

2012 CONFERENCE REPORTS

AFRICA PLANNING COMMITTEE

For the year beginning July 1, 2011 and following, Marion Grant and Dorothy Hollenbeck are serving as co-chairs of the Africa Planning Committee, supported by committee members Oscar Harrell, Alexx Wood, Tsitsi Moyo, Stewart Lanier, James Blair, Aida Fernandez, Richard Harding, and Marcelle Dotson.

For the several years of its existence, the Africa Planning Committee has been focused on our Conference's relationship with the West Angola Conference and the management/ disbursement of funds designated to the West Angola Covenant through the Together for Tomorrow Capital Campaign. The majority of those funds have now been dispersed, and we are awaiting reports on the progress of these programs. We can then work together with our brothers and sisters in West Angola to find ways to seek additional financial support for ongoing programs, and to work on building relationships through delegation visits.

We will continue our efforts in the next quadrennium with strong focus on support for and nurture of our relationship with West Angola, however, we are also seeking to respond to our sense that God is calling us to expand our vision. It was decided at the Sept 2011 meeting that in order to live up to our committee name of the Africa Planning Committee, we needed to learn about some of the other ministries in Africa that are being supported by, or are of concern to, our local churches throughout New England, and to see if there are ways that this committee can be supportive of those efforts. We contacted Africa-related pastors in our conference, as well as local churches we knew of that had Africa-related ministries, and invited them to attend our December meeting so that we could hear from them. We were able to hear from several of our pastors, lay people, and local churches about their Africa-related ministries that were not currently visible or supported much beyond their own local efforts.

Based on what we heard that day, it was decided that an Advance Special application would be jointly prepared to include some of these current ministries where there was interest in partnering and serving with the Africa Planning Committee. Our hope is that this arrangement would also accommodate future ministries that want us to work with them to help engage our local churches both in education around the needs are their particular ministry and to seek financial and spiritual support. For the 2013-2016 quadrennium, three initial ministries are included in the application: the West Angola Covenant relationship, the Ghanaian Ministry of New Covenant Church in East Hartford, CT, and Bikes Not Bombs in Africa with Rev. Stewart Lanier involved in this ministry.

We are excited at the opportunities this will provide for these ministries and for our local churches to become more engaged with them. Once this application is approved, we will begin making plans for outreach to local churches. This will require quite a bit of time and energy, so we ask for your prayers as we seek to more fully live up to our committee name in the months and years ahead.

Respectfully submitted by: Marion C. Grant, Co-Chair

AFRICA UNIVERSITY

**"When you pass through the waters, I will be with you;
and when you pass through the rivers, they will not sweep over you.
When you walk through the fire, you will not be burned;
the flames will not set you ablaze." – Isaiah 43:2**

At its inception, many doubted that the dream could be realized. Yet, in February 2012, Africa University launched a year-long celebration of its 20th anniversary. It has quite a story to tell.

"We serve a faithful God," says Dr. Fanuel Tagwira, Vice Chancellor. "As we now celebrate 20 years of existence, we can say 'Ebenezer', for this far the Lord has taken us. He will surely take us further because we serve a God who finishes what he starts."

Recalling the challenges the University faced during Zimbabwe's economic crisis in 2008-2009, Tagwira noted that "God was on our side...other universities, primary and secondary schools, and hospitals closed, but Africa University students never lost a day of classes." For this, Tagwira offered his thanks to The United Methodist Church for its responsiveness and unwavering support.

In 2011, the New England Conference was one of twenty-seven annual conferences that paid 100 percent of their apportioned share of funding to Africa University. The University is profoundly grateful to the leadership and local congregations of the New England Conference for their generous apportionment contributions to the Africa University Fund.

Enrollment at Africa University is at an all-time high. The current total population of 1634 students is 42% higher than it was for the 2010–11 academic year. There are 23 African countries represented in the student body. At Africa University, male and female students are almost evenly balanced—something that bodes well for increasing the participation of women in decision-making and leadership roles in Africa.

New programs are helping Africa University to grow and remain relevant to community needs across the continent. New academic offerings include undergraduate degree programs in Computer Science and Laboratory Science as well as graduate degree programs in Child and Family Studies, and Public Policy and Governance.

The University is preparing to launch online distance learning. Online training options will focus on areas such as practical theology, health, and business. The initial target countries for Africa University's online distance learning outreach are Angola, Côte d'Ivoire, Democratic Republic of Congo, Liberia, Mozambique, Nigeria, and Sierra Leone.

In June 2011, 349 students from 19 African countries graduated. The graduating class was comprised of 69 graduate students receiving master's degrees, and 280 undergraduate students receiving bachelor's degrees. The Class of 2011 swelled the ranks of Africa University graduates to more than 4,000 since first opening its doors in March 1992.

In their home countries, graduates are addressing critical issues of hunger, poverty, disease, lack of knowledge, and conflict, all of which prevent millions of people in Africa from enjoying God's promise of abundance (John 10:10; Jeremiah 29:11).

At 20, Africa University is part of a crucial feeder system for nurturing a new generation of principled leaders in Africa as evidenced by the number of graduates who are evangelists, pastors, lecturers and administrators of schools, seminaries and universities.

"Many believe that Africa University, voted into being by the 1988 General Conference, is the most exciting ministry that The United Methodist Church has ever founded," says Tagwira. "It is a model of connection; shared responsibility; and best of all; it is a tangible witness to how United Methodists live out the Word of God in a chaotic and self-centered world."

This year, encourage your church to give 100 percent of its Africa University Fund apportionment. The Africa University Fund supports day-to-day operations. Your support helps young people acquire the tools and skills to spread the Gospel of Jesus Christ, heal communities, enable dignified living, and foster hope. Thank you for believing in and supporting Africa University.

For more on Africa University, visit: www.support-africauniversity.org or like us on Facebook

James H. Salley, Associate Vice Chancellor for Institutional Advancement, Africa University
March 1, 2012

ANTI-RACISM STEERING COMMITTEE

The Anti-Racism Steering Committee (ARSC) was created by the annual conference in 2008 to coordinate some of the anti-racism ministries of our conference. This group has representation from established bodies (Commission on Religion and Race, Board of Ordained Ministry, Board of Laity, the Bishop's Office, etc.) and also includes others with broad experience in this work.

One major element that the ARSC has pursued has been the support of pastors and key laypersons in congregations that have experienced cross racial/cross cultural appointments. We have provided resources, and members of the ARSC have been in telephone contact with these pastors and laypersons. We seek to be supportive in these ministries.

We continue to assess whether these supportive efforts in cross racial/cross cultural appointments have been useful. We welcome your comments in this regard.

During 2011, Community Change and the ARSC developed a survey for persons who have participated in anti-racism workshops in our Conference during the past 10–15 years. The results are posted on the Conference website. We have also established a Facebook page.

In October, our Steering Committee gathered for a daylong event with a similar group of folks from the New England Synod of the Evangelical Lutheran Church of America (ELCA). Our paths in anti-racism efforts have been on a parallel track

for a decade or more, and our meeting was an opportunity to explore ways in which this work might be strengthened for both of us.

As we look ahead, there are many challenges in anti-racism work in our midst. Our own Steering Committee is composed of overextended individuals who do their best to bring energy to this work. We often feel, however, that more energy and initiative is needed. Also, we need to establish a more regular rhythm of anti-racism training opportunities. We hope that we may work with the ELCA sisters and brothers in this.

Finally, our vision is for a church and a conference in which racial justice is "written on the heart" of every United Methodist and is integral to the thoughts and actions of every faithful person.

February 2012 – Ernest Belisle, Maria Coleman, Eric Dupee, Lisa Fagerstrom, Oscar Harrell, Sophia Harrell, Dot Hollenbeck, Wendell Luke, Ricka Marsh, Jim McPhee, Jung Sun Oh, Don Rudalevige, Vicki Woods.

BOARD OF CHURCH AND SOCIETY

During the last year the Church and Society Committee continued its mission to “provide education and action on issues confronting the Church consistent with the Social Principles and the policies adopted by the General Conference.” The following are some of the highlights of our ministry.

- Following the 2011 annual conference, we have delivered more than 1400 cards and signatures to House Representatives and Senators in New England states urging them to vote for Dream Act providing a path- way to citizenship for children of the undocumented.
- Continued to provide leadership in establishing the Justice For Our Neighbors (JFON) program in our conference area. JFON is a national United Methodist Immigration Hospitality program organized by the United Methodist Committee on Relief.
- The Divestment task force continued its faithful work in identifying companies that support the unjust and illegal Israeli occupation of Palestinian land.
- The Addiction Prevention and Recovery Team led worship services in local churches and offered conference-wide training.
- Reconciling Ministries provided a Reconciling Ministry Training event for the individuals and congregations.
- Through our grant program we supported “Christians Supporting Community Organizing,” “Dismas House-Homeless Shelter/Advocacy,” “Hopkinton Celebrates Peace,” “New England School of Christian Mission,” and “Witness Trip to Palestine.”

To carry out the ministry of social justice, we continue to structure our work through the ministries of “Designated Passion.” We have eight areas of designated passion. Each ministry is led by one or two members of the committee, who are responsible for organizing and carrying out its ministry. The following is the list of passions:

Addictions and Prevention Recovery Team – Philip McClintock- works on the issue of addiction/prevention and offers training workshops and healing and recovery services in the local church

Economic Justice/Affordable Housing – Gary Richard – works on the issue of economic justice, especially on affordable housing

Immigration Task Force – We Chang – works on the issue of immigration reform

Labor Justice/Workers’ Rights – Laurel Scott- advocates for workers’ rights and labor justice

Mental Illness/ Homelessness – brings awareness to the issue of mental illness in the local churches and advocates for the rights of the mentally ill

Middle East Justice/ Divestment – Bill Aldrich – works on the issue of a just peace in Israel/Palestine

Reconciling Ministries – Leigh Dry – works on challenging the conference on the issue of inclusiveness, especially on the issue of sexual orientation

Climate Change Task Force – Marla Marcum – works on environmental justice issues

I would like to express my deep thanks to the members of the committee and all who have worked together to bring the Kingdom of Gods’ justice and peace during the last eight years when I have had the honor to share this ministry as a chair of the committee. It was a humbling yet inspiring opportunity to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with God and with each other.

Anyone who is interested in any of the above areas of justice ministry is welcome to join one or more of these passionate ministries. Anyone who sees the need of a new area of justice ministry is welcome to add to our ministry to further the work of bringing God's reign of peace and justice on New England and beyond as it is in heaven.

We Chang, the Chair

BOARD OF GLOBAL MINISTRIES

We know that all things work together for good for those who love God, who are called according to His purpose. (Romans 8:28 NRSV)

The New England Conference Board of Global Ministries is charged "to maintain the connectional relationship and provide for global ministries responsibilities related to the objectives and scope of work of the General Board of Global Ministries..." (§633.1 BOD). To fulfill this charge, the Conference Board, in the second year of its existence, has added members who are assigned to work in specific missional areas, i.e. refugee ministries, health and welfare, etc. This expansion of the Board, as it strives to be in accord with its Disciplinary mandate, is important for the relationship with the General Board and the interpretation of its work to the member churches of the New England Conference.

As reported last year, there is still the need to develop more leadership at the district level. While there has been some success in recruiting district Volunteer-in-Mission Coordinators, there are still many openings for District Disaster Response Coordinators and for District Secretaries of Global Ministries. Anyone interested in filling a district mission position is invited to express that interest to the Board.

A decision was made to attempt to meet in different churches across the Conference and invite the mission committees of those churches to meet with us and present an overview of their work in their communities and beyond. Since the report to the Annual Conference in 2011, the Board has met three times, and it was especially pleased to see the work being done at St. James UMC in Merrimack, NH, where a "mini-hub" has been organized to respond to a variety of missional needs. Using space in the church that was not occupied, the Missions Committee has prepared a site for receiving items for UMCOR kits, a room for sorting and assembling them, and a temporary storage area for kits brought from surrounding churches on their way to larger hubs. Items for layette kits are sewn and knit in another room, and the site is open with a receptionist on a regular schedule. In addition, a food pantry is operating to serve local people in need. St. James had other ministries too numerous to include here, but this is a fine example of a church in mission with the broader community.

Two resolutions with support from Global Ministries are before the annual conference session this year: one to engage the Conference in the "Imagine No Malaria" campaign, and one to encourage support for Moscow Theological Seminary. We commend these to members as worthy of thoughtful consideration.

This year, Fay Flanary is retiring as the New England Conference Secretary of Global Ministries. She has been a faithful servant in this position, working tirelessly to expand the mission work of the Conference and relate it to the General Board. Fay goes with our blessing and gratitude for her many years of service; she will truly be missed on the Conference Board for the knowledge she brought to the table, as well as her grace-filled spirit and deep commitment to her calling.

Finally, those in attendance at the Mission Breakfast at the 2011 annual conference session were enthusiastic supporters of the Board, and for that we are grateful. We hope that many more will join us in 2012 to learn more about mission projects and future plans for the work of mission and ministry of New England Conference.

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit. (Romans 15:13 NRSV)

Respectfully submitted,
Rene Wilbur, Chairperson

BOARD OF LAITY/CONFERENCE LAY LEADER

By virtue of our baptism and professing of membership, we are all called to the ministry of the "Teachings of Jesus." I am clearly reminded of this in paragraph 607 of the Book of Discipline that charges the Conference Lay Leader with the responsibility for fostering awareness of the role of the laity both within the congregation and through their ministries in

the home, workplace, community and world in achieving the mission of the church (to equip, connect and support local, regional and global ministries to make disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world).

As I have traveled across the conference, at the Annual Conference sessions and at other meetings, I have distributed the booklet “The United Methodist Church Making Disciples of Jesus Christ for the Transformation of the World” or referred to other information and literature. I believe that learning has limited value unless it is taught or shared. How often do we attend meetings without the information being shared or being given the opportunity to share with the local church? The Rev. Dr. James Scott, a colleague and co-author of “Restoring Methodism”, says that “The local church is the most crucial component for accomplishing what Jesus prescribed for our participation in the Kingdom of God on earth. It is the key vehicle for making disciples of Jesus Christ and equipping the saints for ministry and to serve Christ in the world.”

