income is used to fund ministries and mission in the New Hampshire Conference. In 2019, the allowable draw from investments was increased from 4.75% to 5.25% for unrestricted and Board-restricted Conference-controlled funds. As a whole, the draw taken from investments in 2019 was 4.7%. This draw is calculated on an annual basis for the average market value over the past 20 quarters. In 2019, investment income generated 18% of revenue. The Conference is a beneficiary of Investment Income from Trust Distributions from several trusts which include the Lane Estate, Hussey Trust, and Chadwick Trust. We also receive Administrative Fee Revenue for oversight and the administration of the Lyford-Merrow Trust and the Ministerial Relief Fund.
Rental Revenue includes income from the rental of office spaces at the Conference Center in Pembroke which, for the first time in many years, all offices are rented. It also includes the rent received for the cell tower on the grounds of Horton Center. Rental Income accounted for 10.5% of revenue in 2019.

Other Income includes a Horton Center Appeal, Event Donations (Annual Meeting), as well as potential donations for Search and Call. Other Income generated 2% of revenue in 2019.

The New Hampshire Conference remains strong in its belief in, and reliance on, the covenantal partnership with the local churches, their pastors, the Associations, the national setting, and the Wider Church. We urge pastors, delegates and individuals to become strong advocates for supporting these connections in and through the United Church of Christ. This, we believe, to be Christ’s challenge to us.

Thank you! Together, we are the New Hampshire Conference, a vital voice in New Hampshire proclaiming the Good News and witnessing to God’s love in the world. We celebrate our partnerships with local churches and with all of our members and friends of the New Hampshire Conference. We look forward to continuing the Conference mission and ministry in 2021 and for many years to come!

Thanks to you, and thanks be to God!