Annual Report of the
Massachusetts Conference
United Church of Christ

Transforming lives
Do not be conformed to this world but be transformed . . . [Romans 12:2]

June 1, 2012

Dear friends of the Massachusetts Conference, UCC,

Jesus transformed lives. Many of the most joyous stories in scripture witness this truth. The eyes of a once-blind man are opened. The host of a private banquet throws open the doors to welcome strangers. A despairing father runs to embrace his long-lost son.

Jesus also transformed our life together. Rather than responding to aggression with violence, Jesus invites us to turn the other cheek. In place of hatred, Jesus calls us to love our enemies. Jesus’ first followers held all things in common. And after only a few years, those first followers came to be known as the ones who turned the world upside down [Acts 17:6].

Transformation does not come easily. Too often, we cling to familiar ways, even though we long to have our lives transformed.

This is where church comes in. Churches have choices. And discerning our choices has never been more important.

As you will see from the inspiring stories on these pages, countless churches in the Massachusetts Conference are choosing transformation. The fact that over 10% of all ONA UCC churches in the country are in the Massachusetts Conference attests to that. The fact that over 60% of our pastors are part of a Clergy Community of Practice attests to that. And the fact that the Massachusetts Conference has over 50% of all UCC clergy under 40 years of age attests to that.

These pages also testify to the role your Conference staff and volunteer leaders are playing as churches choose transformation. In the Massachusetts Conference no church needs to be alone; no pastor needs to feel isolated. Our Conference staff and leaders are building a covenantal web of relationships that grow out of Jesus’ call to discipleship – enabling congregations, lay leaders and pastors to envision and live into a faithful, bold and resilient future.

These pages – and the issues we will engage at Annual Meeting – also testify to the ways our life together as a Conference is transforming. And it’s important to lift up the fact that the innovations, initiatives and experiments of the Massachusetts Conference are helping to shape the entire UCC. Our Pastoral Excellence Program will soon find its way into over a dozen UCC Conferences, and may well expand to other denominations. And our 2009 resolution on climate change, along with our Green Congregations program is a model for other Conferences and denominations.

In the coming year, let us continue to join in Jesus’ ministry of transformation.

Faithfully,

Jim

The Rev. Dr. Jim Antal
Conference Minister and President
Rooted in the grace of God, the mission of the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ is to nurture local church vitality and the covenant among our churches to make God’s love and justice real.

We are a gathering of 375 active churches with over 70,000 members, making us the largest Protestant denomination in Massachusetts. Our roots go back to the Puritans and Pilgrims who founded this country, making us the Commonwealth’s oldest denomination. The Massachusetts Conference is one of 38 regional bodies of the United Church of Christ (UCC), which has 5,300 churches and 1 million members.

The motto of the UCC is “That They May All Be One.” This is from the prayer of Jesus (John 17:11) for the unity of the church.

Our churches are large and small, urban, suburban and rural. As a Conference, we support one another in spreading the Word and doing the work of Jesus Christ. On any given weekend in our churches, you may hear traditional hymns or something more contemporary. You may meet people whose families have been in America for generations, or those who still speak the languages of their homelands in Asia, Africa, the Caribbean, and Central and South America. You may find a church hall that houses a soup kitchen or one that houses a coffee house for local performers. You may find a church that has declared itself Open and Affirming to gay and lesbian people, or you may find a congregation that is theologically more conservative.

Each of the churches of the Massachusetts Conference is unique, yet we are all united in Christ. We are a people of covenant, a united and uniting church.

Rev. Carrie Bail, pastor of First Congregational Church in Williamstown and the president of Higher Ground (a non-profit, interfaith, long-term recovery group) reported that students from area schools, volunteers from Williamstown’s COOL Committee (which works to lower the town’s carbon footprint, in conjunction with 350.org), and the Spruce’s Mobile Home Tenant’s Association joined Higher Ground in a day of service to help residents of a flood-devastated community make their park a little nicer.
Transforming the World a Little Bit at a Time...

