

**214<sup>th</sup> ANNUAL MEETING**  
**NEW HAMPSHIRE CONFERENCE OF THE UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**  
Saturday, October 24, 2015  
Grappone Conference Center, Concord, NH  
**MEETING MINUTES**

CALL TO ORDER and WELCOME

At 9:00 Conference President Rev. Gayle Whittemore called the 2015 Annual Meeting of the New Hampshire Conference of the United Church of Christ to order and welcomed all those in attendance.

Although no report was available yet from the Registrar, she declared by observation that a quorum was present.

With a full house it was a perfect opportunity for all to sing *Happy Birthday* to Matthew Schulte.

INTRODUCTION and GREETINGS

Highlights regarding the exhibits, evaluation form, Nominating Committee Report, availability of Speakouts, and voting cards were announced.

At the same time, names were projected onto the screen of those who have served the Conference during 2014 including: Conference Officers, Board of Directors, Conference Staff, Contractors for Special Services, Volunteer Consultants, Annual Meeting Assistants, Annual Meeting Planning Committee, Worship Committee, Special guests, and Clergy new to NHCUCC. (*attachment 1*)

From this point The Annual Meeting Planning Committee served as the Business Committee for this Annual Meeting.

GRANTING VOICE WITHOUT VOTE

President Whittemore introduced Laura Sevigny, Chair of the Annual Meeting Planning Committee who made the motion "*Clergy who are serving in a local church in the New Hampshire Conference but do not have ministerial standing in an Association of the New Hampshire Conference of the UCC, and our special guests and be granted voice without vote for this meeting.*" Since the motion came from a committee, it did not require a second. There was no objection; those clergy and guests were granted voice without vote for this meeting with unanimous vote.

PROPOSED AGENDA (*attachment 2*)

Laura Sevigny presented the agenda as prepared and printed in the packets. She made the motion, "*On behalf of the Annual Meeting Planning Committee I move the adoption the proposed Agenda as printed.*" Because it had come from a committee, it did not

require a second. There was no discussion, the Moderator called for the vote and declared the motion agreed to and the Agenda was adopted.

### STANDING RULES (attachment 3)

The Proposed Standing Rules were also prepared and in the packet. Laura Sevigny made the motion on behalf of the Annual Meeting Planning Committee, "*I move the adoption of the proposed Standing Rules as printed*". Because it had come from a committee, it did not require a second. There was no discussion, the Moderator called for the vote and declared two thirds of those voting was in the affirmative, and the Standing Rules were adopted.

### 2014 ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES

The Minutes of last year's meeting had been approved by the Board of Directors, acting on behalf of the Gathered Conference, on November 14, 2014 and required no action. They were printed and placed in each packet.

### MORNING WORSHIP

The gift of worship and Holy Communion was offered by Rev. Gary Schulte and Rev. Richard Slater with music by jazz band, *The Prodigals* with vocals by Emilia Halstead; dance "Sajojo" from members Of the Maranatha Indonesian UCC, and a keynote address by Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer who energized and explained "why we love this church, why it matters, and why our best days are ahead of us."

### TABLE CONVERSATION

Gayle Whitemore explained the process for forming into different groups for intentional Table Conversations following the break.

[break]

### REPORT FROM REGISTRAR

Based on the figures from the Registrar, a quorum was present:

**322 In attendance, representing 94 churches**  
98 Authorized Ministers  
156 Lay Delegates  
9 Youth  
6 Board or Directors  
35 Visitors  
3 Special Guests  
15 Exhibitors

Rev. Richard Slater introduced Dr. Peter Wells who gave an overview as to listening, affirming and gaining an understanding of each other's experience regarding race for the facilitated Table Conversations.

LUNCH – Five different discussion groups were available in various locations with box lunches. *A Conversation with Rev. Dr. John Dorhauer*; *Continuing the Conversation* with Rev. Dr. Peter Wells; *Horton Center- Building Community in Creation* with Rev. Mollie Landrs Hatt; *Policing in a Multi-Cultural, Multi racial Community* with a panel of Law Enforcement Officers; and *Racism and the Environment* with Spirituality and Earth Stewardship Mission Group.

### SPEAKOUT SESSIONS

Rev. Nancy Talbot, Pastor of Congregational Church North Barnstead UCC explained the one minute rules. John Herbert was time keeper.