To accomplish the above, it is important for there to be cooperation, collaboration, prayers, discernments and other processes among laity and clergy. Bishop Reuben Job offers three simple rules in his book, “Do No Harm, Do Good and Stay In Love With God.”

The Board of Laity and a steady growing number of clergy and laity in the conference have a strong desire and need to be able to talk and communicate with each other through a process of “Holy Conferencing Principles.” These guidelines were presented by the Council of Bishops prior to the 2008 General Conference. The biblical reference was Colossians 3:12-16a,17. It reads – As God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, clothe yourselves with compassion, kindness, humility, meekness and patience. Bear with one another and, if anyone has a complaint against another, forgive each other; just as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive. Above all, clothe yourselves with love, which binds everything together in perfect harmony. And let the peace of Christ rule in your hearts, to which indeed you were called in the one body. And be Thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly...and whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God the Father through Him. A total of ten “Holy Conferencing Principles” emerged from the process. The Board of laity presented 1200 laminated cards with the principles printed on them to persons in attendance at the 2011 Annual Conference session. In addition to the 1500 cards made by the Rev. Dr. David J. Abbott for members of his district, many hundreds more have been requested and distributed by laity and clergy, Numerous training, workshops, discussions and sermons have been presented on the “Holy Conferencing Principles.”

The following are some of the involvements by the Conference Lay Leader during the past year:

- I was selected as a member of the African Heritage Delegation to Israel/Palestine during July, 2011. The trip was sponsored by the Interfaith Peace Builders in Washington, D.C. The 14 members had experiences as civil rights participants.
- Developed and participated in training for the Board of Laity by Sandy Jackson, Director of Laity Ministry for the General Board of Discipleship. She provided very basic and comprehensive information which was spiritually centered.
- Participated in Fall and January Vermont churches with the Bishop, District Superintendent and District Lay Leader.
- Northeastern Jurisdiction meeting on January 27, 2012 in Charleston, West Virginia.

Unfortunately, we do not have the allocation of space to provide more definitive information about the many involvements and participation. Therefore, more information may be shared through our catalyst and other possible meetings.

Oscar W. Harrell, II

BOARD OF ORDAINED MINISTRY

The Board of Ordained Ministry continues its commitment to serving Our Lord Jesus Christ in the New England Annual Conference. We recognize and value and necessity of covenant groups for clergy. To that end we have developed the Provisional Leadership Academy with the wisdom and creative spirit of The Rev. Dr. Wendell Luke and The Rev. Sandra Bonnett-Kim. Participation in the Academy is part of the process of vocational discernment. We believe that this will help provisional members form habits and practices of accountable covenant ministry. This will be a requirement of all those commissioned in the order of deacon and elders.

We believe that the Board should also be held accountable to be a covenanted body so that we may develop, guide, discern support, and hold accountable clergy leadership for the work of the church. We hope through the covenant to inspire us to cultivate a culture of call in the church through our conference and connectional ministries.

The Board’s policy is being revised to reflect some of the many changes that have occurred over the past quadrennium.

Anti-racism training is included in every Board gathering. This is important work to help us to be accountable in every way possible. Raising the awareness of racism is critical to the work of the Board.

We are entering a new quadrennium and that brings change to the Board. We are grateful to have served with a committed team of caring individuals. We pray for discernment as new Board members are nominated and elected at Annual Conference. The new Co-Chairs of the Board have been elected and appointed. They are The Reverends LaTrelle Miller Easterling and Peter Hey. We pray God's blessing on them. They have begun the training process so that the current co-chairs can help to guide them.

We appreciate the leadership of Bishop Peter Weaver and the Cabinet and their willingness to work with us. As always, we are ever grateful for the steadfastness and faithfulness of our Registrar, Susan Evans.

Respectfully submitted,
Lynn McCracken and Ernest Belisle – Co-Chairs

BOARD OF PENSIONS

One of the regular activities of your CBOP is to regularly review the financial position of the Conference's pension and health benefits funds, and as required to recommend to you various rate, copayment, and plan changes. While we were saddened at the loss of our brother and GBOPHB representative Bill Neuert, we have been blessed to have Ron Coleman serve as our current representative from the GBOPHB.

There are also every year a number of unique pension and health care issues brought to our attention. While we deal with each of these individually, the Board is working on developing policy and procedure that will help us to assure that all of these issues are dealt with in a consistent manner.

As a result of the Conference Fair Trade Resolution, your CBOP held a conference call with Vidette Bullock Mixon from Wespeth, the investment division of the GBOPHB. The Board approach is first to work with other stockholders, meeting with company executives to attempt to influence decision-making. Only after exhausting all possible efforts would they encourage other action.

At our regular meeting in November, Vidette shared with us regarding recent negotiations with the Hershey Corporation and previous work of the Board encouraging the Kroger chain of supermarkets to include fair trade coffee in their product line. While acknowledging that supermarkets and retailers can play a major role in making fair trade products available, the Board position is that "In the end, it is the consumer who makes the conscious choice to pay a higher price for products knowing that the price goes directly to the producers and their communities and assures small farmers a living wage." For a fuller story on this work with Kroger, you can find a full article at http://www.gbophb.org/sri_funds/oyb/200506.asp.

Finally, as a result of our conversation, Sharon Jones, CBOP member and president of Spirit Wind (fair trade markets in the New England Conference), Bill Burnside, Conference Treasurer, and Bonnie Marden, UM Foundation of New England, met with the Social Principles Committee of the GBOPHB at their fall meeting that was serendipitously happening in Cambridge, MA during the next week. A more complete report on this issue will be distributed at Annual Conference.

At last year's Annual Conference, you charged the CBOP, in consultation with the Board of Church and Society, Equitable Compensation Commission, and others to create a study committee to make recommendations on ways to have affordable health and dental insurance "that is equitable and just for pastors, employees, churches, and parishioners alike." [New England United Methodist Church Annual Conference Journal 2011, from Resolution 207, page 55] While as of this writing this study committee has not been created, we hope to have it formed by Annual Conference 2012 and to provide you with an interim progress report. The health insurance landscape however, is very unclear at the moment. With the United States Supreme Court scheduled to hear a 26-state challenge to the federal health care law in late March, a ruling may not be issued until early summer or even late fall. When a ruling is made, the possibility exists that it will change not only federal law but state law as well. Therefore, any study of health and dental insurance must be undertaken for at least one more year so that any recommendations made are consistent with the law of the land and can be implemented if the Annual Conference agrees with the recommendations.

The positive influence and assistance that the Preacher's Aid Society has provided to the New England Conference of the United Methodist Church cannot be adequately stated in a few lines of an annual report. Beyond the good work that they do directly, their representatives to the Board provide valuable insight and common sense to our deliberations. This Board urges you to not only learn more about the Preacher's Aid Society, but to endorse and support their valuable mission.

While we will continue to have Bill and Thelma as important members of our team, we will miss the leadership of Charles Stewart, who is stepping down as Chairperson, having served since 2004, the last four years as Chairperson. May God bless us all.

Charles Stewart, Chair

BOARD OF TRUSTEES

It is my honor and privilege to submit this Annual Report on behalf of the New England Annual Conference Board of Trustees.

By Discipline, the Conference Trustees have overall responsibility for the custody, care and maintenance of Conference-owned properties. This includes Conference parsonages, office facilities, camps and retreat centers and local Church properties which have been declared closed or abandoned. This past year, the Trustees discharged those responsibilities in several ways:

District Parsonages Committees – This past year saw the first steps toward implementation of the District Parsonage Committee program which vests more responsibility for care of District Parsonages with locally appointed committees. The results have been mixed. We need more individuals to step forward and assume these responsibilities. We continue to work toward a unified system of reporting and planning so that long-term strategic funding of needs can be accomplished. As a consequence of personnel changes, the Trustees expect to sell our property in Scarborough, Maine this coming spring.

Office/Business Properties – In 2011, the Trustees accomplished one objective with the sale of a former Church property on Tremont Street in Boston. We are still struggling to appropriately dispose of the former Conference offices on Commonwealth Avenue in Boston. We continue to look for opportunities for District offices, particularly in New Hampshire. The Church office facility in Lawrence continues to be in need of significant capital renovation, particularly in HVAC and related systems. The Conference will need to develop a plan for funding needed capital repairs.

Camp and Retreat Centers – During 2011, the Trustees visited four (4) of our five (5) Camp/Retreat properties, with a visit to the fifth facility scheduled for the spring. We have been impressed with the wonderful ministry being accomplished at these places, and the dedicated work of our Site Directors. We have had the opportunity to see the physical needs and challenges at each site. Major investments were made this year in the parsonage at Rolling Ridge. Funds were made available for a roof replacement at Mechuwanna. The effort to construct a new parsonage at Aldersgate is underway with an expected completion in 2012.

Abandoned Properties – The Trustees continue to administer properties of abandoned/closed churches. We currently are in the process of selling a property in Hope District. A property in Riverton, Vermont, previously listed for sale, was taken off the market to use as a mission center in response to weather-related natural disasters in the spring. As this report is being written, it appears we will assume responsibility for two (2) properties before Annual Conference; one in New Hampshire and one in Western Massachusetts. Please pray for the years of faithful service of these congregations.

The Trustees also oversee the Conference Unit Insurance Program, the New England Grant Program and Trustee Loan Program. The past year has been an eventful one for the Insurance Program and I encourage you to review the separate report submitted by Insurance Committee Chairman, Bruce Maxwell.

In 2012, we are looking forward to:

- A visit to Covenant Hills Camp in Vermont in the spring.
- A new parsonage at Aldersgate.
- Planning a new District Parsonage for C&WM and continued discussions on a possible relocation of our Vermont District Parsonage
- Sale of the Scarborough, Maine property and some disposition of Commonwealth Avenue in Boston
- Continued work on the District Parsonage Committee process.

Finally, I want to express my appreciation to the members of the Trustees for their dedicated service. I want to especially recognize Mary Tremblay for her many years as the Treasurer of the Trustees. It will indeed be difficult to replace her, and we pray for the Lord to lift up and bring forward a person with a willingness to support the work of the Trustees in this critical role.

Respectfully submitted,
 Bernard H. Campbell
 President – Board of Trustees
 New England Annual Conference
 United Methodist Church

BOSTON UNIVERSITY SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Dear Colleagues in Ministry,

Greetings from Boston University School of Theology, one of your United Methodist partners in mission! Thank you for your prayerful support through the past year.

A Year to Remember!

- **New Faculty:** BU School of Theology welcomed six great faculty: *David Jacobsen*, Preaching; *Rady Roldan-Figueroa*, History of Christianity; *Phillis Sheppard*, Pastoral Psychology and Theology; *Pamela Lightsey*, Assoc. Dean for Community Life & Lifelong Learning; *Cristian De la Rosa*, Dir. Contextual Education with Community Partners; and *Wanda Stahl*, Dir. Contextual Education with Congregational Partners.
- **Church Connections:** Bryan Stone and students continue to develop new church starts. Faculty and students are working with local churches and boards and agencies, and our graduates are giving strong leadership throughout the church.
- **Global Connections:** Students have come to STH from more than 19 countries on 6 continents. Travel seminars have studied this year in Jamaica, Israel and Palestine, and Turkey (Ephesus). One seminar roamed the Boston region, with students from BU and Russia, who visited and worked together in diverse ministries.
- **Intentional Living Communities:** We have two dynamic intentional living communities – Theology House and Green House – and are working toward a third!
- **Contextual Engagement:** We continue to build great partnerships with churches and service agencies, both local and global. We welcome others!
- **Community Building:** Community life is buzzing with dynamic weekly worship, daily Morning Prayer, and afternoon Bible Study. Students have delighted in work days, Saturday reading retreats, a weekend “Beside Still Waters” retreat, and two spring break journeys: Seminary Singers Tour in Florida and a “Vocation Vacation.”
- **Sustainability:** The School stepped up its green offices, composting, and carbon reduction. We were even a BU Challenge winner!
- **Reclaiming our Tradition:** We dedicated the *Truman D. Collins Chair of Global Christianity and Mission* and honored the Collins Professor Dana Robert. We also honored Distinguished Alums: *Sally Dyck* ('76, '78), UM Bishop, Minnesota; *Philip Wogaman* ('57, '60), ethicist and leader in church and academy; *Janet Yarlott Horton* ('76), pioneer as army chaplain; *Barry Lynn* ('73), public theologian on church and state; and *Jeremy Smith* ('06), young tech-savvy alum and UM pastor in Oklahoma.
- **People's History:** We had a fabulous lecture and interview with James Lawson, UMC pastor, Civil Rights leader, and prophet!

Still to Come!

- **Alumni/ae Connections:** Find interesting articles on STHConnect (<http://www.bu.edu/sthconnect/>). Watch also for regional alumni/ae gatherings (send ideas to Jaclyn Jones, jkjones@bu.edu or 617-353-8972).
- **Matriculation and Alum Weekend:** On 19 September 2012, we will welcome an outstanding class of new students, install the new Walter G. Muelder Professor of Social Ethics, and honor the School of Theology Class of 1962.
- **Lifelong Learning:** Webinars are unfolding! Stay tuned!

With gratitude and prayer,
Mary Elizabeth Moore
Dean, Boston University School of Theology

CAMP ALDERSGATE

This year has been an exciting year at Camp Aldersgate!

Camp Aldersgate is being rediscovered by congregations as an integral part of their congregational development strategies.

Last summer was our biggest summer in many years, and we expect this summer to be even bigger! Our retreat ministry is also flourishing, with our facilities usually booking up for more than six months in advance!

