

## **MINUTES OF THE 2011 ANNUAL MEETING Vermont Conference United Church of Christ**

The 216<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Vermont Conference United Church of Christ was held at Castleton State College, Castleton, Vermont, June 3<sup>rd</sup> through June 5<sup>th</sup>, 2011. The theme of the meeting was “Looking Up: A Faith Worth Living.”

The Plenary sessions were intermingled with worship.

### **Plenary 1**

June 3, 2011

The evening session began with a brief worship. The Prelude was played by the Rev. Anthony Acheson and the Call to Worship and opening prayer was led by the Rev. Doug Carter.

Ms. Carrie Youngblood, Moderator then called the meeting to order.

Ms. Youngblood introduced the officers of the Conference: Herself at Moderator; Rev. Kevin Goldenbogon, Vice Moderator; and Mr. David Damkot, Treasurer.

The Conference staff was introduced: Rev. Lynn Bujnak, Conference Minister; Rev. Pam Lucas, Associate Conference Minister and Director of VAST; James Thomas, Business Manager and Stewardship Associate; Lynn Thomas, Administrative Assistant and Placement Secretary; and Sybil McShane, Resource Center and Communications Coordinator.

The Moderator then led the delegates and guests in the Covenant for Dialogue:

“... speaking the truth in love, we must grow up in every way into him who is the head, into Christ, from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by every ligament with which it is equipped, as each part is working properly, promotes the body’s growth in building itself up in love.” Ephesians 4:15-16

We covenant with one another to sustain a congregational culture in which we will communicate with integrity and mutual respect, and in which our creative energy—both individual and collective—will be free to flourish.

1. We *will repeat* in our own words what the other has said to confirm that we have understood them, and ask them to do the same if we feel we have not been understood.
2. We *will communicate directly* with each other, using the first person, using “I.”
3. We will try to make our meaning clear and *say what we mean* and *mean what we say*.
4. We will identify *merit* in another person’s idea or suggestion before we identify its *deficiencies*.
5. We will be willing to *inquire* into another *person’s reasons and reasoning* and will *welcome inquiry into our own reasons and reasoning*.
6. We will *listen to understand*, but don’t necessarily have to agree.
7. We will not *say outside the meeting* what we are unwilling to say *inside the meeting*.

It was announced that **Roberts Rules of Order** would be used during the plenary sessions.

A **motion** was made to elect Ms. Cindy Tolman, as Parliamentarian, Ms. Jean Daley and Dr. Lynn Wickberg as Scribes during the Plenary Sessions. This was seconded and passed.

Ms. Youngblood then gave words of welcome to the Dignitaries, Officers, and Conference Staff present. The UCC National staff was represented by: The Rev. Dr. J. Bennett Guess, Director of Communications, Rev. Loey Powell and Rev. Sala Nolan. The above were given the privilege of voice without vote.

She also thanked the members of Fair Haven Concerned for providing refreshments during the meetings.

The Conference Board of Directors have approved the minutes of last year's Annual Meeting .

Worship continued following the business session. The Rev. Dr. Ben Guess gave the opening message, "For Thus Says the Lord," and the evening blessing.

The evening ended with a social time, snacks and entertainment.

## Plenary II

June 4, 2011 - Morning

After a Peace Makers breakfast the second Plenary started with a brief worship service. The Call to Worship was delivered by the Rev. Susie Webster-Toleno. The Rev. Dr. Guess delivered the Keynote address entitled "The Plans I Have for You."

Following worship, Ms. Youngblood called the meeting to order.

Speak Outs were held:

- Daehler Hayes spoke of the UCC Corner Stone Fund
- Philip Brown regarding the UCC Musician's Association
- Theresa Lever for the Department of Mission entering into a partnership
- Jean Zammataro, Moderator of the Windham Union Association gave thanks to the host Association red vesters and to the Association for organizing refreshments.
- Rev. Abby Gackenheimer, Workshop Coordinator, announced the locations of the various workshops.
- Doug Couter of the Family Committee, spoke for the Friends of VT Conference pledges.
- Laurie Hulman showed slides of Covenant Hills
- Rev. Ryan Gackenheimer also spoke of Covenant Hills

Rev. Lynn Bujnak then gave a report on the Vermont Conference. She entitled her talk as a "snap shot" of the Conference. Some of the highlights of her talk were: ...that there are 144 churches in the state and the majority of them have small memberships. She showed the challenges that are before us. One such being the difficulty in obtaining interim ministers. We are the "least religious state," and longing for change. Rev. Bujnak ended her talk with quoting the call of Abraham and stated that a "ship in the harbor is safe, but that is not why they are built. The change is to leave the harbor." Churches continue to need leaders. There will be a transformation in

VAST in the coming year. More continuing education programs – “Keys to Old Doors.” There will be a new model for search and call. Also there are other ways to get together instead of face to face. She ended by stating the three “V’s” – Vision, Value, and Voice. “Sail on!”

Mr. David Damkot presented the Treasurer’s report, Conference Financial Status and the 2012 Budget Resolutions. He stated that he was impressed with the work the members of the Finance Committee had done with the budget. He then introduced Mr. John Holme, Chair of the Finance Committee, who presented the 2011 Finance Committee Report, and Jim Thomas for review of the 2011 budget.

John then introduced the members of the Committee: Robert Delaney, Rev. Linda Kulas, David Damkot, Rufus Cushman and Rev. Lynn Bujnak and Jim Thomas. Mr. Holme told of the purpose of this Committee. He stated that the payment to National has been cut from 40% to 35% and the Board was firm in balancing the budget. The delegates were urged to adopt the 2012 budget. **Motion** was made and seconded to vote on the 2012 budget at the Sunday Plenary session.

Jim Thomas then reviewed the status of the 2010 and 2011 budgets.

The session ended with delegates going to their various workshops.

### Plenary III

June 4, 2011 – Afternoon

Ms. Youngblood called Plenary III to order.