WAYS (Workdays for Adults and Youth in Service)
by the Rev. N. Shantia Wright-Gray, Coordinator of Workdays for Adults and Youth in Service, Mission Education and Travel Opportunities for Local Churches

Nine people from the Massachusetts and Connecticut Conferences of the UCC participated in two trips to Haiti in 2011 and 2012 to work with the Haitian Baptist Convention churches of Haiti in the Port au Prince area. Some volunteers led medical teams that visited five churches and/or schools on each trip, seeing about 500 patients each visit, while others focused on construction work building a school.

With the help of Baptist International Ministries, a number of projects were completed. These include constructing the first floor of a new school at Concorde Baptist Church of Port au Price; building a three-story, two-wing school and orphanage; and building a day school which houses a center for physically handicapped children and offers classes in sewing, computer technology and tiling.

WAYS – which is endorsed by the Commission for Mission and Justice Ministries – has also assisted local families in applying to work with Heifer International, and has solicited the consulting services of trained locals to give advice on building a chicken farm for the orphanage.

For more information about 2012-13 volunteer opportunities, contact Shantia at 508-450-2001 or shantiawg@gmail.com.

An Exchange of Blessings with the Pentecostal Church of Chile

The Massachusetts Conference has been a long-time mission partner of the Pentecostal Church of Chile (IPC). That partnership was strengthened after a 2010 earthquake (coupled with a subsequent tsunami and substantial aftershocks) hit the country and left millions of people homeless. Through the UCC’s “Lifting up Hope” program to help build “casitas de bendición” (“houses of blessing”), local churches of the Massachusetts Conference donated $124,240 – enough to build 83 “blessing cabins” – and vowed to keep the people of Chile in their prayers.

In turn of fate, Bishop Ulises Muñoz Moraga of the Pentecostal Church of Chile sent a letter of support following the June 2011 tornadoes in western Massachusetts. An excerpt: “We remember with gratitude how the sisters and brothers of the churches in Massachusetts accompanied us with their prayers and commitment of solidarity during the weeks and months after the disaster of the earthquake in this county. We want you to know that we also wish to accompany you in this moment of need...We share in the suffering that you are experiencing even as we offer you the same comfort and solace that we have received.”

Two Examples of Local Churches Giving Globally

The United Church of Christ, Congregational, Boxborough in support of the Japan Tsunami relief efforts, marked the first anniversary of the country’s disaster with an event to remember and honor the victims.

The church’s goal was to provide a free community event that gathered all ages to come together and experience some aspects of the Japanese spirit and culture while raising funds for those in need. The “Celebrate Japan” event was held in June 2011 and over $5,000 was raised to support the survivors. All proceeds went to organizations directly involved in the relief efforts and who provide long-term support for those affected in Japan: the Japan-specific efforts of UCC Global Ministries, Habitat for Humanity and Save the Children.

The members of Nahant Village Church took a personal interest in helping the people of South Africa fight against HIV/AIDS. The church raised enough money for a year’s tuition at a hospital’s nursing school. The first scholarship (also called a Bursary) was awarded to a student at the McCord Hospital in Durban, South Africa, so she can complete her education and be certified to help treat HIV/AIDS patients.

Did you know? Giving to One Great Hour of Sharing also goes in part to disaster relief (21%), as well as refugee assistance and development work around health, education and agriculture.
Helping to Transform our Children and Youth ...

Christian Educator Certification
Now Offered
by Elsa Marshall,
Christian Education Minister/Director

The Massachusetts Conference now offers Certification for Christian Educators in order to support excellence in Christian education/faith formation.

Certification provides:
• Development via courses, experiences and curricula;
• Support for educators as leaders within their context;
• Guidance in learning how to articulate their faith and the Gospel of God’s love and justice;
• Tools to create and sustain strong and vital Christian education programs in their churches;
• A supportive community of colleagues.