We are busy developing our summer camp staff into youth ministry and youth development professionals. All campers are counseled by professional camp staff members who undergo 40 hours of training before setting foot on site, and have an additional two weeks of on-site training. Our leadership, waterfront, and ropes course staff go through an additional week of training in their specific areas.

This summer will be exciting as we continue to build our Living Arts program. We will be welcoming a professional Russian dance troupe as part our program this year, which will feature a performance of Fiddler on the Roof Jr. Our volunteers continue to bring integral and unique skills to our campers. As we have seen cuts to the arts in schools and communities, Living Arts continues to be a place where campers can come to explore their artistic gifts.

We will celebrate the addition of restrooms to our waterfront cabins with a dedication on June 10. This addition was made possible by the generosity of Together for Tomorrow donors and volunteer groups like NOMADS, the Westborough UMC Appalachian Service Project Group, and several United Methodist Men groups.

We have utilized the TFT funds to make big changes to Aldersgate. Our projects included the waterfront cabin restrooms, heating and insulating the Dining Hall, a Dining Hall kitchen renovation, a new waterfront amphitheater, new roof on the Retreat Center, ADA compliant restrooms in the Retreat Center, new ropes course, and several other projects. We still have more work to do, and you will see more information about that in the near future.

This year, we were blessed by a grant of \$68,650 from the Champlin Foundations. This grant has helped us to renovate our waterfront area, purchase new watercraft, renovate an old bathhouse into an arts & crafts center, and purchase beds for the waterfront cabin renovations. We also received \$5,000 for camperships from Champlin and \$5,000 for alumni development from the United Methodist Foundation of New England.

Camp Aldersgate is proud to be accredited by the American Camp Association (ACA), and two of our staff serve as accreditation visitors, visiting other camps in New England to help ensure camp standards are high.

Our staff has also been honored in many ways. Our director, Jenn Becker Carpenter, was elected president of the Rhode Island Association of Camps, and has moderated a panel of religious camp leaders at the Tri-State Conference of the ACA. Lee Carpenter, our associate director, is working with a group at the national ACA to write a new Basic Camp Director Course. Camp Aldersgate was also recognized as a Pioneer in Camping at the ACA National Conference.

Jennifer Carpenter

CANDLER SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

This Candler School of Theology prepares real people to make a real difference in the real world. Our commitment to authentic discipleship and relevant ministry enables us to develop uniquely well-rounded leaders who are challenged academically, encouraged spiritually, and immersed in Christian service from the first day they arrive on campus.

As one of the 13 official seminaries of The United Methodist Church, Candler is grounded in the Christian faith and shaped by the Wesleyan tradition of evangelical piety, ecumenical openness, and social concern. As one of seven graduate professional schools of Emory University, Candler provides a rich context for learning and formation supported by the extensive resources of a top-tier research university. As a school located in the major metropolitan area of Atlanta, Candler offers students a learning environment that reflects the highly diverse communities of our 21st century world. There is no better place for ministry preparation that addresses our major denominational priorities: developing leaders, starting and growing churches, ministry with the poor, and improving global health.

Candler's student body continues to reflect the diversity and breadth of the Christian faithful. Our enrollment stands at 479, with 372 seeking the Master of Divinity, 64 the Master of Theological Studies, 19 the Master of Theology, 17 the Doctor of Theology, and 7 enrolled as Special, Non-Degree students. The total student population is 22% U.S. ethnic minority, 8% international, and 50% women. Forty-four denominations are represented, with 52% of MDiv students being United Methodist. The median age of our entering class of MDiv students is 26, with 50% of total enrollment under thirty.

An extraordinary gift of \$15 million from the O. Wayne Rollins Foundation will make possible the construction of the second phase of the school’s new building. In recognition of this gift, the first building—a 65,000-square-foot facility completed in 2008—will be named in memory of the late Rita Anne Rollins, the first grandchild of the foundation’s namesake. The new building will house the Pitts Theology Library, additional classrooms and offices, group study areas, and the Wesley Teaching Chapel.

Candler and The General Theological Seminary (GTS) in New York have formed an innovative partnership that includes the sharing of library resources, collaborative educational programs, and the exchange of both students and faculty members. The partnership began this fall with the transfer of 90,000 volumes from GTS to Candler’s Pitts Theology Library, and will continue to expand this year via student/faculty exchanges and continuing education programs.

We continue to emphasize preparing our students for leadership in an increasingly global context, and now offer 17 academic exchanges with theology schools across five continents and 15 countries, including many related to The United Methodist Church. In addition to our ongoing summer internship program with the Methodist Church in the Bahamas, this year’s travel seminars included the Middle East and World Methodist Evangelism Institute evangelism seminars to Colombia, Indonesia, and Israel.

Our Lifelong Learning events strengthen the church by providing opportunities for clergy and lay leaders to learn more about the practice of ministry. Our Fall Conference, “The Art of Preaching in the 21st Century,” brought to campus some of the most respected names in preaching, including Otis Moss Jr. and James Howell. The Spring Conference, “The Singing Church,” gathered experts to lead an exploration of the best practices and emerging trends of congregational song.

Candler remains steadfastly committed to making theological education financially feasible. Although our operating budget essentially remained flat this year, we dedicated \$4.5 million to financial aid. Seventy-seven percent of eligible students received Candler-based financial aid, with the average award covering more than two-thirds of tuition.

Candler draws considerable strength and inspiration from its relationship with The United Methodist Church. Our ability to fulfill our mission of educating faithful and creative leaders for the church's ministries in the world depends upon your support, gifts, and prayers. Thank you for the countless ways you advance this vital ministry in the life of our denomination. Visit us in person in Atlanta or online at candler.emory.edu to see firsthand how Candler prepares real people to make a real difference in the real world.

Jan Love
Dean and Professor of Christianity and World Politics
Candler School of Theology

COMMISSION ON EQUITABLE COMPENSATION

2011 was a very busy year for the Commission with several seasoned members rotating off the working group and a number of new members welcomed in the second half of the year. This meant a challenging Fall period with new members tackling a learning curve along with an increased number of applications. With God’s help we handled the challenges and approved 43 applications for salary assistance for the year 2012.

The Commission met on eight occasions during 2011. There were four face-to-face meetings and four teleconference meetings. A total of \$192,945 for salary grants was distributed to 50 charges throughout the year.

Grant distribution for 2011 is outlined in the chart below.

<u>District #</u>	<u>District Name</u>	<u>Percentage of Distribution # Charges</u>	
1	Northern Maine	20.09	14
2	Mid Maine	2.35	2
3	New Hampshire	3.73	4
4	Tri-State	22.18	7
5	CT/WMA	9.79	5
6	Central Massachusetts	3.64	2
7	Metro Boston HOPE	12.39	6
8	RISEM	11.76	3
9	Vermont	14.07	7
TOTAL	<u>\$192,945</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>50</u>

For 2013 the Commission recommends minimum salaries of \$37,450 for Elders and \$33,875 for Local Pastors. The Commission also recommends that the minimum Reimbursable Account be increased from \$2750 to \$2900. There are no proposed additions for years of service increments this year.

The Commission welcomes questions and requests for assistance from districts and local churches regarding the guidelines and application forms for salary grants. Supplemental assistance is also provided with strategic plan formats, audits and financial records. The following individuals are members of the Commission. They are listed with the Districts in which they reside:

Mr. Roy Bruton, TRI
 Ms. Margrit Dutta, NH
 Mr. Kenneth Edgerley, MME
 Mrs. Rose Gwinn, MET
 The Rev. Deb Estey, VT
 The Rev. Jeffrey Hooker, MET
 The Rev. Dr. Pat MacHugh, (D.S.) NME
 Pastor D J Martin, CTWMA
 The Rev. David Nicol, NME
 Pastor Alecia Reeves-Freeman, MET
 Mrs. Sue Rudalevige, TRI
 The Rev. Laurel Scott, Chairperson, CTWMA
 Mr. James Stephen, CMA

Respectfully submitted
 Laurel Scott, Chair

COMMITTEE ON FINANCE AND ADMINISTRATION (CFA)

The Conference Committee on Finance and Administration has met regularly during this past year doing the work assigned to them per The Book of Discipline. 2011 completes the first full year with the Vermont churches as part of the New England Conference and that transition is working well. Conversation around issues of unpaid Mission Shares has led to a resolution to be presented to the Annual Conference for a Jubilee. These unpaid amounts can lead to discouragement for local churches and make moving forward difficult. If passed, local churches that pay 100% of Mission Shares each of the next 5 years will receive 100% reduction of that debt, 20% for each year.

Oversight of Mission Share Reviews continues to be an important responsibility of the CCFA. While the administration of the application, review of the information/need and dialog with the local church is the responsibility of the District, it is CCFA's task to make the final approval. Churches seeking to be 100% churches can apply for Mission Share relief over a three-year period, during which a plan will be agreed upon to help the church reach their goal. Applications for MSR can be found on the Conference website and must be approved by the District Superintendent and district MSR Committee. A resolution is being presented to the 2012 Annual Conference to continue this important program.

CCFA is given the tasks surrounding the finances and administration of the annual conference. The members of this team bring many gifts and abilities in finances and other experiences, but they bring so much more. They come to this work with hearts first guided by faith in Jesus Christ. They approach their work with deep concern about the impact of decisions on local churches, pastors and the many important missions. For many years CCFA has concluded its meetings with a report from the Justice Monitor. At each meeting one person listens closely to the conversation and the decisions made, with an ear toward issues of justice.

We are grateful for the commitment of so many local churches to pay 100% of their Mission Shares. It makes a significant difference in the ministry of our conference. We recognize that some of our local churches are facing financial challenges and find it difficult to reach 100%. We appreciate every effort these churches make to financially support the important work of our Annual Conference and the United Methodist Church around the world. Despite the efforts of our local churches, the bottom line for 2011 was worse than 2010. This has caused us to revisit the 2012 budget and find ways to cut expenses in this new year.

In November, William Burnside completed 3 years as our New England Conference Treasurer and we have presented his name to continue in the next quadrennium.

A word of thanks goes to our churches and pastors for their commitment to participating in the work of making disciples of Jesus Christ through the transformation of the world. Every dollar that is sent in Mission Shares helps make that mission and transformation possible.

Barbara Cann and Bruce Young
Co-Presidents

DEACONESS ABUNDANT LIFE COMMUNITIES

Deaconess Abundant Life Communities, founded by Methodists, has been serving older adults since 1889 as the New England Deaconess Association. The Deaconess provides aging services and accommodations to meet the changing needs of older adults. With dedicated staff and excellent facilities, we continue to adapt in order to provide high-quality support and care to all of our residents. Our Core Values Statement highlights the foundation for all we do:

Deaconess Abundant Life Communities...

- Cares** compassionately for our residents, staff, volunteers, and their families while sharing
- Abundant life** with an attitude of joy, hope and commitment;
- Reaching out** to our community with a holistic focus on body, mind and spirit in an
- Environment** which leads to continued excellence and financial strength as we
- Strive** for new and innovative ways to better serve older adults.

The Deaconess has transformed and built new retirement communities in Concord, MA (Newbury Court), Northampton, MA (Rockridge), Provincetown, MA (Seashore Point), and Gilford, NH (Wesley Woods). The Groves in Lincoln, MA is a community we operate in partnership with Masonic Health Systems of Massachusetts. Through these transitions, we continue to honor our heritage on a daily basis by being grounded in our core values and our unchanging commitment to caring and compassionate service. We surround every resident with a sense of abundant life that touches body, mind and spirit. Each of our staff members see what they do as more than just a job. We are called to help to bring fulfillment into people's lives, with whatever challenges they might face. On a day-to-day, moment-to-moment basis, we feel the responsibility we have to each resident, and are dedicated to surround them with a love that reflects God's love for them.

At Wesley Woods in Gilford, NH, homes are being occupied by retired pastors, church members and folks from the broader community. In Concord, we have both market rate and affordable independent living apartments, a memory support neighborhood to meet the needs of older adults with Alzheimers, skilled nursing and rehabilitation and Adult Day Care. In Northampton, Rockridge has independent and assisted living, as well as memory support for Alzheimers. Seashore Point, in Provincetown provides condominiums, skilled nursing and outpatient rehabilitation services. In Lincoln, The Groves provides cottage homes, apartments and affordable rental options. At Wesley Woods and at Wesley by the Sea in Wells, ME we are proud to be partnering with Preachers Aid Society to support retired pastors and their spouses.

We celebrate our historical connection with the United Methodist Church and proud to provide leadership in elder care and ministry within the Conference. Our President and Chief Executive Officer, Rev. Herb Taylor, is an ordained elder within the New England Annual Conference and provides his guidance to help Deaconess Abundant Life Communities meet the changing needs of older adults into the future. Please feel free to contact us at (978)369-5151 if you have any questions or needs concerning our organization, issues of long term care, or retirement living and we would be glad to assist you. You can find out more about the Deaconess at www.nedeaconess.org.

Herb Taylor

DIRECTOR OF CONNECTIONAL MINISTRIES/ASSISTANT TO THE BISHOP

I am blessed by the company I keep.

As Director of Connectional Ministries, I have the privilege of working with a wide variety of people in many ministries in New England (and across our connection). It is clear to me that God's Spirit is moving in us, through us, and in spite of us. In many places and many ways, we reflect a compelling witness of new life, hope, compassion, justice, and peace in Christ for our neighbors and our world.

New England United Methodists are indeed stepping out in ways that are offering Christ and making disciples for the transformation of the world. Rolling Ridge Retreat Center and our camps (Aldersgate, Covenant Hills, Mechuwana, and Wanakee) increasingly are reaching out to new children, youth, and adults. From the Hispanic/Latino “family camp” and Bible Institute to Emmaus and Chrysalis experiences to an increasing number of churches/individuals involved in mission experiences and disaster response ministries (around 150 Early Response Team members have been trained), we are blessed and moving in new ways. Emerging new faith communities, regional youth events, spiritual life events, renewing ministries in some of our congregations, and actions for justice are making impacts for individuals and communities.