Speak outs were held:

- Rev. Susie Webster-Toleno announced that a CD has been made by Tony Acheson and that it is available for sale.
- Jeanne Zammataro reported on the Prison Justice Committee work including that of Will Hunter and Bruce Spruce.
- Rev. Rev. Adrienne Carr spoke of a mission conference to be held in the near future.
- Ned Davis told of a 3-day workshop that he was presenting regarding sanctuary flower arranging.
- Rev. Rona Kinsley announced that there were pledge forms available in the lobby for Friends of the Vermont Conference.
- Chris Heinz spoke for the South West Association creating a collaboration of churches at a gathering on August 7, at 2:30.
- Rev. Mike Caldwell spoke of a workshop regarding the Iona Community entitled “Chasing the Wild Goose.”
- Rev. Mandy Lape-Freeberg announced the happy news of Member in Discernment Kay Loudon being called to a new church.
- Sheryl Rodgers thanked the United Church of Hinesburg for a gift of \$375 to send a youth to the Youth Conference this July.
- Kathy Clark reminded the delegates of the contra dancing this evening.
- Rev. Susie Webster-Toleno announced a mental illness conference – the UCC “Widening the Welcome Conference - Inclusion for All.”

Ms. Youngblood then thanked Ned Davis for the wonderful candle and flower display.

The following resolutions were then presented:

Rev. Susanna Griefen presented the resolution on becoming a Green Justice Conference. A **motion** was made, seconded and passed to accept the resolution. No discussion.

### **2011 AM 1: VOTED** Resolution on Becoming a Green Justice Conference

Whereas *The earth is the Lord's and all that is in it*, (Psalm 24:1) and God has from the beginning called humankind to tend the earth, *to work it and to watch it*. (Gen 2:15, Fox)

Whereas God has declared through the prophet Isaiah *The earth lies polluted under its inhabitants; for they have transgressed laws, violated the statutes, broken the everlasting covenant. Therefore a curse devours the earth, and its inhabitants suffer for their guilt.*  
(Isaiah 24:5)

Whereas by resolution the Twenty-sixth General Synod of the United Church of Christ *admits Christian complicity in the damage human beings have caused to the earth's climate system and other planetary life systems, and urges recommitment to the Christian vocation of responsible stewardship of God's creation, and expresses profound concern for the pending environmental, economic, and social tragedies threatened by global warming, to creation, human communities and traditional sacred spaces;*

Whereas environmental disruptions fall disproportionately on poor and marginalized persons, communities and nations;

Whereas the United States imports more than half the oil we need, increasing our national debt and threatening national security; and domestic reserves of oil, gas and coal are increasingly costly to access and present increasingly greater environmental risks;

Whereas money saved by conservation can further the economic vitality and future ministry and mission of our conference and our churches;

Whereas our faith calls us to be responsible stewards of creation, in deed and in truth, and to offer transforming and hope-filled leadership for peace and justice in our broken world, responsive to the needs of coming generations;

THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED that the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ declare itself to be a Green Justice Conference of the United Church of Christ

- In our buildings, programs and policies setting an example of sustainable environmental practices.
- Encouraging local churches to become Green Justice Congregations, following the guidelines of the Environmental Justice Ministries of the United Church of Christ. (see below)
- Providing resources, training and support to local congregations through the Environmental Ministries Committee of the Department of Mission to help members and congregations find new and transforming ways to live, acting on our faith grounded in wonder, reverence, love, and respect for all of God's creation.
- Providing public witness to the need for our governments at local, state and national levels to act in ways that are hopeful, restorative, and just as we face the challenges of environmental disruption and the need for sustainable and affordable life for all.

**ADDENDUM: Becoming a Green Justice Congregation  
From Environmental Justice Ministries of the United Church of Christ**

<b>WORSHIP AND EDUCATION</b>	<b>POINTS</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Preach an environmental stewardship sermon	1*	
Hold an annual “Earth Day” Sunday with appropriate liturgy and hymns	2	
Conduct a six-week or Lenten Bible study, book study, or small group study on stewardship of creation	4	
Show an environmental justice film	1*	
Invite speakers on environmental justice to special church events	1*	
Have your “Just Green Team” or others take a “toxic tour” and report back to your congregation what you learned	2	
Measure the carbon footprint of the church facility and staff and pledge to reduce it by 10% per year	3	
Set up a program to measure the carbon footprint of each family in the congregation	5	
Send a member of your congregation to a UCC Center for Environmental Justice workshop or a Justice Leaders Engaging and Developing (LED) training	3*	
<b>COORDINATION &amp; COMMUNICATION</b>	<b>POINTS</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Form an on-going church “Just Green Team”	5	
Include a “Just Green” column in your church newsletter	2	
Shift church communications from paper to electronic media – as much as possible	1	
Sign up at least 50% of your congregational households to the Justice & Peace Action Network (JPANet)	3	
<b>EQUIPMENT</b>	<b>POINTS</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Put office machines on power strips and unplug rarely used appliances	1	
Replace old heating/air conditioning units with energy efficient models	5*	
Buy “energy star” appliances	1*	
Install water saver or dual-flush toilets throughout the facility	1*	

Install tankless or solar water heater(s)	4	
Install ceiling fans in rooms for circulation and reset thermostat	2	
<b>STEWARDSHIP</b>	<b>POINTS</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Assist members in reducing “junk” mail	1	
Recycle paper/bottles/cans	2	
Shift to reusable dishes/utensils in church kitchens and rooms	2	
Shift to environmentally sensitive cleaning products	1	
Review church investments for environmental justice impact	3	
Shift to “fair trade” and environmentally friendly items for regular consumption	2	
Shift to locally grown food as much as possible for church events	1	
<b>ENERGY USE</b>	<b>POINTS</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Conduct a professional energy audit of the church facility	5	
Clean radiators/heating ducts/refrigerator coils regularly	1	
Turn off computers and other appliances overnight or when not in use	1	
Install and use programmable thermostats	3	
Replace incandescent bulbs with CFL’s	2	
Insulate/weather-strip church pipes/walls/ceilings/doors/water heaters/wall outlets	2	
Install energy efficient fluorescent lights/ballasts	2	
Use blinds to help regulate temperature	1	
Purchase “clean” or “green power” for the church	1	
Replace old windows with energy-efficient windows	1	
Replace old doors with energy-efficient doors or install storm doors	1	
Install solar panels for electricity generation	5	