Who should be certified?
• Sunday School Teachers
• Superintendents
• Christian Education Directors
• Other church leaders

What to expect:
Certification for Christian Educators offers classes and courses that are practical and inspirational for those new to this work, for experienced educators who seek to develop their skills, and for those wishing authorization for their teaching ministry. Whether one is trained in the field of Christian education and faith formation, has a background in teaching, or is just thinking about becoming involved in the church’s teaching ministry, this program is beneficial.

37 people from 29 churches have participated;
7 church educators have been certified.

Confirmation Retreats Help Deepen Youth Spirituality
by Rev. Matt Carriker,
On-Site Leader

What a blessing it is to minister to the youth of the Mass Conference UCC through weekend confirmation retreats! For a number of years now, Rev. Heather Ramsey-Mabrouk and I have enjoyed co-facilitating these retreats, along with a number of other talented clergy and seminarians. Our weekends together are a sacred time to assist the youth from various churches in the forward movement of their journeys of life and faith. This past year, we had 40 churches (three from out of state) participate in one of seven weekend retreats in three different locations. A total of 400 confirmands and their mentors participated! This year, in addition to having retreats at both the Craigville and Grotonwood retreat centers, we added a third popular site: the Berkshire Outdoor Center in western Mass.

Our mission is to facilitate a high level of competence among church educators. We present a philosophy and theology of faith formation and Christian education. At the same time, we provide practical, experiential tools to meet the need for educational ministry in our local churches.

For more information, go to http://macucc.org/cecert or contact Elsa Marshall at elsa@maplestreetchurch.org.

In 2011, 40 churches with a total of 400 leaders and youth attended 7 different MACUCC Confirmation retreats in 3 different locations.

As one of the facilitators who helps lead this process, I can say unequivocally that all of the facilitators of these retreats have a heart for youth ministry. And these overnight retreats give youth a chance to deepen their spiritual connection, sacred space and energy that they can carry into our future times together.

Some of the testimonials from the youth themselves speak best to the power of these retreats:

“I learned that Jesus and God love me, and there’s nothing I can do about it!”

“The games when we first got here were very fun, and people got to know each other. It took away from my awkwardness.”

“I learned that we need to stop comparing ourselves – to see ourselves as precious and unique – and affirm that in others.”

“I learned that God is with us every step of the day.”

“I learned to be who I am… that Jesus loves me always… and that the church expresses who I am and how Jesus loves me.”

“I learned that I have more interest in this than I thought.”

We hope that your church will participate in these retreats if you never have! Many thanks for all you do to mentor the youth in your churches.
Transforming Communities After Major Disasters …

Responding to Disasters
By Rev. Don Remick, MACUCC Disaster Resource Team

We have recently marked the first year anniversary of the devastating tornado that tore a scar through the center of our state. Long term recovery often takes at least two years just to get folks back into homes, though the scar in the psyche and soul lasts much longer. Long Term Recovery Groups (LTRGs) have been evolving since the earliest days following the storm. We are continuing to support their efforts.

You have helped. We received over $115,000 in gifts from our churches.

We have allocated nearly two-thirds of that ($74,932.58) to help the Long Term Recovery Groups as they seek to help with the unmet needs of our most vulnerable populations. We have allocated $2,000 of that to assist a Conference-sponsored youth mission trip this summer. We are working with FEMA and the LTRGs as they continue to budget their needs and their existing sources of funding.

We have allocated another quarter of the donations ($28,819.84) for local church recovery. So far we have disbursed $16,500 for trauma and spiritual care training to help our churches serve and support their own congregations and their communities.

The remaining funds (approx. 10%, or $11,527.94) have been allocated to support our pastors who have been at the core of the damage as well as the recovery efforts. Many of them have been caring for their own churches and congregations while also overseeing long term recovery efforts. So far we have disbursed $4,000 for renewal, rest and recovery programs.