My role in all this, as part of the job title implies, is to serve as a connecting link, to make sure that the right and left hands know what each other is doing, to help coordinate resources, and to focus our efforts in terms of the central mission and ministry of our conference and denomination. In short, my ministry seeks to enable us to work together more effectively, to keep in touch with many people and ministries of our conference, and “to keep the main thing, the main thing” (as Stephen Covey has written).

I am blessed by the company I keep.

Supporting and connecting with much of the above work are conference staff persons and parish consultants who are dedicated, gifted, and devoted in their support of local church and conference ministries. I give thanks to God for each of them: Parish Consultants: Evelyn Johnson-Moore (coordinator), Donna Bivens, Greg Carpenter, Stewart Lanier, Barbara Lemmel, Bonnie Marden, Jerry Rardin, Betsy Waters; Camps and Retreat Center Directors: Kelley Alderman, Jennifer Carpenter, Michael Moore, Larry Peacock, Norm Thombs; Program Staff of the Conference: Rick McKinley, Rosemary McNulty, Alexx Wood, Lori McKinley, Emma Escobar.

During 2011 Curtis Brown left our staff to be part of the Pacific Northwest Conference work in congregational development. We welcomed Rick McKinley in July to serve in this area of ministry for us. Also in 2011, Wanda Stahl left our staff to join the staff and faculty of the Boston University Theological School. Since September, Lori McKinley has been assisting us with administrative support for congregational development ministries. In December, Emma Escobar joined our ministry team as coordinator of Hispanic/Latino Ministries for our conference. In 2012, we will be looking again at our staffing patterns to determine our need for help in areas formerly in Wanda’s portfolio as Director of Christian Formation.

As I say, I am blessed by the company I keep.

And so are you.

We are called to be agents of transformation through Christ. May we continue to give thanks to God for all the ways that we are blessed and gifted, and may we be renewed in our walk in making disciples of Christ for the transformation of the world.

James T. McPhee, February 2012

DISASTER RESPONSE MINISTRIES - NEW ENGLAND CONFERENCE

2011 was a year of cataclysmic natural disasters across our world. Compared with the tsunami in Japan or the tornadoes in Joplin, the New England experience has been mild. Yet, based on our long experience, last year in New England was one of record breaking disaster events that continue to impact the lives of thousands of people throughout our region.

Early in 2011, Lake Champlain flooding was followed by unusually severe rainfalls that flooded the Winooski River in Vermont. Late in the spring, western Massachusetts experienced rare tornadoes. Late summer brought a hurricane to the region which resulted in devastating flooding in Vermont, northwestern Massachusetts, and northern New Hampshire.

For a region that, in recent memory, has endured occasional severe rain, snow, or ice storms, this past year has tested our capacity to support local churches and communities in responding to these situations of disaster.

In the midst of these disasters and their impact, we have been blessed by our partnership with UMCOR in our conference. Thanks to the generosity of United Methodist members in churches across our district who have supported the efforts of UMCOR, UMCOR is able to give back to our communities in the form of grants. Through UMCOR, we have received several grants to support disaster response work throughout our region. Working closely with federal, state, regional, and local authorities, we have been able to provide early response teams, case management training, and support for the clean-up and rebuilding that continues in all of these regions.

Many, many persons in our congregations and communities are active in this ongoing work. Among the individuals in these ministries who have been very active for our Conference this year are: Conference Disaster Coordinator Doug Spanks,

together with Stacey Bullock, Vermont Disaster Response Coordinator Bill Elwell, and UMVIM Coordinator Dave Stackpole together with John Blackadar.

As we continue forward, our Conference seeks to recruit and train disaster response associates in each of our states and to strengthen the network of trained persons who can respond to future disasters. In such a widespread region as ours with the frequency of disaster events increasing, the need for additional human resources is great. More skilled volunteers will support the efficiency of response to such events and facilitate the continued work of helping our communities recover from natural disasters.

“The King will reply, ‘Truly I tell you, whatever you did for one of the least of these brothers and sisters of mine, you did for me.’” Matthew 25:40

The Disaster Response Ministries in the New England Conference continue to strive to minimize human suffering and help “the least of these”.

James McPhee

DREW UNIVERSITY THEOLOGICAL SCHOOL

Drew offers the MDiv, MA, MAM, STM, DMin, and PhD degrees, as well as certifications in Camp and Retreat Ministry, and Spiritual Formation. Drew offers 100% tuition scholarships to all United Methodists who meet all admissions requirements and have a 3.5 undergraduate GPA or higher.

Last fall’s new class was composed of 73 masters and 13 PhD students. In addition, we also admitted 58 DMin students who started the program in the various cohorts around the country. We began the new academic year with a new Associate Dean for Academic Affairs in Dr. Morris Davis, Associate Professor of the History of Christianity and Wesleyan/Methodist Studies and welcomed two new faculty members and a post-doctoral fellow. Dr. Kate Ott joined us as Assistant Professor of Christian Social Ethics, Dr. Elías Ortega-Aponte as Assistant Professor in Afro-Latino/a Religions and Cultural Studies, and Dr. David Evans as a post-doctoral fellow position and Lecturer in the History of Christianity.

I had the privilege of visiting Drew alumni in Hong Kong, Taiwan, Malaysia, Singapore and South Korea. Our alumni spoke with great appreciation of the education they received at Drew and the professors who taught them. Drew’s influence in Korea, in particular, is historic. Henry G. Appenzeller, a graduate of Drew in 1885, brought Methodism to Korea. Appenzeller’s connection with Drew has brought hundreds of students from Korea to Drew. Today, we have alumni teaching in seminaries and universities and serving churches in Korea.

We are living into a “majority minority” faculty, staff and student body at Drew that trains leaders for the church that will be soon serving in a “majority minority” world. Forty-five percent of our faculty is African/African Americans, Asian/Asian Americans, and Latino/a. We have almost an equal number of women and men on the faculty.

We received a grant of \$75,600 from the GCORR Action Fund for the purpose of widening the ethos of multi-ethnic theological education. The grant will assist us in a thorough curriculum review with the hopes of enhancing every aspect of the multi-lingual, multi-ethnic, and multi-cultural reality at Drew.

Below are just a few other ministries that make me proud to be associated with Drew.

Bishops in Residence at Drew

This past January, Bishop Alfred Johnson taught a class in urban ministry. He recently shared with me some reflections about his experience teaching here at Drew: “I am deeply impressed with the quality, depth and reflective experience of the students in my class. Both their reflection, inquiry and contribution to the field of urban ministry greatly deepened my own theological reflection and praxis.”

In January 2013, Bishop Peggy Johnson of the Eastern PA and Peninsula Delaware Conference will teach a class on Ministry with People with Disabilities. In January of 2014, Bishop Jane Middleton of the Central PA Conference will teach a class on Ministry and Health.

United Methodist Liaison at Drew

The Rev. Jeff Markay continues to work with our UM students by introducing them to the leaders and resources within our denomination. He helps them navigate the process toward commissioning and ordination as well as with issues of discernment. We are also grateful to have the Rev. Susan Worrell as the Deacon Liaison on campus who shares resources and wisdom with those hearing a call to the Ministry of the Deacon in the UMC.

Center for Clergy and Congregational Health and Wholeness

In the fall of 2011 representatives from GBOPHB came to Drew to meet with Dean Samuel and me to explore developing a partnership between the two institutions to address issues of clergy health. This cooperative partnership will lead to two things in 2012, namely, the launching of a longitudinal study on the health habits of seminary students while in seminary and for five years upon graduation and a conference, bringing together deans and presidents and staff members from the 13 UM seminaries, to be held in June on Clergy Health and Theological Education.

We at Drew look forward to working with the good and faithful people of the UMC as we forge deeper friendships in the shared ministry of making disciples of Jesus Christ for the transformation of the world.

Kah-Jin Jeffrey Kuan
Dean, Drew University Theological School

EARLY RESPONSE TEAM (ERT)

This program began in New England in 2010. We held 5 training sessions (Mansfield, MA, York-Ogunquit, ME, Wesley UMC Worcester, MA, Bow, NH, Ipswich, MA) that year. We trained 45, issued badges to 44 plus 6 trained in the former Troy Conference. In 2011, we held 3 training sessions (Readfield, ME, Essex Junction, VT, Williston, VT) and trained 28, issued badges to 27. In addition Dan Randall was certified bringing the total trained and certified to 79.

Five classes are already scheduled for 2012;

- Milford UMC Milford, NH 11 people completed training on January 7, 2012
- Cornerstone UMC, Saco, ME 16 people completed training on February 4, 2012
- Trinity UMC, Springfield, MA Scheduled for Sat. March 10, 2012
- Northside UMC, Brewster, MA Scheduled for Sat. April 28, 2012.
- Carter Memorial UMC, Needham, MA Scheduled for May 19, 2012

We expect the classes not completed to average 10 attendees bring the total to approximately 136. For more information or to sign-up for a class contact Dave Stackpole umvimnecumc@charter.net (603) 244-0713.

The first ERTs were deployed in 2010 in Southeast MA, RI, and CT. In 2011 ERTs were deployed in VT and NH. In VT Early Response Teams from VT and Worcester, MA worked with National Civilian Community Corp (NCCC) and Southern Baptists Men on homes flooded by the Winooski River. Teams were called out in VT and NH for Irene Flooding.

ERT personnel are trained to be responsive on a moment's notice, but this has not been the case. The biggest challenge we've had is getting ERT personnel to answer the call. We expect only a third to respond on any given day, but we have experienced far less of a number. Other conferences in the Northeastern Jurisdiction (as well as in other jurisdictions) have had the same disappointing results. As a consequence, UMVIM and UMCOR are planning to revise the program this year.

David A. Stackpole
ERT Coordinator

EPISCOPAL RESIDENCE COMMITTEE

In 2011, the Episcopal Residence Committee welcomed four (4) new members, Rev. Janet E. Smith-Rushton, Hugh Connor, Unyoung Park, and Edward Torell. We had a busy year getting to know each other. The other members of the committee are Bruce Maxwell and myself. Bishop Weaver and Jim McPhee work with us as we have responsibility for the care and oversight of their residences in Reading, MA.

The committee conducted its business with meetings at the Episcopal Residence. We replaced the old furnace that was emitting some type of fumes at the Bishop's house. For both properties, we changed the vendor that handles the lawn and clean-up services and snow removal.

We will be very busy, from March 1, 2012 through August 31, 2012 in preparation for the new Bishop.

James Stephen
Chair

GARRETT-EVANGELICAL THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

Garrett-Evangelical Theological Seminary continues its commitment to its core purpose: to know God in Christ and, through preparing spiritual leaders, to help others know God in Christ. We are faithful to the charge of preparing bold and articulate leaders who share the transforming love of Jesus Christ.

Last fall the seminary welcomed ninety-three new students, raising enrollment to 382, a nine percent increase. More than thirty religious traditions, four continents, twelve countries, and thirty-two states are represented in the student body, including 204 United Methodist students.

The seminary awards more than \$2 million in institutional financial aid. The newly-created Linked in Ministry Scholarship is a 100 percent scholarship awarded to the first student admitted to Garrett-Evangelical from his/her annual conference who is a candidate for United Methodist ministry and maintains a 3.3 GPA.

Loder Hall and Stead Hall (formerly Lesemann Hall) reopened last summer. Loder, a Gold-certified LEED facility, includes a student center, student lounges, a state-of-the-art classroom, a dining hall, two small chapels, modern residence rooms with private baths, and guest suites. Stead Hall includes a conference room and library offices and houses the Stead Center for Ethics and Values.

The seminary participates in the Green Seminary Initiative, incorporating an ethic of care for creation into the identity and mission of the institution. We are a founding participant in the Blessed Earth Seminary Stewardship Alliance, a collaborative project for the purpose of preparing future church leaders to be catalysts for positive change around issues of environmental sustainability.

A partnership with Associated Mennonite Biblical Seminary (AMBS) gives Garrett-Evangelical students the opportunity to obtain a concentration and/or certificate in Peace Studies, and AMBS students can meet United Methodist ordination requirements through a certificate in United Methodist Studies earned through Garrett-Evangelical.

Plus is the first of its kind cooperative executive education program of Garrett-Evangelical and Northwestern's Kellogg School of Management. The three-year leadership certification program for seminary graduates and professionals in ministry includes six seminars led by experts in non-profit leadership.

Intersection, an innovative continuing education opportunity, incorporates readings, online presentations, and reflection on contemporary issues of life and ministry. Continuing education credit is available.

Garrett-Evangelical helps develop bold local pastor leaders through the UMC Course of Study School. This quality education and formational experience, guided by a strong and committed faculty, offers classes in English, Spanish, and Hmong. In addition to the on-campus residential model, Garrett-Evangelical supervises three extension locations: Indiana, Illinois Great Rivers, and Upper Midwest (Iowa).

The seminary continues to raise \$2 million to endow the Rueben P. Job Chair in Spiritual Formation, ensuring that the seminary remains at the forefront of developing and enhancing spiritual formation studies at the certificate, master's and doctoral levels.

The expanded Doctor of Ministry program offers four tracks: Congregational Leadership, African American Congregational Leadership, Spiritual Direction, and Mission in the Contemporary United States. Our D.Min. program is also a portal to the Association of Chicago Theological Schools' D.Min. program in preaching.

We are proud to serve the United Methodist Church, and we ask for your continuing prayers and support as we pursue our mission and our renewed vision.

Philip A. Amerson
President

INSURANCE COMMITTEE OF THE BOARD OF TRUSTEES

The Insurance Committee of the New England Conference Board of Trustees met one time since the last Annual Conference to monitor the Conference Unit Insurance Plan. The committee also communicates on a regular basis via e-mail for votes and other communications that do not require a physical meeting. For the period 8/1/2011- 7/31/2012, Church Mutual Insurance Company is our primary insurer, providing coverage for Property, General Liability, Crime, Automobile and Excess/Umbrella Liability as well as our Workers' Compensation coverage that renewed in January 2012. Fred C. Church Insurance of Lowell, MA continues as the Conference's broker, providing service on claims, loss prevention, risk management and general insurance questions.