<b>TRANSPORTATION</b>	<b>POINTS</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Institute “Walk/bike/carpool to church” days	1	
Develop a car pool system for church activities	2	
Install bike racks at your church	3	
Intentionally carpool to local, regional, or state church events or meetings	2	
<b>NATURAL SURROUNDINGS</b>	<b>POINTS</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
Shift to organic lawn/landscape care	4	
Establish a community garden at the church	5	
Build a rainwater garden or landscape	5	
Utilize xeriscaping for lawns/landscaping	4	
Plant deciduous trees on South and West sides of church buildings	3	
<b>ADVOCACY</b>	<b>POINTS</b>	<b>TOTAL</b>
As a congregation, join your state’s Interfaith Power and Light organization	<b>4</b>	
Hold a letter-writing campaign to elected officials at local, state, or national levels to tell them that environmental justice should be reflected in public policy decisions	1*	
Visit your elected officials at the local, State, or national levels to tell them that environmental justice should be reflected in public policy decisions	1*	
Join with other congregations to pool resources and energy for community efforts towards environmental justice	3	
Hold an educational/advocacy event about such groups as 350.org or Transition Towns	2	
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>		

**\* Points are given per event, item, or action**

**Notes:**

1. Other events, items, or actions can earn points. We encourage creativity and actions customized for your setting. Write a brief description and estimate the points based on comparison with other criteria.

2. Points begin accumulating each Easter Sunday morning for one entire year. Reports from each congregation are encouraged at every Conference meeting in the spring or early summer.
3. Count points every year for actions you have taken to change facilities or energy use. For example, if you shift to organic lawn care, you may count those points every year as long as you continue the action.
4. 20 points – Level 1; 40 points – Level 2; 60 points – Level 3; 80 points or more - Level 4

Theresa Lever presented a resolution on re-affirming the Vermont Conference as a Just Peace Conference. A **motion** was made, seconded and passed to accept the resolution. No discussion.

### **2011 AM 2: VOTED Resolution on Re-Affirming the Vermont Conference as a Just Peace Conference**

Whereas Christians in every age and place are called to bear witness by word and deed to the vision of God's realm as the Holy Spirit enables them to discern God's purpose; and

Whereas scripture reveals God's will for creation to be covenantal harmony, wholeness, and well-being having its source in God; and

Whereas Just Peace is characterized not merely by absence of war, but by right economic and social relationships among people (Amos 5:24; Micah 6:8), a right relationship between humanity and nature (Is. 11:6-9, 32:15-20; Ezek. 34:25-29), and a right relationship between humanity and God (Jer. 31:31-34); and

Whereas the church, despite often failing to challenge the structures and institutions that perpetuate violence and injustice, and despite often failing to resolve its own conflicts nonviolently, is entrusted with the message of justice and peace revealed in the life and teachings of Jesus Christ (Matthew 5:38-44; Matthew 25:31-40; Luke 4:16-21); and

Whereas the threat posed to the environment and to human life by modern warfare raises profound moral and theological questions about the justness of any resort to military force, and preparation for and engagement in war diverts resources away from pressing human needs; and

Whereas we affirm the reality that peace is not possible if injustice exists, holding with Isaiah the understanding that justice precedes righteousness and peace (Isaiah 32:15-29 18); and

Whereas the Fifteenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ in 1985 affirmed "the United Church of Christ is to be a Just Peace Church," defined Just Peace as "the interrelation of friendship, justice, and common security from violence," placed "the UCC General Synod in opposition to the institution of war, " and called upon "Conferences and national bodies of the United Church of Christ to organize their common life so as to make a difference in the achieving of a Just Peace and the ending of the institution of war"; and

Whereas the Seventeenth General Synod of the United Church of Christ in 1989 adopted as a priority "Integrity of Creation, Justice and Peace," acknowledging that integrity of creation, justice and peace is encompassed in the biblical vision of shalom and is central to the Christian identity of members of the United Church of Christ; and

Whereas the Twenty-fifth General Synod of the United Church of Christ in 2005 supported "a denomination-wide peace with justice movement among local churches, associations, conferences and the national setting which promotes a multi-issue, multiracial, and multicultural approach to justice and peacemaking"; and

Whereas the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ at its 1993 Annual Meeting declared itself to be a Just Peace Conference, calling on local churches "to organize their common life so as to make a difference in the achieving of Just Peace and the ending of the institution of war"; and

Whereas since becoming a Just Peace Conference the Vermont Conference has adopted several other resolutions addressing Just Peace issues, such as Uprooting Racism (1999), Clergy of Color (2002), Open and Affirming Conference (2002), War

in Iraq and Future Plans for Peace (2004), Health Care for All (2005 and 2009), No Attack on Iran (2007), Anti- Poverty Work (2007), Summer Lunch Programs (2007), Fair Trade Conference (2007), Multiracial/Multicultural Conference (2008), Christian/Muslim Dialogue (2009), and Charter for Compassion (2010); and

Whereas the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ has demonstrated its Just Peace commitment in the past by supporting activities such as Bridges for Peace, witness against the death penalty, the Livable Wage Campaign, and the Uprooting Racism Task Force, and in the present through support of the Vermont Low-income Advocacy Council, Hunger Free Vermont, global partnerships, prison justice ministry, environmental justice ministry, and the celebration of just peace activities at the annual Peacemakers' Breakfasts; and

Whereas the United Church of Christ Justice and Witness Ministries, Global Ministries of the United Church of Christ and the Disciples of Christ, and the Vermont Conference Resource Center have available for local churches a plethora of resources for education, reflection and action on just peace issues; and

Whereas no United Church of Christ congregation in Vermont has adopted the Just Peace designation since its inception in 1985,

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ re-affirms its commitment to Just Peace and its role as a Just Peace Conference; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Vermont Conference calls upon the churches of this Conference to engage in education, reflections and actions that advance the realization of Just Peace; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Department of Mission, through the Just Peace Advocates or other entity responsible for justice and peace concerns, commits itself to providing leadership and resources to assist the Conference, its associations and local churches in their efforts; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that the Vermont Conference commits itself to work with other conferences and bodies of the United Church of Christ, members of other Christian denominations and other faiths, and all people of good will who seek to make Just Peace a reality.