The thanks of many, many folks go out to all of you who are bringing the love of God to those who are traveling a long road.

With help from the former Adams Square Congregational Church of Worcester, Williamstown victims get housing assistance.

After Tropical Storm Irene hit last August, Berkshire County was named a federal disaster area. The largest concentration of damaged homes was in The Spruces Mobile Home Park in Williamstown where over 300 of the town’s most vulnerable residents lived. A Boston Globe article in April 2011 reported that “only 64 of the 225 mobile homes in The Spruces are inhabited, and just three others can possibly be reclaimed…. Fifty-eight homes have been demolished, and 100 are waiting to be removed.”

Carrie Bail, pastor of First Congregational Church UCC, Williamstown, reported that good neighbors and businesses sprang into action after the storm, providing emergency housing, food, and other necessities. An emergency meeting of the Northern Berkshire Clergy hired an Interfaith Relief Coordinator before they even knew how she would be paid. After a month of serving survivors’ immediate needs, they formed Higher Ground, a non-profit long-term recovery group to work with government to assist Sprucians on an ongoing basis. The most critical post-disaster need for their economically diverse town is housing, and Bail, president of Higher Ground, still receives calls every day from people struggling with repair bills, the FEMA bureaucracy, and a frustrated search for permanent housing.

Thanks to a gift from Adams Square Congregational Church in Worcester, which closed last year, the Massachusetts Conference was able to make a $7,000 grant to Higher Ground, which will fund a case manager who will assist the low income families and individuals who have been displaced from their homes.

Brimfield UCCer named unsung hero for tornado relief work

Gina Lynch, a member of the First Congregational Church of Brimfield, was recently presented with an Unsung Heroine Award by the state Commission on the Status of Women for her work in transforming the church into a tornado relief center following the June 1st tornado. The awards are decided by the Commission with help from state legislators.

“Gina’s efforts can be credited with providing invaluable support to families who were hit by this unprecedented force of nature,” said state Rep. Todd Smola, who nominated Lynch for recognition by the House. “Not only did she provide tangible support to her community, but emotional support as well. She epitomizes what it means to be an Unsung Heroine.”

“This nomination is a great honor and a fitting tribute to Gina,” said state Sen. Stephen Brewer, who nominated Lynch for this recognition in the Senate. “The devastation caused by the June 2011 tornado was unprecedented. While no one could prepare for the physical, emotional and financial impact of that event, Gina’s efforts made everyone feel a little more secure. She was a beacon of hope and a lifeline for many residents in Western Massachusetts during that time and truly distinguished herself not only as a wonderfully giving individual, but an undeniable asset to her community.”

Lynch is the Director of the Brimfield Senior Center. Her husband, Ian Lynch, is pastor at First Church.
Thanksgiving prayers were answered as the goals of the United Church of Christ’s Mission:1 campaign were surpassed. Mission:1 was a program that ran throughout the entire United Church of Christ in an effort to make good on its motto “that they may all be one” with a coordinated mission campaign. The goals were to gather more than one million food and household items for local food banks and to marshal its 5,300 congregations to advocate collectively – and loudly – for hunger-related causes, both domestically and around the world.

Nationally, the campaign saw these results (see www.ucc.org/mission1 for more details):
- Food items collected: 1,462,949 (goal 1,000,000)
- Letters to Congress: 37,731 (goal 11,111)
- Neighbors in Need food programs: $187,013 (goal $111,111)
- Africa famine relief: $183,262 (goal $111,111)

Massachusetts Conference churches reported to the national setting that they collected 120,905 food items and sent 1,493 letters to Congress. The churches collected $8,053, and another 134 individuals from the Conference gave online donations of $24,646. Many local efforts were spotlighted on the UCC website.