2011 was a challenging year for the Insurance Committee. We had three concerns about the August 2011 renewal:

1. Utica Mutual, our insurer since August 2007 was looking for a 39% premium increase for all churches.
2. The Conference had very large property claims relative to the premiums we paid in three of the past four years.
3. The overall property/casualty insurance market, especially property which is our biggest premium portion, had begun to tighten.

The Insurance Committee went to the market and solicited competing proposals from several other insurers besides Utica Mutual. Working with our Conference insurance agent, Fred C Church Insurance, we negotiated very positive renewal terms with Church Mutual, the largest insurer of churches in the United States. Despite all the above adverse factors, we were able to leverage the power of the Conference and renew all of our policies with only a slight increase of 4% from the expiring August 2010-2011 program.

There is one significant difference between the expiring Utica Mutual program and the new Church Mutual coverage under the Property coverage. Previously, we had one Blanket Limit coverage covering all churches for the total values of the whole Conference, in excess of \$600 million, which was enough to cover any single loss to any church. With Church Mutual, each church will have its own Blanket Limit for all buildings and contents plus a 25% cushion. It is more critical than ever that each church is insured for full replacement cost. Fred C Church will be contacting those churches that we believe are 50%-60% underinsured. We want to do everything we can to be sure that no individual church suffers a major Property loss and was not carrying adequate limits to pay for repairing, replacing or rebuilding any church property.

The Insurance Committee continues to monitor local church payments of their insurance billings and challenges every church to make payments on time and in full. The committee thanks all of the churches that paid their premium in full by October 15, 2011 with the 9% discount or enrolled in the Automatic Clearinghouse Account process with a 7% discount through the OAS and Vanco Services, LLC. We also want to thank all the churches that faithfully pay their premiums each year.

For the upcoming renewal period, the Insurance Committee with the help of Fred C. Church, our agent, will provide the best coverage and rate possible for the 2012/2013 renewal period.

The Insurance Committee would like to thank Fred C Church Agency for all that they do for our Conference and especially working with the churches in the Vermont District during their transition to the New England Conference Insurance Unit Plan by August 1, 2011.

Over the 17 years that the Unit Plan has been available to all churches in the Conference they have been able to use the savings in premiums to carry out more mission and ministry within our conference and around the world. The Conference Unit Insurance Plan is an example of our connectional life as a conference and how together, with God's help, we can do more than we can do separately.

Grace and Peace,
Bruce Maxwell, Chairperson

MARRIAGE AND FAMILY MINISTRIES

Families and singles alike benefit from the love and acceptance of a church family, relationship education and enrichment, and effective support during crises and transitions. For all types and sizes of families, the mission of Marriage & Family Ministries is to provide resources and support to help:

- Nourish all persons to grow toward their God-given potential
- Develop and maintain healthy relationships
- Deal with whatever transitions and crises arises

Effective ministries for all kinds of families include not only marriage preparation and enrichment, but also relationship education for children, youth, and young adults; parenting training and support (for single as well as married parents); and specialized supports for stepfamilies, those involved in elder care, and those in transition and/or crisis (such as unemployment, addiction and other illnesses, relationship breakdown, and divorce).

[www.neumc.org/marriageandfamily]

As Marriage and Family Ministries Coordinator for the New England Conference, I continue to share information and resources to encourage and support local church ministries for strengthening marriages and families of all configurations. I maintain lists of upcoming events and resources available in New England at www.neumc.org/marriageandfamily and also share this information through the Catalyst and through an email list of persons who have expressed interest in marriage and family ministries. I continue to gather names of interested persons, respond to inquiries, review resources, and donate

books and curriculum kits to the conference resource library and to the Bangor Theological Seminary Library in Portland, Maine (these may be accessed through interlibrary loan from your local library). See list of Marriage and Family Ministries Resources Available in New England at www.neumc.org/marriageandfamily and a more comprehensive list of Marriage and Family Ministries Resources which is posted at www.marriagelovepower.net. As a Marriage and Family Ministries Consultant for the UM General Board of Discipleship, I also have articles describing “best practices” for various aspects of marriage and family ministry posted at www.gbod.org/marriage and www.gbod.org/family. These articles address marriage preparation, relationship education for youth, parenting, domestic violence, and other topics and can be downloaded and copied to use as handouts.

In addition to a Learning Center during Annual Conference, I presented a workshop on communication at the winter retreat for clergy and families and another at the Casco Bay Cluster winter workshop. I also led a communication workshop for My Sister’s Keeper, a ministry of the Cape Elizabeth (Maine) UMC.

Please send stories of your effective marriage and family ministry practices for me to share with others. Please also let me know if you are not yet receiving my occasional email updates and announcements and would like to. You can find additional information at www.marriagelovepower.net, www.gbod.org (Minister to People/By Relationship), and at www.smartmarriages.com (the most complete source of relationship education articles and resources available).

Jane P. Ives, New England Conference Marriage and Family Ministries Coordinator
10 Quaker Lane, Portland, ME 04103, 207-797-8930, Janelves@aol.com

MCH, INC. – Rockland, Maine

MCH (formerly Methodist Conference Home) continues its commitment to foster the wellness and independence of underserved and at-risk populations in Mid Coast Maine, particularly older adults and individuals with disabilities. We do this through a somewhat unique combination of programs, which focus on giving the people we serve the assistance they need to remain in their own homes (be that an apartment in the Methodist Conference Home or the old family homestead) and also to move about and be as active as they want to be in the communities where they live.

We continue to be grateful for our roots in the United Methodist Church and for the support of the old Maine Conference that brought us into being and the New England Conference that continues to guide, nurture and support us as we live out our call to be Christ’s hands and feet in the world..

2011 was another year of growth for MCH. Again our transportation programs have been the leading edge of that growth. With a new 2 year grant from the Federal Transit Administration we were able to expand the “mobility management” program begun last year that helps individuals access a variety of transportation options. We are especially excited about our Transportation Coupon Program that allows people with disabilities access to local taxi providers at half fares. The first year of our new bus service in Brunswick was very successful and we are operating an expanded schedule there this year. Transportation is at the top of the list for most service providers in our service region and we are involved in numerous discussions about ways to help people get where they need to go.

We were also able to secure the help of an Americorps volunteer to help us build a more vigorous activities program for residents in the housing facilities we own and/or manage in the Rockland area. We will be looking to find ways to continue this program that is so important in brightening up the lives of our residents.

We are also excited to report that, with the help of a development consultant, we have been putting together a fundraising arm for the organization called the MCH Neighbor Foundation. We have secured the volunteer help of some wonderful people in the community who are willing to serve as the first board of the foundation and who bring with them some excellent skills and experience that will be invaluable to us.

Along with our work on expanding our fundraising efforts, we continue to look at our administrative needs. We are well into the search for a new accounting software package that will enable current accounting staff to work more efficiently.

We have been fortunate to remain on a sound financial footing in spite of the economic climate and the fallout that has had in state and federal funding. Our transportation program had another good year last year in spite of some severe cutbacks in Medicaid funding. We are still waiting for a potential reorganization of the delivery of Medicaid transportation that may have additional negative effects on our funding

Our housing programs are strong, providing housing for approximately 180 individuals. Supportive services (meals, housekeeping, laundry, emergency call services, etc) are provided to more than 40 people in our housing facilities. Our

Meals on Wheels program reaches more than 250 individuals in the course of a year. We provide transportation for nearly 3,000 individuals in 4 counties, providing a total of approximately 150,000 rides – roughly 600 rides every weekday.

We are blessed to have the support of the New England Annual Conference in the work that we do.

Methodist Conference Home, Inc. Board of Directors

2011 – 2012:

<u>Name</u>	<u>Representing</u>
Class of 2012	
Richard Sheppe	Community
Vacancy	Methodist Laity
Class of 2013	
Jacquelyn Brannen	Methodist Clergy
Charlotte Gulezian	Methodist Laity
Ann Parent	Methodist Laity
Class of 2014	
Pastor Elizabeth Bilodeau	Methodist Clergy
Jeffrey Nims	Methodist Laity
Katherine Carrigan	Community
Class of 2015	
Jane Sturgeon	Methodist Laity
Daniel Day	Methodist Laity
Rev. George Hodgkins	Methodist Clergy
Ex Officio	
Jim Pierce	Coastal Trans Board Chair
Rev. Beverly Stenmark	Mid Maine District Superintendent

Lee Karker, Executive Director

NEW ENGLAND CONFERENCE SCHOOLS OF CHRISTIAN MISSION

The 2011 New England Cooperative School of Christian Mission took place at Southern New Hampshire University and included children/youth, a Korean language one-day event and an English language one-day event, as well as the longer weekend class.

The Topics:	Study Leaders:
Discovering Haiti	Mike Clark, Elizabeth Beane
Joy to the World: Mission in the Age of Global Christianity	Lorene (Rene) Wilbur
Coming Out on the Side of Grace: Forgiveness and Reconciliation	Latrelle Miller-Easterling, Tom Porter We Hyun Chang, Korean Language
Forgiveness and Reconciliation: Coming Out on the Side of Grace (Youth Study)	Catherine Jansen
Krik-Krak: The Story of Haiti (Children’s Study)	Sarah Laflamme

The 2011 Committee would like to express a resounding Thank You to all of the leaders and participants for a successful weekend school and one-day event. We registered 65 adults (6 men and 59 women), as well as 5 children and 1 youth for the weekend. The one-day event had 30 registered for the class in Korean, and 17 for the English class.

In addition to the above leaders we want to thank Evie Doyon, our song leader, and Kay Ellis, our accompanist, for their leadership during our worship services. We also appreciate District Superintendent Dave Abbott’s message and welcome to the New Hampshire District brought during our opening worship. The dedication of all of the above gifted leaders to the New England Conference School of Christian Mission makes our school and event one of the most inspirational offerings within our Conference.

Our 2012 School and one-day events will take place again at Southern New Hampshire University July 27-29, 2012. Classes include Immigration and the Bible, Discovering Haiti, and Poverty. Once again, attendees will take one course with an opportunity to attend a one hour overview of another class. We will have eight hours of class time with additional time in the class sampler and worship. Teachers for the weekend school include Glory Dharmaraj and Laurel Scott for Immigration and the Bible, Jung Sun Oh and Rene Wilbur for Poverty, and Belinda Gould and Elisabeth Kennedy co-teaching the class on Haiti. Our children's teacher is Sarah Laflamme and Naomi Sam Kpakra will teach the youth.

After experimentation with a one day English event the planning team made some adjustment and invited three teachers to train and be dedicated to the one-day events, July 28. The first teacher, Jeong Hwan Kim will help us to continue our tradition of offering a class in Korean on Immigration and the Bible. Lisa Swett will teach the one-day class on Poverty and we have not yet confirmed the teacher for the one-day English event on Immigration and the Bible. Event attendees will have five hours in class and one worship service.

Both programs include men, women, youth and children. We hope that you will consider attending this inspirational program with your family. The cost is reasonable and the facility is impeccable. Please plan to be with us July 27-29, 2012 at Southern New Hampshire University.

We hope that Districts in the New England Conference will offer a one-day class in their District at a time and location convenient to the District. Potential teachers include the regional school trained teachers at our Conference School, as well as student participants in the Conference School.

Blessings to all and thank you for allowing us to be in service to the Glory of our God!

Sharon G.W. Jones, Dean, on behalf of the administrative team: Marie MacDougall, Assistant Dean; Patricia Neal, Secretary; Roberta Bragan, Treasurer; Kim Gontarz, Registrar; Willard Robinson, Publicity.

NEW HOPE UNITED METHODIST REGIONAL MINISTRY

New Hope Regional United Methodist Regional Ministry (New Hope) is a Greater Springfield regional urban ministry founded for the purpose of actively engaging United Methodist leaders and members in vital community partnerships. New Hope was established by action of the Annual Conference in 2009 to provide for the appropriation of funds remaining after the closing of the New Hope United Methodist Church (Chicopee Falls/Liberty Street merger) and the development of a regional urban ministry. The New Hope Board of Directors is composed of clergy and lay members of the following Springfield United Methodist congregations: Trinity UMC, Wesley UMC, La Restauracion as well as former New Hope UMC leaders now members of Chicopee Faith UMC and St. Paul's UMC, Ludlow.

Since its organization New Hope has been developing local church relationships with a particular focus on the ministries of Trinity United Methodist, Wesley United Methodist and La Restauracion. It is the mission of New Hope to enhance the local church ministry as well as provide new resources for expanding congregational-community partnerships. In 2011, New Hope provided financial support for two vital community partnerships, Trinity United Methodist Church and Rebuilding Together Springfield. The New Hope Board of Directors granted Trinity United Methodist \$20,289 to assist in the funding of an after-school program focused on neighborhood middle school students. New Hope also initiated a relationship with Rebuilding Together Springfield by providing a \$5,000 grant to support recovery efforts after the June 2011 tornado. New Hope has partnered with Rebuilding Together Springfield by organizing United Methodist volunteers and providing financial support for the April 28, 2012 "National Rebuilding Day." Additional grants to date include funding support for local congregational development and support of La Restauracion and Wesley UMC.

New Hope has also provided leadership for the organizing of a Justice for Our Neighbors (JFON) ministry based at Trinity United Methodist. Community partners from the public education, legal assistance, health care and social service sectors have joined Trinity UMC leadership in the organizing and development of the JFON model. New Hope board members look forward to providing the necessary support to bring JFON to the Springfield area.

New Hope is also committed to engaging United Methodists outside the urban center of Springfield and looks forward to partnering with the greater Springfield United Methodist churches to strengthen the ministry's presence and support new opportunities for mission and service.