Ms. Youngblood then introduced Mr. Burt Marshall of Church World Service and Dr. Walter Strong from Dillard University prior to the taking of the offering. While the offering was being taken Dr. Strong showed a video of the devastation that Dillard sustained from Hurricane Katrina. The offering will be divided between CWS and Dillard University.

Following the offering Rev. Pam Lucas and Rev. Lynn Bujnak presented Conference Family Celebrations as follows:

## **LITURGY OF FAMILY CELEBRATIONS**

### **ANNIVERSARIES OF ORDINATION**

Representing **1540** years of ministry, we give thanksgiving for each one who celebrates a significant milestone in 2011

Ordained in **1991**,

The **Rev. Jane Bartlett**, **Rev. John Grivetti**, pastor of the Salisbury Congregational Church, **Rev. Amanda Lape Freeburg**, Pastor of Old South Congregational Church in Windsor, the **Revs. John C. Weatherhogg and Tracy Fye Weatherhogg**, Pastors of Grace Congregational Church in Rutland and the **Rev. Lucia A. Jackson**, Pastor of the Hartland Congregational Church – celebrate their **20<sup>th</sup>** anniversary of ordination.

Ordained in **1986**

The **Rev. William Warriner** and **Rev. Douglas Carter**, Pastor of the Danville Congregational Church - celebrate their **25<sup>th</sup>** anniversary of ordination.

Ordained in **1981**

The **Rev. Jean Andrews**, **Rev. Gail Dimick**, Pastor of the United Church of Thetford, **Rev. Patricia Harwick**, **Rev. Richard White**, Pastor of the Brandon Congregational Church, **Rev. Martha Peck**, Pastor of the United Church of Newport, and **Rev. Rebecca Strader** - celebrate their **30<sup>th</sup>** anniversary of ordination.

Ordained in **1976**

The **Rev. Roger Brown**, **Rev. Kathy Eddy**, Pastor of Bethany Church in Randolph, **Rev. Michael Henkle**, **Rev. John Merriam** and **Rev. Margaret Wright** - celebrate their **35<sup>th</sup>** anniversary of ordination.

Ordained in **1971**

The **Rev. Joe Amico**, Pastor of First Congregational Church in West Brattleboro, **Rev. Richard Crocker** and **Rev. Roger Daly**, interim Pastor of First Congregational Church of Rindge, New Hampshire - celebrate their **40<sup>th</sup>** anniversary of ordination.

Ordained in **1966**

The **Rev. Neil Carr**, Pastor of Brookfield Congregational Church, **Rev. Robert Moyer**, **Rev. Lee Moore** and **Rev. Donald Vincent** - celebrate their **45<sup>th</sup>** anniversary of ordination.

Ordained in **1961**

The **Rev. Robert Boutwell**, **Rev. David E L Brown**, **Rev. Yorke Peeler**, **Rev. David Ransom** and **Rev. William Wintersteen** - celebrate their **50<sup>th</sup>** anniversary of ordination.

Ordained in **1956**

The **Rev. David Dean**, **Rev. Harold Harrison**, **Rev. John Nutting** and **Rev. Betty Stone Ludwig** - celebrate their **55<sup>th</sup>** anniversary of ordination.

Ordained in **1951**

The **Rev. Walter Cooley**, **Rev. Ray Harwick** and **Rev. Leroy Hastings** -celebrate their **60<sup>th</sup>** anniversary of ordination.

**AND** ordained in **1946**

The **Rev. Charles Chamberlain** celebrates his **65<sup>th</sup>** anniversary of ordination this year!

*Prayer blessing those at this point in their journey.*

We celebrate your ministries in our midst and ask Christ's blessing upon your continuing journey. And let the people say "Amen."

## NECROLOGY

Voice 2: And we remember others...

Voice 1: The ones to whom Jesus whispered an invitation into their souls over and over through their lives

Voice 2: – Jesus called them by name –

Voice 1: and said “Come follow me.”

Voice 2: He said, “oh do I have plans for you.”

Voice 1: Plans to give you a future and a hope.

Voice 2: Jesus invited them to share their lives and their gifts with the world

Voice 1: And they did. As good and faithful servants...they served the Church of God.

Voice 2: This day we remember those who have ended their journey in this world.

**Lorraine Sprout**, wife of the Rev. Jay Sprout, Pastor of North Church St. Johnsbury, died on July 16, 2010 at the age of 58. She taught humanities to 7<sup>th</sup> and 8<sup>th</sup> graders for 27 years.

**The Rev. Dr. Dennis Roth** died on July 25, 2010. Born in 1939, he was ordained in 1967. He served the First Congregational Church of West Brattleboro from 1996 to 2005 when he retired. In retirement he served the Turners Falls Congregational Church in Massachusetts.

**Margaret Post**, wife of the Rev. Avery Post, past President of the United Church of Christ and member of the Norwich Congregational Church died on November 7, 2010. Peg was 85 years. She and Avery had been married for 65 years.

**Rev. Dr. Lawrence Fairchild** died on November 21, 2010 at the age of 89. Ordained in the Congregational Church in 1945, he served the First Congregational Church of Manchester from 1948-1951, where he also hosted a Sunday afternoon radio broadcast.

**Dottie Glasser** died on January 17, 2011. Widow of the Rev. James Glasser, who served North Church in St. Johnsbury from 1954-1960 and the Peacham Congregational Church from 1984-1987 where her funeral was held.

**Kermit Reilly** died on February 17, 2011. Born in 1930, he graduated from UVM in 1953. At the age of 33 he became a Deacon of the Peru Congregational Church and took that calling seriously and began to preach there through the many years the church was without a pastor.

**Jane Buswell** died April 18, 2011 at the age of 88. She was a graduate of the Baptist Institute of Philadelphia and worked for the North American Interdenominational Missionary Society before becoming the lay pastor of the Tyson Congregational Church where she served for over 50 years.

### *Prayer blessing those who have completed their journey.*

O God, we celebrate and give thanksgiving for these souls who have been gathered into the cloud of witnesses that surrounds us and cheers us on – for the journey continues into all eternity – with you. And let the people say “Amen”.