- Rev. Jan Howe - Disaster Response Mission
- Diane Wells - Syrian Refugee Crisis ( from Joyce Ray)  
- Women's Fellowship
- Rev. Sid Lovett - For the Love of Children
- Debbie Gline-Allen - Northeast School of Ministry
- Rev. Emily Heath - ONA Gathering 11/7/14
- Gail Kinney - Economic & Justice Peace Group Ministry
- Rev. Daehler Hayes- Cornerstone Fund
- Rev. Stacey Kullgren - NH Campus Ministries
- Rev. John Gregory-Davis - white privilege Racial Justice conversation
- Rev. Gordon Crouch - Criminal Justice Mission Group
- Rod Bowles - Friends of Horton Center
- Rev. Barbara Currie- Peace and Justice Advocates
- Rev. Nancy Talbot - Expanding Stewardship

### STATE OF THE CONFERENCE

Rev. Gary Schulte offered his perspective of the past year highlighting the shared ministry of worship, work, and prayer within the 136 congregations of the New Hampshire Conference. After 214 years, "we do not grow weary, we do not give up." Responsible relationships matter. Although a 25% membership decline in the past decade, many churches have increased in the last 5 years. Ukama celebrated its 20<sup>th</sup> anniversary; the new structure is positive; 11 new clergy came to NH; 30 churches are currently in transition; continued collaboration with Maine Conference and new conversation with Vermont Conference also about partnering with Outdoor Ministries and Mission opportunities. OCWM pledge is an important relationship piece with the national setting as well as each local church. He thanked the staff with particular

appreciation given to Rev. Richard Slater and noted the retirement of Bill Hoysdrat coming in December.

### TREASURER'S REPORT

John Herbert, a member of the Community Congregational Church, UCC, Salisbury and the Conference Treasurer presented the Treasurer's Report. He reported his "good news/bad news" in narrative form. Good news was that last year's budget had been budgeted with a \$22,000 deficit, but through local church giving and frugal spending of the Ministry teams, the year finished in the black with an extra \$1,100.00.

Bad news is that this 2015 budgeted deficit is \$25,000. But currently it is at \$130,000 it looks that it may come in much higher than the budgeted prediction: previous years there had been an insurance rebate, overpayment the Chadwick Trust must be corrected, and the shortfall from Horton Center anticipated revenues have all contributed. But he felt the most significant cause has been the steady reduction of the receipts for OCWM.

### MISSION INCOME & SPENDING PLAN FOR 2016 (attachment 5)

Marcie Miller, member of First Congregational Church & Society, UCC Rindge and Chairperson of the Conference's Budget Committee, presented the proposed Mission Income & Spending Plan for 2016. Members of the budget team and a representative of each Ministry joined her on the podium as it was a collaborative effort and all offered vision and support to create the unified budget.

A copy of the budget and narrative was in each packet, and after ten minutes of presenting the proposed budget and explaining the changes that ultimately left a proposed budget with a 25K deficit, Marcie made the motion, "*On behalf of the Board of Directors, I move the adoption of the proposed Mission Income & Spending Plan for 2016.*" Because it came from the Board, it did not require a second.

Although no PROS or CONS spoke to the issue, several people spoke raising questions about the figures and the process of the current Treasurer's Report, asking for details or a balance sheet. Not the time to answer specifically, but it was noted that next year a more detailed financial report will be available. Other comments included questions about local church involvement, accessibility of the budget, additional reserved funds, and the plan for making up the deficit. Also prayerfully noted was the demise of Keene State Campus Ministry.

Although the current deficit at the end of third quarter was alarming, there is confidence that the income stream will come in and the plan remain consistent.

The question was called for a vote; the Moderator declared the ayes have it, motion passed and the Mission Income & Spending Plan for 2016 was adopted.

### BUMBERSHOOT FUND

Rev. Gayle Whittemore explained The Bumbershoot Fund as a name given to a short term fundraising proposal to pay for the replacement of the Conference Center roof. The proposal and details written by Art Urie with Finance Ministry had been approved by Board of Directors.

### GENERAL SYNOD RECAP

Moderator called on Rev. Eliza Buchakjian-Tweedy, Pastor and Teacher of First Congregational Church, UCC in Rochester for a report on the meeting of the General Synod held in Cleveland in June, 2015. In addition to the ten minute video highlighting the four and a half days, she recognized all who attended, gave an explanation of the business and leadership process, and re-iterated that it is time to get out of our comfort zone to consider who we are and who we are called to be.

### CAPITAL FUND CAMPAIGN EXPLORATORY COMMITTEE

Rev. Ed Koonz, Rev. Stacey Kullgren and Phil Kimball reported on the process and the visioning of how to move forward in the journey of stewardship. Although there is a sense of urgency with specific material needs (the roof, the server, Horton Center requirements, local church needs, etc.) there is also the understanding of moving ahead in a thoughtful manner. To that end, there will be a meeting in the Conference Office on Tuesday, December 1 from 5:30 -7:30 to engage in creative conversation; from that the sub-committee will look for 8 or 9 others to go forward; then broaden the circle with clarity in each step and full assessment as it is essential to the Conference.