In Christian service, Gary Richards,
on behalf of the Board of
New Hope UM Regional Ministry

OFFICE OF CONGREGATIONAL DEVELOPMENT

As indicated on the conference website, Congregational Development is a holistic approach to the development and growth of a congregation's ministries, participation, and impact on its community and world. The Office of Congregational Development continues to live into the goal set at last year's Annual Conference to create a Board of Congregational and Community Development, and expects to fully transition by the end of 2012. The work of Congregational Development continues to be a collaborative effort, including District Ministry Team, District Superintendents, District New Church Start Committees, our Parish Consulting Network, and several others.

Some highlights of our work in the past year include:

- Inside/Out School of Congregational Development featuring Jorge Acevedo and Margaret Feinberg. This event continues to be a place to inspire and equip our churches and leaders for ministry in today's world.
- Overseeing our Together for Tomorrow and Urban Ministry grant process. This year the grants supported 21 different projects with grants ranging from \$1000 to \$10000. Grant applications for 2012 are currently being available at www.neumc.org/cd and are due by May 15.
- With the help of Path1 (www.path1.org), training a team of assessors for new church planters as we continue to identify and equip people for the unique work of church planting.
- Creating a clear process by which new and existing churches can apply for funds through the Hebrews 11 resolution.
- Training, equipping and coaching new church planting pastors, as well as providing support and coaching for several redevelopment projects in the Conference.
- Supporting, connecting and training our network of Natural Church Development coaches who are working with churches throughout our Conference.
- Coordinating the recognition of the Denman Evangelism award, and, in partnership with the Board of Church and Society, coordinating the recognition of the Ziegler Preaching award.

This is an exciting year ahead for the Office of Congregational Development. We continue to see more new churches starting across our Conference, reaching new people in new places. As United Methodists across the nation, since January 2008 we have assessed and equipped more than 1,000 potential lay and clergy planters and have started more than 440 new churches. This is an increase of nearly 60% over last quadrennium. Of the new churches we've started, nearly 50% are racial-ethnic congregations. Here in the New England Conference, these are just a few things to which we are looking forward:

- Our first church planter bootcamp called "Launchpad" on August 10–12 in Stafford Springs, CT. Church planters from across the Northeast Jurisdiction will gather to gain skills under the guidance of Path One. We expect to have several teams from our own conference attend this event.
- The building of a Lay Missionary Planter Network (LMPN). The LMPN movement focuses on finding, equipping and then deploying lay people to start new faith communities in partnership with clergy and in populations and contexts in which traditional approaches have not proven fruitful.
- The 2012 School of Congregational Development "GoIn 2!" This year's event is November 16–17 at Grace Chapel in Lexington, MA, and features an amazing group of keynote presenters. The first is Ian Morgan Cron, an episcopal priest, author, and retreat leader. The second, Alan Hirsch, is one of the leading voices in Christianity today, and author of several books including "The Forgotten Ways" and "Untamed." Alan will be joined by his wife Deb, a dynamic leader and presenter. Third, we'll enjoy the music and worship leadership of Linnea Good, a songwriter and worship leader from British Columbia. As always, there will be dozens of workshops covering a wide range of topics, from worship to youth and young adult ministries to technology and everything in between. We'll be extending early registration to early March so that you can take advantage of the low registration prices for an even longer period of time. Stay up to date by going to www.newenglandschool.org.

Richard McKinley

PREACHERS' AID SOCIETY OF NEW ENGLAND

Once again we are pleased to share with you highlights from the ministry and mission of the 179th year of our Society. We continue to work on behalf of our pastors, active and retired, in primarily four areas: health care, housing, visitation and education. About 80% of our ministry is focused on the needs of our retired pastors and surviving spouses. The following spotlights our work this past year.

- We have now paid over 1.25 million into the Together for Tomorrow Campaign.
- We have visited in hundreds of retiree homes.
- We have provided over \$100,000.00 in emergency assistance.
- We had over 60 participants in our first summer "Clergy Camp."
- We had a very successful year of "Tending the Fire" including a new segment for clergy spouses.
- Eighteen retired clergy families are now living or have lived in our homes at Wesley Woods in Gilford, New Hampshire and Wesley by the Sea in Wells, Maine. We have 6 new homes that will be available this summer.
- We have sponsored several significant clergy family finance seminars with the United Methodist Foundation of New England.
- We have sponsored many retreat and luncheon occasions for our retiree community.
- Our clergy luncheon at the beginning of Annual Conference had almost 400 attending.
- We presented the 2011 Lifetime of Discipleship Award to Mary Pittman Wyatt and Beverly Abbott.
- We presented the 2011 Blaine and Lois Taylor Fellowship Award to The Reverend Daniel Weaver.
- We published For All Seasons, prayers and worship resources by Dr. John Winn, mentor of many "Tending the Fire" type clergy support programs across our Church.

Because They Serve

We are one year into the only Preachers' Aid Society Capital Campaign ever conducted for the support of our housing programs for retired pastors. This five year program has already generated commitments/payments of over \$600,000.00 for which we are deeply appreciative. As part of our commitment to mission, we presented Bishop Weaver with a check for \$15,000 in December for the Central Conference Pension Initiative.

Please consider helping us in this very meaningful drive either through support from your local church or individual donations! A number of churches are considering us as a mission component in capital campaigns for their needs. We can provide leadership for these.

Coming Attractions

Clergy Camp II – August 13 to 16, 2012 at Camp Mechuwana with Dr. Thom Fassett.

United Methodist tour in England, September 4 through 17, 2012 led by Reverend Don Rudalevige.

Please visit our sites online at www.preachersaid.org and www.wesleybythesea.org.

Respectfully,

David MacMahon, President; Thom Gallen, Executive Director.

ROLLING RIDGE RETREAT AND CONFERENCE CENTER

Rolling Ridge offers peace in a world of busyness and stress, silence in the midst of noise and competing voices, and the simple beauty of woods and water away from bright lights and blinking screens. We provide time to listen, space to rest, places to dream and plan. We continue to offer the hospitality of Christ to individuals and groups who are often mind-weary and body-tired.

Nearly 40 programs were offered during the year, including a sold-out Nurturing Passionate Spirituality Day with a keynote by Bishop Weaver, our popular retreat series, "A Day Apart for Busy People", our monthly drumming circle, and the beginning of Gateways to God, a two-year training program in spiritual direction and congregational formation. A special summer evening program with Nobel Peace nominee, Archbishop Elias Chacour from Palestine, brought record numbers for dinner, speech and a book signing.

We celebrate the reception of payment from the Town of North Andover for a conservation restriction on open space while preserving building rights on the land around the conference center and pool. The funds, invested in the United Methodist Foundation of New England, will be used for renovation and expansion of facilities.

New improvements to our facilities have made guests feel a gracious welcome:

- New lights and paint in the Lakeside Gallery Dining Room
- New carpet in the lower level meeting room
- Refinished wood floors in library and bedrooms
- New mattresses and chairs and Wi-Fi throughout the buildings

Summer picnics and pool events, our first Alumni Day, and a day camp for 300 children from Lawrence Community Day Care, kept us busy in the summer.

Outreach to the community included the dedication of the Lakeside Gallery with new lights and four art shows. Our Ridge Fest Wellness Event welcomed many to the estate and our services and a new December outreach, “Buy A Plate, Give A Plate” enabled us to host some deserving folks for a Christmas meal.

The Board of Directors adopted Vision 2013 to guide our selection of an architect to increase the number of bedrooms and bathrooms, and add an elevator and accessibility to our facilities and also to hire a development consultant as we move toward a capital campaign. A Donor Appreciation Tea began a new focus on gratitude as we move toward our 65th anniversary in 2013.

Thank you for your prayers and donations to Rolling Ridge. As a Conference Advance Special, we welcome your gifts of any size. We are also grateful for your support of the Together for Tomorrow Campaign, which has provided funds to improve our facilities.

Please think of us first when you plan a church overnight retreat, a personal retreat or a weekend picnic. Do plan early since weekends are very popular and we are often booked 6-9 months in advance.

Please continue to hold us in your prayers as we move toward a major renovation and expansion and continue to offer hospitality in Christ’s name. Please call us soon to book your personal or church retreat – we have mid-week openings most of the time.

Alumni, we would love to hear from you. Next Alumni Day is July 8, 2012!!

Check out the programs on our website and sign up to receive our bi-weekly news from Rolling Ridge – “a true oasis of quiet beauty and gracious hospitality.”

Larry Peacock, Executive Director
978-682-8815

www.rollingridge.orgwww.rollingridge.org

SEXUAL MISCONDUCT CONFERENCE RESPONSE AND INTERVENTION TEAM

Covering all New England states, the Response/Intervention Team responds and intervenes in sexual ethics issues. The varieties of sexual misconduct calls seems to be increasing as people realize the R/I Team exists and the Conference takes seriously this violation of the “sacred trust” given to church leaders. Clergy sexual misconduct cases are fewer than in former years but two clergy and other lay cases remain before us.

More victim-survivors are coming forward from sexual misconduct that occurred twenty and thirty years ago. Some of these violators surrendered their orders, some since died, and for others, charges can still be filed. Often victim-survivors remained silent for years fearing they “would be dragged through the mud”; however, when they recognized the continuing damage they suffer, see that the Intervention Team and Conference maintain strict confidentiality and offer help, the victim survivors often come forward.

Intervention for these victim-survivors means they can finally begin the path toward wholeness. This journey sometimes takes them back to the church, sometimes to places of helping others, and other times to realizing that healing is possible. Whether something happened long ago or yesterday, the Conference and the R/I Team take each case seriously and walk with everyone affected.

For more than a year, R/I Team training focused on cultural diversity of the church and community. Helen Son brought her experience and visions of the Korean church and culture, Charlotte Pridgen-Randolph and June Carter shared the African, African-American, and Caribbean perspective, and finally Jeffrey Hooker and Patricia Pena instructed on the Hispanic church and culture. The R/I Team also holds as a priority the diversity of its membership– culture, age, gender,

clergy /laity. It is important for the team to remember that all churches are not Anglo and that response to sexual ethics violations must carry justice and mercy in the same vessel with both cultural understanding and sensitivity.

The Conference takes sexual ethics violations seriously and calls on the R/I Team as part of the Bishop / Cabinet team that works on each case. When someone feels a sexual ethics violation has occurred, a call to the R/I Team coordinator, superintendent or bishop begins the journey toward healing and justice.

The R/I Team does not just respond to violations but also works toward prevention. Participants in Licensing School and New Pastors' Orientation hear the theological foundations under-girding sexual ethics, the damage sexual ethics violation does to victim-survivors, congregations, and even church leaders- clergy and laity. Because Licensing School training is so intense with myriad issues to learn, participants receive a packet of sexual ethics materials as resource for their future.

The R/I Team participated in leadership of the spring 2011 Bishop-mandated sexual ethics training for clergy. Nearly 1500 clergy and laity attended these sessions on two Saturdays in March in all corners of the Conference.

Marilyn Robb continues to serve on the national Inter-Agency Sexual Ethics Task Force. This allows us in our New England Annual Conference to be among the first to receive resources from the denomination and to offer materials and insights back to the denomination. New issues surface quickly in the culture of technology. Social media, cyber-safety, and pornography are new issues and are taken seriously on the agenda of the SETF. A full-time Director of the Sexual Ethics national team leads the SETF and a bishop now serves as a regular member.

The Doctor of Ministry project of one of the members of the SETF discovered that over two years ago there were thirty-five effective Response Teams in the United States. Upon completion a year later, her study revealed that only eighteen teams remained. Some of the denomination's leadership realize the importance of responding to sexual ethics violations while many wish sexual misconduct did not have to surface. Fortunately, New England's leadership understands the importance of quick and effective response to such violations and continues to be one of the most effective in the country. As we move into new Episcopal leadership, we work to maintain safety, justice, and mercy as a priority.

“In order to recover, you have to uncover.”

America Anonymous by Benoit Denizet-Lewis

Marilyn Owen Robb, Coordinator and the R/I Team

SPIRIT WIND

In 2007, several clergy-women from the New England Annual Conference traveled to Nicaragua to meet with teachers of the Igleisa de Christo (AICN) sewing schools to begin working together for fair trade. With assistance from Miguel Lezama in Nicaragua, we interviewed a representative of the labor unions, met with a free-trade zone government representative, toured a free-trade-zone factory, and visited a fair trade T-shirt company. We talked with the leaders of the AICN sewing schools discussing style, quality, and potential products. We placed our first order as on-consignment; Spirit Wind purchased the fabric and paid the women for sewing the product after it was sold.

Since that time, the women sewing for Spirit Wind have earned about \$4,000, been affirmed in their ability as seamstresses, and created a new relationship with Spirit Wind. They are now paid for their completed products when ready for delivery to the U.S. The women strengthened their skills as businesswomen and developed a relationship with Esperanza en Accion (Hope through Action), an in-country fair trade crafters cooperative. They took advantage of different training opportunities in accounting, inventory control, and marketing. Spirit Wind is grateful to Esperanza en Accion; for more about them, check out their website at www.esperanzaenaccion.org. The seamstresses have also improved their design creativity. For example, some of you have seen and purchased the three-way bag created by Marlene Betanco. This year, be sure to see the aprons created by Berthe, Aracelli, and Patricia from Leon.

For seamstresses, sewing machines are a constant concern. While in Nicaragua last December, we heard Marlene Rivera from Managua speak eloquently and emotionally about love and care for her sewing machine. Spirit Wind expresses gratitude to the United Methodist Women of Wesley Worcester for a \$500 grant for sewing machines. We budgeted an additional \$250 to establish a grant program to help our seamstresses purchase their own sewing machines. We are pleased to announce that two women from Leon will receive matching grants to help them purchase their first sewing machines.