We remember as well, others who have been active in the life of the Vermont Conference and who died this year:

**Ann Olney Gilmore** who died September 18, 2010 at the age of 95. A member of Second Congregational Church of Hyde Park, Olney was the first woman president of the Vermont Conference.

**Betty Adams** who died April 14, 2011 at the age of 83. A member of the Perkinsville Community Church, she was honored for her mission work at the 1984 New England Conference on Mission, as 1987 Heifer Project Outstanding Volunteer and received the UCC General Synod Service Award in 1995.

**Nancy Hughes** who died April 4, 2011. Born on July 27, 1931, Nancy worked for the Office of Church in Society in Washington and has served as Moderator of the Grafton Orange Association and as Chair of their Committee on Ministry.

We remember as well the many who have died in this past who were a part of our local church communities...even perhaps within our own families...please share their names as the spirit moves you...

For all whom we cared for us, for all who cared for us, for all labored with us in the building of God's Kingdom, we say thank you, God.

We give thanks that they now live and reign with you.

As a great cloud of witnesses, they surround us with their blessings and offer you hymns of praise and thanksgiving. And let the people say "Amen".

### **Official Transitions, Retirements and Moving on...**

Voice: Believing that God is always calling us forward into new possibilities – to give us a future and a hope - we also recognize those who have moved into one of our interim ministry settings – those who have retired or who have announced their retirement from settled ministry – and those who have or will be moving on into the "new plans" God has in store for them...

#### *(Our Interims)*

In September, 2010, **The Rev. Sam Newton**, ordained in the UMC, began interim Ministry at the Federated Church of South Royalton.

In October, **the Rev. David Pruitt**, after ending an interim in Bradford, began serving an interim at the First Congregational Church of Newbury.

On September 1, 2010, **the Rev. Matthew Owen** began Interim Ministry at the United Church of Proctor. Ordained in the PCUSA, Matthew comes from serving the Union Church of Manila in the Philippines since 2006.

On November 1, 2010, **Michael Boy** began transitional ministry at the Ascutney Union Church. Previously he had worked in Youth Ministry at Valley Bible Church in White River Junction.

On November 1, 2010, **The Rev. Michelle Rogers Brigham** began interim ministry at the United Church of Hinesburg. She comes from serving as Pastor of the Immanuel United Church of Christ in Plymouth Wisconsin.

And on November 1, 2010, **Sherry Baer** began ministry as a licensed Bridge Pastor at the United Church of Northfield.

On January 1, 2011, **The Rev. Janice Chilek**, began transitional ministry at the United Church of Bellows Falls.

In January of 2011, **The Rev. Byron Breese**, ordained in the ABC, began interim ministry at the United Church of Strafford.

On March 1, 2011, **The Rev. Jonathan New** began interim ministry at the First Church in Burlington.

### **RETIREMENTS**

**With great thanks to Rev. Charles Purinton and Rev. Barbara Purinton who are retiring from their work with the National Guard. (NOTE: A standing ovation was given to the Purintons for their ministry)**

On December 31, **the Rev. Robert Boutwell** retired from Ministry at the Pawlet Community Church after 10 years. He celebrates 57 years of Parish Ministry.

On January 15, 2011, **the Rev. Robert Lee** retired from his ministry at the First Congregational Church in Burlington. He had served for 18 years.

On June 26<sup>th</sup>, **the Rev. David Wright** will retire from his ministry at the College Street Congregational Church. He began his ministry in November of 1992. OKAY – retiring – but not quite yet. He will be doing Interim Ministry in Rangeley, Maine.

On June 30<sup>th</sup>, after six years of ministry in the United Church of Hardwick, **the Rev. Judy Waible** will retire.

### **And MOVING ON**

On September 26, 2010, **the Rev. Bruce Bishop** ended his ministry at the Jamaica Community Church. He had arrived to help out – and stayed for 5 years.

On October 1, 2010 **the Rev. William Schutter** ended his interim at the St. Johnsbury South Congregational Church.

On February 7, 2011, **the Rev. Diana Scholl** ended her ministry of Hospital Chaplaincy at the Porter Medical Center after thirteen years, when the position was eliminated by the Hospital.

On May 15, 2011, **the Rev. Richard Ringenwald** ended his interim at the Manchester Congregational Church as they prepare to welcome a new pastor. It was his second leavetaking having retired from the church as a settled pastor years earlier.

On May 29<sup>th</sup>, **the Rev. Michael Ford** resigned from ministry at the First Congregational Church in North Hyde Park where he had served for 15 years. He continues ministry at the Second Congregational Church of Hyde Park and the Johnson Community Church.

On July 17<sup>th</sup>, **the Rev. Sandra Daly** will end her ministry at the First Congregational Church of Newfane. She will continue in Retreat Ministry at Hallelujah Farm – just over the border in New Hampshire

*Prayer blessing those at this point in their journey.*

We celebrate your ministries in our midst and ask Christ's blessing upon your continuing journey. And let the people say "Amen."

### **Plenary IV**

June 4, 2011 – Evening

Ms. Youngblood opened the session with several announcements.

Jim Thomas then announced the names of the churches that had increased their Basic Support for Our Church's Wider Mission by 1% per year of its operating budget expenses; moving toward a full tithe (10%) and beyond if possible. The churches achieving either or both these goals are:

Bennington (11.0%); Brandon Congregational; Brattleboro Centre (10.0%); Brattleboro, First; Craftsbury; East Arlington; Fair Haven; Hartland; Hinesburg; Hubbardton; Norwich; Randolph Center; Rochester; St. Johnsbury , North; Westmore, Williamstown.

Then Vermont Conference 5 for 5 churches (Our Church's Wider Mission, One Great Hour of Sharing, Christmas Fund, Neighbors in Need, and Strengthen the Church) were announced:

Bennington, Second Congregational, Brandon Congregational; Chelsea, United Church; Craftsbury Common, United Church; Danville, Congregational; Dorset, United Church; East Brookfield, Congregational; East Cornith, Congregational; Essex Junction, Congregational; Fair Haven, First Congregational; Jamaica Community Church; Newbury, First Congregational; Pawlet, Community Church; Pittsford, Congregational Church; Rutland, Grace Congregational Church; South Hero, Congregational; St.Johnsbury, North Congregational; Waitsfield, United Church of Christ.