First Church of Christ, UCC, in Sandwich was one of many local churches which took interest. When the members discovered that their own community was deeply affected by the injustice -- that their local food pantry’s shelves were bare -- they took action. The church decided that they would try to collect at least 111 food items for two area food pantries each week, with a total goal of at least 1,111 food items collected in 10 weeks. They did reach their goal, and in fact exceeded it -- with over 1,400 items collected.

First Congregational Church, UCC, of Oxford, lined their walkways with a ‘Share Garden.’ With the help of many young people in the church and community, a vegetable garden was planted and harvested all summer long. All of the harvest was donated weekly to the community’s Ecumenical Food Shelf, a local food pantry that was thrilled to receive the fresh produce.

Youth of the Essex Association of the Mass. Conference gathered at an event called Mission: 1, Challenge: 11. They did some great work for the Mission:1 campaign, as well as finding time for games and fellowship. More than 40 attendees donated 265 nonperishable food items for the Harvest for Hope food pantry in Salem. The group mailed 90 letters to Sen. Brown, Sen. Kerry and Rep. John Tierney, and used many of the resources that were sent out during the Mission: 1 campaign.

United Church of Christ, Congregational, Boxborough
Despite a snowstorm and power outage, the church was able to collect 1,100 healthy food items and $1,133.00 for Neighbors in Need. During worship, the children of the congregation led the letter writing and sent 100 letters to Senators Brown and Kerry and Congresswoman Tsongas.

Franklin Federated Church held a Cheerios Challenge. Over 600 boxes of Cheerios and canned goods were collected and donated to the Grow Clinic at Boston Medical Center, which specializes in the treatment of Failure to Thrive in young children.

The Sunday School children of First Church of Christ Congregational, Bedford, held a walk-a-thon, and took pledges for canned goods, money and letters from walk sponsors. Despite bad weather, the goal of 1,111 items of food was exceeded, with the church collecting 1,211 and counting, along with money and letters.

Many children brought in jars for the food pantry during peanut butter and jelly week at First Church of Christ in Sandwich – part of their participation in the Mission:1 campaign.
Mission & Justice: Helping to transform lives because none of us can do it alone

Here are some of the Mission & Justice actions taken by the Conference and local churches during 2011/2012. For more details, visit the “Changing our World” section of the Conference website, or contact the Rev. Peter Wells, Associate Conference Minister.

LGBT Asylum Task Force Supports 25 Individuals
In January, the LGBT Asylum Task Force, a ministry of Hadwen Park Congregational Church of Worcester, presented UCC Justice and Witness Ministries with a certificate of appreciation for their support. The LGBT Asylum Task Force, now a central Massachusetts volunteer organization affiliated with Lutheran Social Services, has supported over 25 LGBT (Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender) individuals seeking to escape violence and imprisonment in their home countries.

Supporting a Bill to Reduce Youth Homelessness
The 2011 Annual Meeting of the Massachusetts Conference approved a Resolution to End Homelessness among Youth and Young Adults in Massachusetts last June. That resolution called on churches to actively engage this issue.

The Massachusetts Coalition for the Homeless (MCH) is the lead organization behind House Bill 3838, an Act Providing Housing and Support Services for Unaccompanied Homeless Youth. This bill, supported by the Commission for Mission & Justice of the MA Conference, seeks to reduce youth homelessness and its adverse effects by funding a continuum of housing and support services geared specifically for unaccompanied homeless youth.

The Pilgrim District Women’s Association participated in a discussion and saw a presentation by MCH at their fall meeting. They learned how they could help support the bill, as well as other ways they could aid the homeless youth, such as volunteering at Father Bill’s Mainspring in Brockton (one of the agencies working with unaccompanied youth), joining the MACUCC’s Task Team to End Homelessness, attending the Coalition’s Legislative Action Day, or having individual churches participate in the 2012 National Hunger and Homelessness Awareness Week (Nov. 10-17, 2012).