### BYLAW REVISION

Moderator called upon Rev. Carolyn Keilig, member of Board of Directors, to present a proposed change to the Conference Bylaws as found in the packets. Rev Keilig moved on behalf of the Board of Directors *“to amend Article IX: Ministries, Section 5, ‘Peace and Justice by striking out the words “Peace and” and adding at the end the words and Witness” to make Section 5 read “Justice and Witness”*. Since it had come from a committee, it did not require a second, but needed a two thirds vote to pass.

Rev. Gordon Crouch, maker of the motion spoke to it explaining there had been some confusion because of the Peace and Justice Advocates Mission Group already in place and with this change it would be more encompassing.

The question was called for a vote; the Moderator declared the ayes have it with a clear 2/3 majority and the motion carried.

### ELECTION OF BOARD of DIRECTORS & NOMINATING COMMITTEE *(attachment 6)*

Rev. Nancy Talbott, Pastor of the Congregational Church of North Barnstead, UCC, and Chair of the Nominating Committee presented the report of those who had been nominated for the Board of Directors and Nominating Committee as printed in the packet. The Business Committee had not received any nominations from the floor. Because only one person is nominated for each position, the by-laws did not require a ballot vote be taken, the Chair declared those individuals who had been nominated, to be elected.

Rev. Gary Schulte came forward to lead in the Liturgy of Commissioning.

As new President of the NH Conference, Neal Cass thanked Rev. Gayle Whittemore for her continual thoughtful leadership.

### CELEBRATIONS *(attachment 7)*

President Neal Cass called upon Rev. Gary Schulte for the recognition of significant anniversaries of Authorized Ministers with standing in an Association of the Conference. Certificates were given to Rev. Gil Healy for his 25<sup>th</sup> and to Rev. Alden Blake and Rev. Robert Curry for their 50<sup>th</sup> anniversaries.

[break]

### STATE OF OUTDOOR MINISTRIES

Rev. Mollie Landers Hatt began her report by reminding all that each local congregation has their own church camp. Although there are plenty of numbers to report (315 campers from 65 churches in 8 states, 15 sessions of camp, 13 staff, 59 volunteers, and the tiered pricing brought in an additional \$9,000) the figures do not reflect the sense of family and community, the understanding that each of those attendees brought back a piece of the mountain to shine some light into the world, and there was growth in faith and understanding for all who participated in the Outdoor Ministry program. Horton Center is a safe space to be transformed and a gift of the spirit to campers and their families.

### PRESENTATION on ZIMBABWE PARTNERSHIP

Rev. Michele Bagby Allan reported first that there are now three new partnerships for a total of forty seven New Hampshire churches. A trip to Zimbabwe in August marked the first Young Adult delegation within the Ukama partnership. The group attended the Annual General Meeting and the Christian Youth Fellowship. Rev. Allan played a video highlighting the partnership churches, with the delegation experiencing Zimbabwe culture and hospitality through their sharing of song, dance, and prayer.

### PRESENTATION ON RESOLUTION (attachment 8)

One resolution, submitted by the Clergy Support Ministry, entitled *Resolution in Support of a Continuing Education Policy for Authorized Ministers* was presented by Rev. Rebecca Maccini. She made the motion “to adopt the *Resolution in Support of a Continuing Education Policy for Authorized Ministers*.” Since the motion came from a committee, it did not require a second.

*Rev. Maccini* explained that, the committee of the chairs of the Association Committees on Church and Ministry (CoCM) would be responsible for developing a single policy outlining requirements for continuing education for authorized ministers among the seven Associations in the Conference by June, 2016. And that, once developed, it would be disseminated to the CoCMs in the fall through meetings or mailings. It would be included in the packet of Annual Meeting Delegates, placed in Weekly News in November and be implemented in January, 2017.

Discussion: Several people spoke in favor of the resolution. That it is incumbent upon each chair to bring it to each Association because of the significance and importance. There should be recognition that not all ministers are full time or UCC. There should be a process for each single person when accomplishing this goal.

With no further discussion, the motion “to adopt the *Resolution in Support of a Continuing Education Policy for Authorized Ministers*” passed unanimously.

### ADJOURNMENT and BENEDICTION

Moderator Neal Cass declared the meeting adjourned at 4:10. The meeting closed with a responsive prayer.

Faithfully submitted,  
*Martha Clement*