Ms. Ann Vivian, Chair of the Nominating Committee thanked the members of this committee and then announced the 2011 nominations:

**Department or Committee**

<b>Term</b>	<b>Nominee</b>	<b>Association or Position (if applicable)</b>
<b>Board of Directors</b>		
2011-2012	Rev. Kevin Goldenbogen	Moderator
2011-2012	Mr. Alan Parker	Vice-Moderator
2011-2012	Mr. David Damkot	Treasurer
2011-2014	Mr. Malcom Chase (2nd term)	Addison Assoc
2011-2014	Rev. Michael Ford	Northeast Assoc
2011-2014	Rev. Laurie Krooss (2nd term)	Windham-Union Assoc

**Personnel Committee**

2011-2014 Rev. David Vanderlinde-Abernathy

**Nominating Committee**

2011-2012 Lucy Samara  
 2011-2014 Rev. Skip Dickinson  
 2011-2014 Rev. D Jean Andrews (2nd term)

**Annual Meeting Committee**

2011-2012 Rev. Marisa Laviola  
 2011-2012 Rev. Michele Rogers Brigham  
 2011-2014 Ms. Holly Puterbaugh  
 2011-2014 Mr. Harold Drury (2nd term)  
 2011-2014 Rev. Martha Peck  
 2011-2014 Mr. Alan Parker (as Conf V Moderator)  
 2011-2012 Ms. Carrie Youngblood, Chair

**Department of Church and Ministry**

2011-2012 Rev. Dereen Vanderlinde-Abernathy Chair  
 2011-2012 Mr. David Durfee, Vice-Chair

**Church Growth Committee**

2011-2014 Rev. Kathy Eddy  
 2011-2014 Rev. Karen Lipinczyk  
 2011-2012 Rev. Cordelia Burpee (filling a vacancy)

**Ministerial Standing and Standards Committee**

2011-2014 Rev. Jay Sprout (2nd term)  
 2011-2014 Rev. Peter Plagge (2nd term)  
 2011-2014 Rev. Susie Webster-Toleno  
 2011-2014 Ms. Beverly Anderson

**Department of Mission**

2011-2013 Ms. Jeanne Zammataro, Vice-Chair (filling vacancy)

**Department of Christian Education**

- 2011-2014 Rev. Sandra Daly, Chair
- 2011-2014 Ms Laurie Chipman, Vice-Chair

**Department of Stewardship and Financial Development**

- 2011-2014 Rev. Lucia Jackson, Chair
- 2011-2014 Rev. Mary Nelson Abbott, Vice-Chair

**Finance Committee**

- 2011-2013 Mr. Robert Delaney (filling vacancy)
- 2011-2014 Rev. Richard White

**Investment Committee**

- 2011-2014 \_\_\_\_\_
- Vermont Congregational Home Inc. (Atkinson Residence)**

- 2011-2013 Ms. Sue Hebb (filling vacancy)

**Vermont Ecumenical Council and Bible Society  
Peace, Justice & Integrity of Creation Committee**

- 2011-2014 Mr. John LaRue
- 2011-2014 \_\_\_\_\_

**Faith and Order Committee**

- 2011-2014 Rev. Jerry Handspicker
- 2011-2014 \_\_\_\_\_

**Prayer and Worship Committee**

- 2011-2014 Rev. Jane Henderson
- 2011-2014 \_\_\_\_\_

**Trustees**

- 2011-2014 Mr. Roy V. Hill
- 2011-2015 Rev. Lynn Bujnak (by virtue as UCC Conf Minister)

The **motion** was made and seconded to approve these nominations. They will be voted on at Sunday’s plenary session.

The 2012 Ministerial Guidelines were presented by Mr. Hal Drury. The Guidelines are similar to last year’s with a few changes. **Page 5** underneath the Cost of Living a new statement was added – “For the first quarter of 2011, the annualized figure is 2.7%. Therefore, we are recommending a 3% increase to cover anticipated cost of living expenses.” Underneath Employee v. 1099 contractor “The IRS definitions for an employees and 1099 contractor cover many pages on their website ([www.irs.gov](http://www.irs.gov)). If there is any question of the status of your pastor, please refer to both the website and a tax consultant.” **Page 7** last line under Health Benefit Plans “Churches with part-time might wish to consider paying for full health coverage.” **Page 13** under Guest Preachers “it is recommended that guest preachers be paid at least \$150 plus mileage at the IRS rate (51 cents/per mile at the time of this publication). **Page 14** under Christian Education “Salary guidelines for Christian Educator can be found at [www.auce.org](http://www.auce.org).

The **motion** was made to accept these guidelines, seconded and passed without discussion.

Rev. Lucas then recognized the Vast Academy of Spiritual Training:

**VAST**

Vermont Academy of Spiritual Training  
 There are those among us who hunger  
 to break open the Word of scripture,  
 who yearn to deepen their spiritual identity,  
 who seek to enrich their understanding of Christian history and theology,

who want language with which to testify to their faith,  
a faith worth living in today's world.

Since 1982 VAST has met the need expressed by local church members for an in-depth study of the Bible, basic theological concepts and the nature of our individual calling and spiritual journey.

Presently there are presently 22 students enrolled in three sites. In addition, this spring, 6 students have been enjoying an in-depth study of the Gospel of Matthew.

Thank you to those who are teaching this year...

In the Richmond class – Peg Slater and Biblical Studies

Amy Pitton and the History and Practice of Worship

In the St. Johnsbury class – Mark Pitton and Biblical Studies

Linda Kulas and Introduction to Theology

In the Manchester Class – Bruce Lee Clark and Biblical Studies

Joel Tibbetts and Introduction to Theology

This year there are three students graduating :

From the St. Johnsbury class

**Elizabeth Daly**, a member of the United Church of Newport

And from the Manchester class,

**Jeanne Zammataro**, member of the Second Congregational Church of Londonderry

**Lynn Wickberg**, member of Christ's Church in Saxtons River.

For Betsy, Lynn and Jeanne's faithful commitment and questing upon the journey of discipleship, we give God thanks.