New DNA Law Could Prevent Wrongful Imprisonments
Massachusetts was one of only two states (the other is Oklahoma) that did not allow access to DNA evidence that could exonerate innocent people who have been falsely imprisoned. After three years, a bill co-authored by Marie Lucca (Pastor of new church start A Different Christian Voice) and Rep. Brad Hill had a hearing by the Massachusetts Joint Committee on the Judiciary, and in February was passed into law.

Renewed Discussions on Anti-Racism
The 2011 Annual Meeting passed the Resolution Calling Churches to Commit to Pro-Active Anti-Racism. Since then the Anti-Racism Task Force members and allies have:
- offered to lead services and be guest preachers at their own and other churches
- led a workshop at a Super Saturday - If You Remove the Yoke From Among You: Committing to Pro-Active Anti-Racism
- sponsored a two-day training that included 16 people from MACUCC (both lay and clergy)
- established a white anti-racism support group
- established a listserve and conference call series for the participants in the training
- been witnesses for the UCC through blog posts and letters to the editor in the local press

This past spring and fall, the Mission and Justice Commission sponsored discussions on anti racism with groups of UCC clergy and lay members and are seeking more involvement from local churches. For more information, contact Russ Vernon Jones, First Church Amherst, russvj@gmail.com.

Putting Money Where Your Mouth Is
First Congregational Church in Amherst decided to move all its money and financial transactions from the Bank of America to a local bank. The vote represents a concern of the members of the church that Bank of America and other big banks do not operate in a way that is consistent with the church’s faith values.

Get all the latest updates and insights: macucc.org/missionjustice
Environmental Stewardship: Transforming the Earth
Many local congregations are going green

Get Green Certification
Massachusetts Conference Environmental Ministries has launched a new initiative to certify our local churches as Green Congregations with three levels of achievement. Churches satisfying the requirements at each level will be recognized at our Annual Meetings beginning in 2012, where they will be presented with an award commensurate with their achievement. (See details at: macucc.org.)

We’re encouraged that some churches have already achieved many of the goals listed and we celebrate and challenge those churches to help others in their community.

Here’s what some of our local churches have already accomplished:

The Congregational Church of Weston, UCC, participated in the Lenten Carbon Fast, including a sermon on the carbon fast as a spiritual discipline and life habit. They used their Good Friday vigil as a time to make members aware of the continued ‘crucifixion’ of the environment. Their Environmental Task Force helped bring Bill McKibben to Weston for a community lecture and environmental forum and helped sponsor a 350.org training session for environmental activists. The church continuously works to make the building more energy efficient.

Since 2007, First Congregational Church of Shrewsbury has been involved in environmental stewardship, including fostering green practices in church buildings and within the congregation, providing educational opportunities related to environmental issues and sound environmental practices, and expanding the commitment of church community to addressing environmental issues in the local community. Recent examples include installing LED bulbs in the church chandelier, hosting environmental talks, holding two Mass ReLeaf tree planting events, and creating a list of energy-saving Lenten sacrifices for children (visit www.fcsom.org for more information).

First Parish Church of Newbury brought together local organic community gardeners, chicken co-op shareholders, eco artists, church congregants, community supported agriculture growers and shareholders, and food and environmental organizations to model a sustainable community through inspiring a conscious, caring relationship to the earth and to each other. In 2011 they opened Our Secret Garden indoor/outdoor nursery and preschool, which they envision as the seed of a full school focused on environmental stewardship.

The Earth Ministry Team at First Congregational Church in Amherst, UCC has led the church by engaging almost every facet of congregational life: facilitating adult-education classes and film-screenings, planning environmentally-themed worship services, managing a Styrofoam recycling center, installing a bicycle rack, planting trees, providing members with energy-saving tips and hands-on assistance, encouraging participation in Lenten Carbon Fasts, and planting an edible garden that feeds church members and soup kitchen guests. In 2010-11, the team provided technical support for the replacement of the church’s oil-fired heating system, which has cut in half the church’s carbon footprint.