Spirit Wind has also become a leader in the Annual Conference educating about fair trade in our churches and beyond. We hope you enjoyed the fair trade scavenger hunt last year and encourage you to look for a similar educational opportunity this year. A grant from our United Methodist Foundation led to the development of a program called “Fair

Trade as a Stewardship Discipline,” available for your cluster or district gatherings. Please contact Sharon Jones at 978-319-0132, if you are interested.

In response to our Conference Fair Trade Resolution, a Spirit Wind representative met with the General Board of Pensions Social Principles group. We learned about previous fair trade work of the Board and initiated relationships that may lead to further contact. In addition to conversation about fair trade coffee, we discussed the effort to encourage Hershey to purchase fair trade cocoa beans for their chocolate. Please visit our booth to learn more about fair trade chocolate. Finally, as a result of this meeting, Spirit Wind began exploring micro loan options for fair trade crafters.

We submit this report in appreciation for the support that Spirit Wind has received from the Annual Conference. The individual members and churches have been our primary support both in terms of purchasing merchandise and being open to hear the message of fair trade. We appreciate the initial work of Deb Shipp and Yong Ja Kim who have now moved on to other interests and the continuing support of Barbara Herber, Pat MacHugh, Sherry Langway, Gabriella Garcia and Linda Weaver. If you have questions, please do not hesitate to be in touch with Sharon Jones, mesophia565@gmail.com, 978-319-0132.

Submitted by Sharon G.W. Jones.

SPIRITUAL FORMATION INITIATIVE

The Spiritual Formation Initiative meets five times a year “to attend to the spiritual formation and spiritual life of the annual conference at all levels.” Believing that God is always at work in us and with us, the Spiritual Formation Initiative has sought to provide opportunities and resources for our clergy and laity to discover and re-discover this God connection. We are grateful for the ways God has indeed been active through the SFI programs and events of 2011.

In 2011, we planned the annual Clergy Spiritual Retreat with Bishop Hee-soo Jung as the retreat leader with the theme, Journey with Elijah. The event was held at Rolling Ridge in N. Andover MA with funding help from the Board of Ordained Ministry.

SFI partnered with Rolling Ridge in the fourth annual Nurturing Passionate Spirituality day with Bishop Weaver. A capacity crowd of over 70 lay and clergy attended.

At Annual Conference, SFI, created a prayer room, sponsored a breakfast, placed a prayer tent on the steps of the chapel, and offered a scroll for persons to write prayer concerns. Spirituality quotes from members of SFI were added to lunch boxes, and the Retreat in the Box – Taste and See was presented to new deacons and elders. Healing prayer and anointing was offered at designated times in the prayer room and also under the prayer tent on the steps.

Four members of SFI offered spiritual direction at the School for Congregational Development in November and members also set up a prayer room for participants.

SFI has been exploring ways to connect with the Districts, looking at creating some prayer and training experiences that could be offered to local churches. To help with this the SFI is developing a program called Fresh Air which includes a variety of 3-hour modules that can be held in local churches and will be led by trained leaders. The first of these programs, Deepening the Congregation’s Prayer Life, was piloted in 3 settings in the fall of 2011 and is now ready for wider use.

Another new program in the New England Conference, Gateways to God, led by The Rev. Wendy Miller, began in November 2011 with twenty-one participants, both clergy and laity. This two-year training program, held at Rolling Ridge, is for those interested in leading one-on-one or group spiritual direction, or congregational spiritual direction. Funding help came from the Preachers’ Aid Society.

In the works for 2012 are plans for The Way of the Child Training for those who are interested in this experiential children’s curriculum in the Companions in Christ program which will be in May at Rolling Ridge. There will be a retreat leaders training led by Susan MacKenzie in Burlington VT in June. The Upper Room Five-Day Academy will be held at Rolling Ridge the week of October 1, 2012.

In gratitude and service:

Yoo-Yun Cho-Chang, Evie Doyon, Sue Ellery, Beth Garnaas-Holmes, Cheryl Gates, Cynthia Good, Sam Johnson, Carole Kerr, Barbara Kszystyniak, Karen Lubic, Cathy MacGovern, Susan MacKenzie, Larry Peacock, Kathi Peterson, Joyce Ringleb, Paul Samuelson, Wanda Stahl, Marian Styles-McClintock, Jana Marie Whitten.

Check out the Conference website or Rolling Ridge for ongoing programs in spiritual formation.

Please contact co-chairs Evie Doyon or Cathy MacGovern with suggestions.

STEERING COMMITTEE FOR THE RESPONSE AND INTERVENTION TEAM

The purpose of the steering committee is to coordinate, implement and oversee the work of the Response & Intervention Team and to implement strategies and policies in the area of prevention and education.

The Steering Committee is composed of representatives from the Cabinet, Board of Ordained Ministry, Board of Laity, Parish Consultant Team, Bishop's Assistant, Communications Director, Chancellor, Response & Intervention Team, and Survivors.

This year's primary focus was to select, organize and implement Education Prevention workshops which were held in March throughout the New England Conference with at least one held in every district. The Steering Committee recruited and trained teams of co-facilitators to lead these days. The training material, A Sacred Trust from the Faith Trust Institute, focused on boundary issues for clergy and congregations.

The goals of the training were to:

- Increase awareness of the need for healthy boundaries in the clergy-congregant relationship
- Provide clergy, lay leaders and teachers with guidelines for appropriate boundaries and self-care
- Illustrate strategies to sustain a safe, healthy church

Every participating-church was given a DVD of multiple resource materials from misconduct policies to safe sanctuary information.

We offer our gratitude for the resource of a well-trained Response/Intervention Team and the gifted leadership of Marilyn Robb as its coordinator.

Jim McPhee and Evelyn Johnson Moore, co-convenors

TREASURER

During 2011, it has been my pleasure to meet, listen to and talk with so many of you either at meetings, over the phone or at Annual Conference. It is a joy to work with the spirit-filled men and women who make up the New England Conference (NEC).

So while this continued to be a year of financial struggle for our churches, I am thankful for the creativity, compassion and heart for the Lord that our parishioners and clergy display on a daily basis. I believe this feeling of partnership is Spirit led and adds great dimension to the Conference staff's ability to work effectively on churches behalf.

The Vermont church transition process, on the financial side, was essentially finished in 2011. We worked with the Upper New York Conference to identify, document and finalize the assets coming to New England. Additionally, 88 churches from the Troy Conference were transitioned onto the NEC's property insurance plan. One church in Waterbury, VT feels blessed for that switch, as its building was flooded during a hurricane in August. The storm left 10 feet of water in the town, and the church's previous insurance policy would not have covered the over \$200,000 loss.

Receipts from Mission Shares were higher than 2010 by \$211,000. This was due to a full-year of receipts from the Vermont churches versus six months of receipts in 2010. If we included all payments by Vermont churches in 2010, regardless of which conference received it, our Mission Share receipts would have decreased by \$128,000 or 2.2%. Overall, churches paid 75.2% of mission shares, a two percentage point decrease from receipts of the past couple of years. On the positive side, we were able to keep expenses below budget by carefully monitoring costs and were able to come close to the actual receipts.

In 2011, the conference used \$127,034 of its reserves to pay conference bills and boost its World Missions payment to 75%. We were pleased to continue to pay 100% of our apportionments for Africa University and the Black College Fund.

By the end of 2011, the Together for Tomorrow Campaign had over \$14.5 million in pledges and \$11.3 million in pledge payments. A total of \$3.7 million had been distributed back to local churches to support their ministries and more than \$5.4 million had been disbursed to the five conference ministry initiatives, which are identified in the campaign annual report.

Health Insurance and Pension Costs continue to claim a disproportionate share of conference and local church resources, both financial and human. These costs are higher than the conference's operating expenses, as more than \$10.5 million was paid to the General Board of Pensions and Health Benefits for both retired clergy's health insurance and active clergy's health and pensions. I am pleased to say that the markets continued to climb last year, getting closer to levels seen

before the economic downturn of 2008. As a result, the value of the plan's assets also increased, allowing the Pre-82 Pension plan to continue partially funding retiree health care costs.

It is my pleasure to acknowledge the considerable contribution, dedication and Christian principles reflected everyday in our conference staff. They are Christ's hands and hearts at the New England Conference office. I very much appreciate the ministry and spirit of common purpose from:

Deborah Cannella, Administrative Assistant
 Steve Hart, Financial Services Manager
 Merry Hoyt, Remittance Specialist
 Joy Mueller, Statistician
 Thelma Phelan, Benefits Assistant
 Janis Salesi, Conference Benefits Coordinator
 Daniel Sierra, Accounts Payable/Payroll

Merry Hoyt announced her retirement effective March 31, 2012 after 23 years of service. Her wealth of knowledge will be difficult to duplicate. We certainly will miss her. We would like to thank and congratulate Merry as she embarks on this new chapter of her life.

I am humbled by the service I witness in our clergy, the members of our local churches, their treasurers and finance chairs, the Council on Finance and Administration, the Conference Board of Pensions, the Equitable Compensation Committee, the Conference Board of Trustees and my colleagues in ministry all over the conference who inspire me by their example and encourage and support me with their prayers.

In Christ's Service,
 William V. Burnside, II

UNITED METHODIST ELDER CARE

Our mission at United Methodist Elder Care remains, as it was when the facility opened in the 1970's - to "provide a community where older persons can live in comfort, with dignity and a sense of purpose." We strive to maintain this ideal in an environment of ever changing needs, opportunities, obstacles, and challenges.

United Methodist Elder Care's vision is of a proactive, growing and flexible organization that seeks to serve a larger number and greater diversity of persons in the New England Conference and in the larger community of southeastern New England. Also, United Methodist Elder Care strives to provide outstanding facilities and services to its residents and the community at large. In 2011, UMEC's subsidiary corporation, ElderCare Consultant's LLC entered into a consulting agreement with the Woonsocket Housing Authority to assist the Authority in replicating our model of an "affordable assisted living" community within one of several Section 8 elderly housing developments that the Authority owns. ElderCare Consultants' Home Care Division will provide the assisted living service component of the Authority's program. It is anticipated that this program will begin to provide services to Woonsocket Housing's community mid-year 2012.

In May of 2011, UMEC expanded its housing complement through the purchase of a closed assisted living facility formerly operated by the Roman Catholic Diocese in Providence, Rhode Island. The facility, renamed Arbor Hill Assisted Living, opened its doors to residents in December of 2011, following a period of health and safety related renovations to the lower and first level of the building. Additional renovations are underway to restore the second and third levels of the building. Once completed, Arbor Hill will be home to 53 low to moderate income elders in need of "affordable" care and services.

As part of United Methodist Elder Care's outreach to the community, the staff and residents of Winslow Gardens continue their mission to spread God's love, joy and laughter through a Caring Clown Ministry. The Caring Clowns are about God's sense of humor, giving and receiving God's love and entering into relationships. The Caring Clowns have spread their joy through skits, sing songs, creating balloon animals, face painting, serving meals, and leading worship services to many United Methodist churches, assisted living facilities, adult day care centers, civic groups, childcare facilities, schools; and march in local parades!

Our facilities have been in operation for over 41 years and although we are able to provide a decent, safe and affordable environment for our residents, the buildings are aging and continually need upgrading and system change to stay competitive with the market.

United Methodist Elder Care hosted its 3rd Charity Classic Golf Tournament event in September of 2011, raising \$16,016.00 for support of projects at Linn Health Care Center and Winslow Gardens.

Continual decrease in revenue, as a result of “rebalancing” the funding system and transitioning low acuity residents from nursing homes, will alter the manner in which long-term care providers, such as United Methodist Elder Care, will accomplish their mission of providing quality services to a frail population. Supplemental funding is critical to continue the mission and ministry of this organization. We ask that the Conference enhance the strength of its commitment and dedication to our mission and ministry by encouraging individual Conference churches and church members to help us weather this Medicaid storm, through financial support.

On behalf of the Trustees and residents of United Methodist Elder Care, thank you to all who express their support of the Centers through Golden Cross and other donations. Your \$ 954.13 in Golden Cross dollars during 2011 funded bed reserves for hospitalized residents of Linn Health Care Center and provided subsidies for personal care, housekeeping, and meal services for Retirement and Assisted Living residents. It has proven to be a valuable and essential service, one that is not often provided by our counterparts in the nursing home industry.

We request that the Conference declare the first Sunday in May of 2012 as Golden Cross Sunday with offerings received to be used to assist residents of the three retirement/health care agencies within this Conference.

Number of Board Members: 20

Number Responding to Report: 6

Number Voting in Favor of Report: 6

UNITED METHODIST FOUNDATION OF NEW ENGLAND

While last year was a time for leave-taking, 2011-12 has been one of celebration for the United Methodist Foundation of New England (UMFNE). During the past months, the Foundation hosted a conference-wide celebration of 20 years of ministry and service with the churches and agencies of the New England Annual Conference. A series of district celebrations helped to share the story of the Foundation’s creation in 1991 and its plans for the future. At the same time, “Creating a Culture of Generosity” – a series of four workshops featuring Dr. Michael Reeves (co-author of the new stewardship program Extravagant Generosity) were offered as a “Thank You” gift from UMFNE to the Conference in grateful appreciation for 20 years of steadfast support.

The Foundation also welcomed a new president this year – Rev. James Mentzer. A native of Massachusetts and an ordained elder in the North Carolina Annual Conference, Rev. Mentzer served local churches for 12 years and the North Carolina United Methodist Foundation for 5 years before coming to New England. Under his leadership, the Foundation continued its practice of offering financial services, stewardship education, and planned giving presentations designed to promote faithful stewardship across the Conference. In less than a year, he has preached in churches from Connecticut to Maine and has quickly been recognized for his commitment to energizing the ministries of this conference.

The “Faith & Money” ministry continued to encourage local churches to create a year-round approach to stewardship. By delivering resources for both individual members of congregations, as well as for church committees, the Foundation fostered a long-term sustainable stewardship ministry grounded in classic Biblical and Wesleyan theology.