Our prayer is that the seeds of knowledge and faith planted in them will bear fruit.

Our hope is that their hearts, minds and souls will continue to search even more deeply as they live into the questions that continue to perplex God's people. And let the people say "AMEN".

Now the challenge to you! The Windham Union Association has set aside enough funds to support 10 students from churches in their Association in their first year in VAST. So there will be a new site next September as the St. Johnsbury site closes down. And there's room in both the Manchester and Richmond classes next year. Pick up a brochure from the display area – pray about it – and join the many others whose lives have truly been changed by the VAST experience.

After a brief break, a worship service ended the Plenary session. Following gathering music led by Mr. Bendan Taaffe, who directed the choir and delegates in the singing of Kufanana, the Call to Worship was given by Mr. Alan Parker. The Rev. Dr. Guess gave the Scripture reading and the evening sermon – "For Your Welfare, Not Your Harm." Rev. Bujnak gave the closing blessing.

The evening ended with Contra dancing and a social time.

## Plenary V

Sunday, June 5, 2011

The fifth session began with speakouts:

- Susanna Griefen gave thanks to the delegates for passing the Environmental resolution
- Dee Keller told of Jen Wright being the representative to the Wider Church Ministries at Synod from 2009 to 2015.
- Jim Thomas announced that the offering totaled \$2088.52 and thanked the delegates for their generosity.

Rev. Lucas and Rev. Bujnak gave further Conference Celebrations:

### **LITURGY OF FAMILY CELEBRATIONS**

*(Recognition of Milestones in the lives of some of our Members in Discernment)*

Voice 1: Oh do I have plans for you, says the Lord.

Voice 2: And sometimes they are the most amazing of plans.

Voice 1: As God's spirit moves through our spirits –  
God's plans unfold in the most amazing of ways.

Voice 2: Today we lift up and celebrate some particular milestones of those  
who travel the journey to ordained ministry

#### **First – the rest of the story:**

Last year we reported that **Paula Gile**, Member in Discernment from the Mallets Bay Congregational Church had been approved for ordination pending call in May of 2010 by the Champlain Association. This year we can celebrate that Paula received a call as Minister of Educational Ministries and Outreach to the Congregational Church of Laconia, New Hampshire. She began her ministry on November 30, 2010. She was ordained at her home church in Mallets Bay on February 6, 2011 by the Champlain Association.

Last year we reported that **John Sanborn**, Member in Discernment from Grace Congregational Church, had graduated from Andover Newton Theological School on May 22, 2010. The following September he began a nine month chaplaincy residency at Brigham and Women's Hospital in Boston. Now back home in Vermont, he is awaiting a date for his Ordination Ecclesiastical Council in the Southwest Association – which will be July 10 at Grace Church at 3pm.

We celebrate that **Laura Cadmus**, Member in Discernment from the Barre Congregational Church just received word that she was awarded the National Make a Difference Seminarian Scholarship.

#### **Now – for the beginning of a story:**

**Elizabeth Siwo-Okundi** was received as a member in Discernment by the Grafton Orange Association on April 14, 2011. She is serving as licensed pastor of the Wells River Church. Elizabeth received her Master of Divinity degree from Boston University School of Theology in 2005.

*Prayer blessing those at this point in their journey.*

We celebrate your journey into ministry and ask Christ's blessing upon your continuing journey into your tomorrows. And let the people say "Amen."

### *New Calls to Settled Ministry*

Voice 2: We recognize and celebrate the ministry of those who, in the past year have said YES to a call in the Vermont Conference.

On July 1, 2010, the **Rev. Deadra Ashton**, ordained in 1987 by the PCUSA began official settled ministry at the Tunbridge Church.

On July 1, 2010, **Heidi Reinker**, lay pastor in the UMC began ministry at the Waterville Union Church.

In May of 2010, **The Rev. William Whiteman**, ordained in 1980 by the Conservative Baptist Association, began settled ministry at the United Church of West Rutland.

On September 9, 2010, the **Rev. Patricia Jackman** began ministry at the Shrewsbury Community Church. A graduate of Bangor Theological Seminary, she was ordained on November 11, 2010.

On September 19, 2010, **The Rev. Karen Lipincyzk**, began ministry at the Bradford Congregational Church. Ordained in 1980, she comes from serving as Pastor of St. Peter's UCC in Wadesville, Indiana.

On October 1, 2010, **The Rev. Cordelia Burpee**, began ministry at the South Hero Congregational Church. She is a graduate of Methodist Theological School in Ohio, and was ordained on August 28, 2010.

On November 25, 2010, **the Rev. Alice Ling** began ministry at the Richmond Congregational Church. Ordained in 1980, she comes from serving as Senior Pastor at the First Parish Congregational Church in East Derry, New Hampshire.

On December 12, 2010, **The Rev. Mary Kay Cavazos**, began ministry at the First Congregational Church of Cornwall. Ordained in the UMC in 1998, Mary Kay is also a Professor of African American Religious History at Middlebury College.

### **OTHER CELEBRATIONS**

On July 9, 2010, the **Rev. Robin Junker**, Associate Pastor of Bethany Church in Randolph, and Sean Boyce were married in Randolph.

On September 3, 2010, **The Rev. Abby Hodges**, Pastor of the New Haven Congregational Church and the **Rev. Ryan Gackenheimer**, Associate Pastor of the Essex Junction Congregational Church were married...and the New Haven folks had to learn to spell Gackenheimer!

On May 30, 2011, the **Rev. Carra Bradt**, Pastor of Centre Congregational Church in Brattleboro, and John McFadden were married...and presently are on their honeymoon as we speak!

This April, with great joy, after a long and arduous adoption process, the **Rev. Mark Mendes**, Senior Pastor of the 1st Congregational Church, Essex Jct. returned from Nepal with daughter, Margaret Kiran Puspa Mendes. Big brother, Nicholas, and Karen Mendes welcomed them home.

**Rev. Jonathan New**, currently serving as interim pastor at the First Congregational Church, Burlington, is now **Dr. Jonathan New**. Jonathan received his Doctor of Ministry (D. Min.) degree at Andover Newton Theological Seminary's 2011 Commencement on Saturday, May 21.