Grace Church, UCC, Framingham, with Edwards Church, UCC in Framingham formed Earthcare, to raise awareness about the biblical call to care for God’s creation and to deepen a commitment to practices that help sustain and restore the environment. Earthcare kicked-off a 350.org event with a bell choir ringing their bells 350 times along a busy road in Framingham. In addition, Grace Church held intergenerational local food cooking classes, planted trees through Mass ReLeaf, and hosted numerous speakers including one “environmental comedian.”

The Congregational Church in Needham arranged through NSTAR to have insulation and more efficient lighting put in the church. In addition, they installed four compost caddies in the kitchens, and a large outdoor composter, for coffee grounds, plant material and food wastes. They encourage members to walk/bike to church, have installed a bike rack, and logged the highest number of miles in their local walking/biking community program. The church has collected used cell phones to be recycled, gave away packets of flower and lettuce seeds on Earth Day, and uses Green Seal certified soap to reduce exposure to harmful chemicals in their church washrooms.

Learn how you can be a Green Congregation
www.macucc.org/environmental
The New Normal: Local Churches Transform Themselves

From a sermon by the Rev. Wendy Vander Hart, Associate Conference Minister

I think we can all agree that the world of 2012 is significantly different from the world of the 1700s, when many of our churches were built. I have been captured of late by the phrase, “the new normal” -- whether it refers to everything from the economy, technology, the use of social media, the climate, or many other things. I believe the phrase is apropos for the changing landscape of ministry and the challenges our churches face in the shifting sands of culture.

Let me paint a picture of “the new normal” for our churches. In any given community across the US only 17% are worshiping in a faith community on a Sunday morning. Some statistics say the percentage in New England is closer to only 9%. The average age of members of United Church of Christ congregations is 65. We have enough seminarians to fill one seminary, but not the seven that are associated with the United Church of Christ. And given the smaller size and older age of our congregations it is estimated that between 30-40% of our churches will close in the next 15-20 years. Add the characteristics of the culture at large to these challenges – like an increasingly multi-option society, the impact of social media on people’s way of relating to one another and the decline of institutions in general – and you can see that local church vitality faces an uphill battle.

Now that was the challenging news. Here is some good news. I can tell you some stories of UCC churches that are meeting that uphill battle of church vitality and are thriving. And they all have the same thing in common – they can clearly state who they are, why they are and for whom they are...

The United Church of Christ in Medfield – the discipleship church. Each member lives in covenant together around six marks of discipleship – daily prayer, daily Bible reading, weekly worship, generous giving, mission through and beyond the local church, and relating with others to foster spiritual growth. $700,000 of their $750,000 budget is met by people’s giving.

Old South Church in Boston – the blessing church. Located at the finish line of the Boston Marathon they bless the feet of the marathoners. They bless backpacks at the start of school, hammers for mission trips, animals – you name it, they will bless it.

First Congregational of Somerville, UCC – the testimony church. Everything they do is understood to be testimony to the faith they live. This even carries over to the front yard of the church that is fully taken over by a vegetable garden. It is a living testimony to who they understand themselves to be just outside of Davis Square. They also practice testimony in worship. Every week in worship the liturgist leads the time of confession and the offering by sharing testimony of his or her faith life. There is a one year waiting list to be liturgist!

Each one of these churches has at least two things in common: 1) They have clarity of the mission God has called them to; and 2) that mission is rooted in the re-claiming of ancient practices.

Ironically, the renewal of the church is dependent upon recapturing the past for the present day. The acts of discipleship, blessing, testifying and changing lives of these thriving churches are all rooted in ancient Christian practices. UCC Medfield, Old South and First Somerville have found in the roots of our heritage a source of life and a sense of purpose.

The key is to listen to the Holy Spirit and be authentic to who God is calling you to be in this present moment and in this neighborhood. You don’t have to be the blessing church or the testimony church or the discipleship church or the transformation church unless that is who you are.