UMFNE was pleased to receive for a second year a matching grant from G. Neil and Anne Yost Harper in support of its Grants & Financial Assistance Ministry. Encouraged by their leadership gift, the Board and Friends of the Foundation raised close to \$40,000 by December 31 of last year that was directed to fund future grants across New England. Through these acts of generosity, the Foundation has strengthened its partnership in ministry with the New England Conference by providing grants this past year to the following churches and institutions:

Camp Aldersgate, Scituate, RI
Children’s Center of Lawrence (MA) UMC
Exeter (NH) UMC
Green Street UMC, Augusta, ME

New England Conference/NUHOPE
Parkway UMC, Milton, MA

Cheshire (MA) UMC/CTWMA District
Covenant Hills Christian Camp, Cabot, VT
First UMC, Framingham, MA
“Hands Across the Table”, Laconia, NH Mathewson Street, Providence RI
NEAC/“Money Follows Mission” Event
NEAC, School of Congregation Development
Rolling Ridge Retreat & Conference Center

The Foundation also continued to be a leader in Socially Responsible Investing (SRI) among the United Methodist Foundations. Because of our active proxy voting and adherence to SRI guidelines, the Foundation is uniquely qualified to manage individual church accounts and endowments. In the arena of investment management, the Foundation has continued to enhance the asset classes within its overall program. The Stock and Fixed Income Portfolios have performed well, have matched their benchmarks, and have done so with less risk and volatility. And, as part of an ongoing commitment to be well diversified, UMFNE added an Alternative Investment Pool to its investment options in October of last year. These investment choices represent no more than 5% of the total assets under management and were selected for their ability to provide inflation protection and stabilize overall portfolio performance over time.

This year we thank and recognize the following Directors who have completed their term of service on the Board since our last report: Stephen Ives, Robert Needham, Diane Peak, Kathleen Rood, & M. Philip Susag.

Members of the 2011–12 Board of Directors:

Richard Black	Wesley Blair, III, Treasurer
Sandra Bonnette-Kim	Theodore Crass
Patricia Deyton	David Fitts, Board Chair
Thomas Gallen	Joseph Gardino
Robert Hill	Joan Humphrey
Anne Marie Hunter	John Koduah
Wendell Luke, Jr.	James Mentzer
Kristine Owen	George Reagan
John Regier, Board Vice-Chair	Brad Stayton
James Stephens	Janice Swenor, Secretary
Herbert Taylor	Sabina Terrades
Mary Todd	Bishop Peter Weaver
Stanley Wilbur	Alexx Wood

Respectfully submitted,
David Fitts, Chair, Board of Directors

UNITED METHODIST VOLUNTEERS IN MISSION (UMVIM)

In 2011, one UMVIM team leader training was held on March 17th led by Charlie Magill at Williston, VT. In 2012 we are planning two sessions, the first in the Worcester, MA area this spring and another in the fall, location yet to be determined.

In 2011, UMVIM teams continued to go to the Gulf although in fewer numbers as UMCOR no longer funds the recovery centers there. Most notable are the teams led by Mary Ann and Skip Danforth to the Epworth Project in Slidell. Work continues from this project on properties in Slidell and New Orleans. Teams go in Feb and Oct/Nov. approximately 60 to 80 volunteers each period. By the time the Journal goes to print, Mary Ann and Skip Danforth will have led a team on February 12-18 (see article in December 21, 2011 issue of UMCatalyst).

Some of the previous Gulf teams have moved on to respond in Tennessee, Vermont, and some non-disaster recovery projects. Other teams went to Rural Mission, SC, Cherokee Nation, OK, Wilmington, DE, Tornado Recovery, and Springfield, MA. There is a mission planned to Mozambique in July 2012 – contact Larry and Ann Barber LBar1000@aol.com. It is still difficult to find out about many teams from New England. If you have sent a team in 2011 and/or plan a team in 2012, please send an email to Dave Stackpole at vimnecumc@charter.net.

Other teams scheduled and/or completed in 2012 are:

- January 12–20, 2012 To Haiti. Team Leaders; Kent Higgins and Gerard Piscitelli
- Jan. 21–Feb. 5, 2012 To Guatemala. Team Leaders: Linda Brewster, Karen Garcia
- April 16–27, 2012 To West Springfield. Team Leader: Roy Richardson
- April 21–28, 2012 To Rural Mission. SC Team Leader: Marilyn Ives

In 2011, 2 Mission Central HUBS were established to make and store UMCOR kits. They are in Georges Mills, NH and at St. James UMC, Merrimack, NH. St. James Hub is open Tuesday am and to drop off kits in Georges Mills contact The Rev. Patricia Williams (603) 763-5549 umc-sunapee@msn.com. More HUBs are planned. HUB stands for:

- H = Heart and Hope of Mission Central
- U = Uniform with 3 goals of Mission Central
 - ✓ Mission Outreach
 - ✓ Mission Education
 - ✓ Mission Response
 - ✓ Unique with each HUB being different.
- B = Birth of Opportunities for Mission Ministry

If your church is interested in exploring becoming a HUB, contact Dave Stackpole vimnecumc@charter.net – 603-244-0713.

David A. Stackpole
UMVIM Coordinator

UNITED METHODIST WOMEN

We shall require a substantially new manner of thinking if humanity is to survive. Albert Einstein

The context of the quote is Einstein's understanding that the universe is essentially one indivisible whole, and that humanity's perception of separateness is what he called an "optical delusion of consciousness ... a kind of prison." He goes on to say "Our task must be to free ourselves from the prison by widening our circle of compassion to embrace all living creatures and the whole of nature in its beauty."

The Conference United Methodist Women (UMW) has made some bold decisions in an effort to free ourselves of old ways of working and to expand our circle in an effort to be more inclusive of those living in New England. The first change has come with the School of Christian Mission (SOCM). With the Rev. Sharon Jones as Dean this past year, the shift came from having three schools (a remnant left from the last Conference merger) to only one. By having only one, it is the hope to bring folk from the north, south, east and west of our Conference together to engage in dialogue and understanding of issues affecting us all. Thus, we get to know one another better.

In some United Methodist Conferences the SOCM is strictly a UMW event, but in New England we have had a cooperative event, meaning that the Conference and the United Methodist Women have shared responsibility for both human and fiscal responsibility. However, in the recent past this has not been a reality. With having only one school and with Sharon's obtaining funds from conference committees, the School has become self-supporting.

This has allowed the United Methodist Women to put more of its resources into the mission work to which we are called.

Another change came with the resignation of Deb Ansourlian, Executive Director of Cooper Community Center in Roxbury, MA. Cooper is the only United Methodist Center in New England. It was started by the wife of a United Methodist Minister to care for children who were playing unattended in the streets. While this is not – and should not be strictly a UMW project, it has been the UMW's caring and support which has kept it a viable resource in the community. With the hiring of Kevin Fusco as the new Executive Director who is building on the past and the Women's Division involvement, Cooper is getting a face-lift. Our hope is to have everyone stop in for a visit to see the happy faces of the children being served and the staff who care for them.

Each year at Annual Conference we lift up these two events with a Resolution and educational information to garner the support of the church at-large. To be informed and to share your knowledge back home will help us to widen our circle of compassion to embrace all the living creatures with whom we come in contact. Let us all remain open to positive change and embrace Einstein's words for humanity to survive.

Arlene Mackie, President

UNITED THEOLOGICAL SEMINARY

"Spirit Led, Renewing the Church"

Is God calling you or someone you know to the ministry of Jesus Christ? If so, we invite you to explore how United can assist you in fulfilling God's purposes for your life and how you can help others in this journey. Come and check us out in person or online at www.united.edu!

United is one of the fastest growing, accredited seminaries in North America. Why are Christian disciples and leaders signing up for our traditional and online programs? They do so because United is committed to teaching the Bible and the historic Christian faith, cultivating spiritual formation for personal and social holiness, and renewing the Church for the mission of Jesus Christ in the world. What could be more important or exciting?

In addition to expanding our service in the Midwestern US, United will continue to enhance its use of technology to deliver theological education in underserved regions in North America and beyond. United's hybrid/online UMC FLEX Master of Divinity degree was designed specifically to meet the requirements of the UMC for ordination and it is accessible anywhere with good Internet service.

Three new professors will join our excellent team of faculty in 2012. Additionally, United's doctoral program will add new mentors and focus groups around the ministries of renewal, mission, preaching, healing and Christian education. United's hybrid/online UM Course of Study is expanding each semester, along with UM Certification offerings.

Please let us know if you have questions about how we can best assist you or, if you would like to help make it possible for an American or international student to study at United.

Enrollment at United is growing steadily and we invite you to call or visit soon!

For more information, please contact admissions@united.edu.

Thank you for your prayers, partnership and service in the ministry of Jesus Christ!

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By Wendy J. Deichmann Edwards, President
January 2012

VISIONING TABLE

The report summarizes the work of the Conference Visioning Table from 2007- 2012.

The Conference Visioning Table serves the conference through an embedded structure of deep reflective collaboration, partnership, and spiritual practices with a strong focus on Making Disciples for the Transformation of the World & Shared Ministries which are aligned to the Table's three cross-cutting issues identified as:

- Passionate Spirituality: the energy that drives the vision of mission/ ministry
- Making Disciples (Evangelism) Foundation for community & openness to God's mission/ministries that extend our spiritual expectations.
- Church as a Powerful Community Connection: the source of our membership.

As a big picture strategic visionary body the table's goals are aligned to the purpose, guiding principles and the cross cutting issues.

Goals

1. Ground ourselves in spiritual practices and Biblical foundations, both personally and as a Visioning Table.
2. Communicate our definition of shared ministry to the entire conference.
3. Identify and promote models of shared ministries across the conference.
4. Challenge churches to be in relationship with the larger community.
5. Stay open to the ways God is moving and working in the conference, in our local churches, and in our communities, and to where God is calling this Table to work.

The diverse membership meets three times annually to be engaged in deep reflective collaboration which paved the way for opportunities in which laity and clergy conceptually examined some of the emerging issues affecting congregations across the conference. Our strategic and coordinated spiritual practices influenced the theme of the 2009 annual conference, Making Disciples and in 2010 Shared Ministries. The extended cabinet also adopted CVT collaborative structure into their work. Another high point of the team is the strong spiritual growth discernment which is the framework of the meetings

In 2010 CVT partnered with the Board of Laity and did a landmark video presentation entitled "Entered into Relationship With Jesus Christ" highlighting the inspirational and vital ministries that are happening in Good Shepherd UMC, Wayland, Grace Vision UMC, Cambridge, Blackstone Valley UMC & Christ Latino UMC, Lawrence. The presentation demonstrated spiritual best practices of ways in which Christians shared their faith, prayer discernment and experiences of God at work in everyday lives. We received great feedback of the presentation which motivated CVT membership to use its

2011 Conference presentation as a medium to showcase models of shared ministries in Wayland/Framingham UMC, Four Points Rising, Northern Vermont and Trinity, Springfield. The variations of Shared Ministries in these congregations have brought new energy that transformed the life of the congregation. These videos created an awareness of Shared Ministries and can be obtained from the conference office to be used as a resource to discern, promote & enhance shared ministries in congregations across the conference.

Conclusion:

In concluding, let me express my personal perspective that I felt that the work of CVT was guided by the Holy Spirit through the spiritual practices and biblical foundation that transformed us individually & collectively as a team. Special thanks to the conference for the opportunity to serve as chair of the Visioning Table, to Bishop Weaver as our Spiritual advisor, the dedicated & committed members of the team and the conference staff that assisted us over the five years. Your efforts allowed the Holy Spirit to guide us in discerning God’s will as we collaborate, inform the work of the conference and created mediums for sharing congregations’ success stories across the conference. As I move on to whatever God is calling me to do I pray that there will be a next step in the journey of CVT to continue digging deeper into Shared Ministries that will assist congregations in embracing the oneness of the body of Christ and decreasing the gap in our interconnectedness as a conference/congregations. WE as Methodists are obligated to continue the mission work stated by our founder John Wesley. May God bless you! Peace & Love!

Respectfully Submitted,
 Veta Daley,
 Chair, Conference Visioning Table

WILBUR C. ZIEGLER AWARD FOR EXCELLENCE IN PREACHING – PROPOSED GUIDELINES

The Wilbur C. Ziegler Award was established to highlight the importance of preaching the whole gospel addressing both personal and social salvation. It is given in memory of Rev. Wilbur C. Ziegler whose ministry was characterized by his commitment to preaching the whole truth of the gospel. His ministry of compassion was done always in the context of social justice and his prophetic preaching and ministry had its foundation in the love of Christ and of all. To remember the spirit of this award and renew our commitment to the prophetic ministry, the Church and Society committee has added the following guidelines to the current nomination criteria and process.

- The search committee will be established following each Annual Conference to actively identify the persons whose preaching and ministry exemplifies the spirit of this award and invite their congregations for nomination. This committee will be formed by the Church and Society committee in consultation with the Congregational Development Committee.
- The selection committee will be composed of two representatives from the Church and Society, two from the Congregational Development, a former recipient, and the Director of Connectional Ministry.
- The followings are the criteria
 - ✓ How and what issues has her/his preaching addressed the need of personal salvation- making disciples?
 - ✓ How and what issues has her/his preaching addressed the need of social justice-transformation of the world?
 - ✓ How does the preacher integrate personal salvation and social justice?
 - ✓ What makes her or his preaching interesting and compelling?
 - ✓ How are the personal needs of the congregation addressed in her or his preaching?
 - ✓ Give examples of several prophetic issues that she or he has addressed in the past year.
 - ✓ Name some of the justice ministries that the preacher and/or the congregation are actively involved in.
 - ✓ How does he or she acknowledge that there may be some in the congregation who will not agree with the position taken in the sermon or series of sermons?
 - ✓ What creative ways has she or he found so that the laity of the local church are challenged to respond to the preaching of the whole gospel with actions?

Submitted by We Hyun Chang for the Church and Society Committee