Rev. Bujnak gave thanks to Rev. Loey Powell, Rev. Sala Nolan and Rev. Dr. Guess from National for giving their expertise in workshops, etc. She made reference that before she became the VT Conference Minister she had previously worked in Cleveland with the above mentioned folks.

The 2012 Budget was then voted upon. There was no discussion and the budget and financial resolutions were passed.

**AM 2011 3: VOTED Resolution Recommended by the Board of Directors Pertaining to the 2012 Budget**

- 1.) That the division of undesignated Basic Support for Our Church's Wider Mission income for 2012 be 65% for the Vermont Conference and 35% for the United Church of Christ beyond Vermont.
- 2.) That the Vermont Conference share with the national setting of the United Church of Christ 65% of any operating budget surplus at the conclusion of the 2012 fiscal year.
- 3.) That the Conference continues to encourage each church to increase its Basic Support for Our Church's Wider Mission by 1% per year of its operating budget expenses; moving toward a full tithe (10%) and beyond if possible.
- 4.) That the 2012 Vermont Per Capita be set at \$11.54. (Note: The association portion of Per Capita is in addition to the Conference amount.)
- 5.) That the churches be encouraged to pay Basic Support for Our Church's Wider Mission and Per Capita at least quarterly.
- 6.) That the Board of Directors be authorized to take funds from the unrestricted reserves for any emergency deficit in 2012.
- 7.) That the Board of Directors be authorized to adjust the 2012 operating budget as unforeseen circumstances require, within the spending limits established in the budget.
- 8.) That the Conference adopt a 2012 Operating Budget of not more than \$721,164 in expense and not less than \$721,164 in income, with the goal of ending 2012 with a balanced budget.

The list of Nominations was referred for vote. No Discussion.

**AM 2011 4: VOTED To Accept the List of Nominations as Presented**

The Commissioning of the Elected Leaders was then held led by Ms. Youngblood.

The Rev. Kevin Goldenbogen, newly elected Moderator, then presented a Resolution of Thanks. It was moved, seconded and passed to accept this document.

**AM 2011 5: VOTED To Accept the Following Resolution of Thanks Given by Rev. Kevin Goldenbogen**

WHEREAS the 216th Annual Meeting of the Vermont Conference of the United Church of Christ convened at Castleton State College June 3-5, 2011, and there worshipped, fellowshipped and conducted business; and

WHEREAS God's Holy Spirit whipped through our fellowship, messed up our hair, and called us to be Christ's witnesses "in Jerusalem, in all Judea and Samaria, and to the ends of the earth" (Acts 1:8).

WHEREAS we connected to what we have been, celebrated who we are, and envisioned what we will be as covenant partners in the United Church of Christ; and

WHEREAS so many of our family and friends worked tirelessly to plan, to welcome, to decorate, to preach, to lead worship, to photocopy, to email, to drive, and to do all those things necessary to make our Annual Meeting safe, productive and a visible witness to the world; and

WHEREAS we continue to adhere to the Covenant for Dialogue with one another which allows us to conduct the business of this Annual Meeting with integrity, mutual respect, accountability; and

WHEREAS we were blessed to look up and to share our faith which is worth living,

THEREFORE be it resolved that we, the delegates and visitors to the 216<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Vermont Conference, United Church of Christ extend our gratitude to those who have shared their time and gifts with us;

TO Castleton State College and especially Lori Phillips and her staff who have welcomed us, provided for us, and made our stay so enjoyable;

TO the members of the Annual Meeting Planning Committee: Rev. Susie Webster-Toleno, Chair; Ms. Carrie Youngblood, Rev. John Weatherhogg, Rev. Abby Gackenheimer, Mr. Hal Drury, Rev. Carra Bradt, Rev. Tony Acheson, Mr. Ned Davis, Rev. Kathy Clark, Rev. Kevin Goldenbogen, Ms. Lynn Thomas (staff representative), Rev. Lynn Bujnak (Conference Minister);

TO Rev. Dereen Vanderlinde-Abernathy, for her fine work coordinating registrations for this gathering;

TO the Vermont Conference Board of Directors and chair Debbie Ingram for their guidance and support, for their organization, and for their spirit of discernment;

TO all Red Vesters who answered our questions and guided us to event venues with grace and warmth;

TO our keynote Speaker, Rev. Ben Guess, of the United Church of Christ, whose presence and words called to us, challenged us, comforted us, and centered us again in our faith that's worth living;

TO our UCC National staff members, Loey Powell and Sala Nolan for their time and presence;

TO the Worship Committee planning committee, to Rob Noble and Sonya Dunbar, and all those who participated in leading worship that energized us, renewed us, and reminded us who and whose we are;

TO our Parliamentarian Ms. Cindy Tolman, Scribes Ms. Jean Daley, and Dr. Lynn Wickberg, who were on hand to ensure propriety, accuracy and a good record of our doings.

TO our Chaplains, Reverends Cordelia Burpee and Rona Kinsley, and our Nurse Carlie Murray who were available for both physical and spiritual well-being.

TO our "servants of servants," the Vermont Conference Staff: Revs. Lynn Bujnak and Pam Lucas, Lynn Thomas and Jim Thomas, and Sybil McShane, who are our compass, our resources, our connection, and yes...sometimes even our mother;

AND with heartfelt thanks to our outgoing Moderator, Ms. Carrie Youngblood, who gave much of her time and talents in both planning and with the gavel. What a blessing to have her service. What a blessing to have her perspective. What a blessing to be her partner in ministry.

TO all of these folks along with those we forgot to name and whose forgiveness we beg, we offer our deep and sincere gratitude, even as I move this resolution.

Following this resolution Vermont gifts of thanks were given to the National UCC visitors.

**AM2011 6: VOTED** without discussion that the 216<sup>th</sup> Annual Meeting of the Vermont Conference UCC be closed following worship.

The 216<sup>th</sup> Annual meeting closed with a service of Communion.

Be it noted that there were 176 official delegates present.

Jean A. Daley  
Dr. Lynn Wickberg  
Scribes