The wonderful gift of being clear about your mission/purpose is that you will help shape people who live that mission in their daily lives. That is who you are called to be in this new normal, in this day and age: a community which has hundreds of people following your every move because they see and experience in you something of Jesus still alive, still present, still calling people out into the world.
Transformation in Meeting Spaces …
New venues enable more ministry outside church and office facilities

Associate Conference Minister Holds Office Hours at Panera Bread Locations

Following on a practice in which a number of MACUCC clergy have been engaged for some time, Associate Conference Minister Wendy Vander Hart established regular “office hours” in an offsite location. Once a week she is holding office hours in a different Panera Bread location in the Greater Boston area.

“I consulted some of our pastors who hold office hours in places like the Diesel Café and JP Licks so I had a sense of what to expect,” said Wendy, “and they helped me navigate the times when more than one person shows up.” Usually, people have let Wendy know ahead of time when they planned to drop in. But at times when more than one person has come by at the same time, they have ended up ministering to each other.

“I have had conversation with a retired Pastor who was feeling disconnected and isolated, counseled clergy in a search process, greeted pastors new to the Conference, met with a lay person about putting together a search committee and even met a complete stranger to whom I gave the websites for the two local UCC churches in Danvers. I don’t think some of these conversations would have happened had there not been this more accessible way to engage,” noted Wendy.

When the time is not filled in conversation, there is free wireless that allows for catch-up on email. “It bears witness to a message the staff are communicating to our churches and pastors that our ministry is outside of the walls of the church building.”

You can find Wendy’s office hours and locations on the Metropolitan Boston and Northeast Associations pages on the Conference website at: macucc.org/regions.

It’s the “Talk of the Town” — New UCC Church Opens “Conversation Café"

Life after death, racism, natural disasters, worry, loneliness, alcoholism, divorce … these are just some of the topics that are being talked about at the weekly “conversation café” being hosted by A Different Christian Voice, Massachusetts’ new non-traditional UCC church. On Sunday afternoons at 4:30 pm, people of all ages are gathering together in the Voice’s beautiful “coffee house sanctuary” for guided discussions about everyday life and faith. Each conversation café features an original film, interesting stories, and meaningful prayers about a thought-provoking spiritual topic. It’s like a live, local talk show but with an inspirational twist!

A Different Christian Voice is a true local missionary effort, designed to reach those who have never before been part of a faith community. In March, the new congregation moved into a storefront location in Middleton, and parishioners quickly set out to paint and transform the space into a comfortable yet sacred setting. Instead of pews, there are café tables, couches and easy chairs surrounding the altar. Icons, candles and other sacred items are sprinkled throughout. There’s even a children’s corner filled with books and toys, and of course, there’s a coffee bar. “We serve free Fair Trade snacks and beverages,” explains Rev. Marie Lucca, founder and pastor of the progressive new church plant, “and I encourage people to get up and refill their plates or top off their cups anytime during our gatherings.”

This new model of church seems to be particularly attractive to younger adults, teenagers and those who prefer a more hands-on and engaging faith experience. For example, although the Voice is solidly grounded in Scripture, the Creeds and Trinitarian theology, they routinely incorporate spiritual practices from other faith traditions and place great emphasis on the arts and community service projects in order to create a hope-filled spiritual connection. Plus, the church has a robust online presence and invites parishioners to participate electronically in the same topical conversations that occur each week at the live venue. It is Rev. Lucca’s hope to raise enough money by 2013 to start offering more formal worship services and at that time, the conversation cafés will be shifted to a different day of the week. The Commission for Evangelism and Congregational Vitality has provided resources and guidance to Lucca in this effort. Although there is currently no available funding for new church starts, the Conference has been encouraging individuals and congregations to support the effort through donations. Online contributions can be made at: macucc.org/donate. (More info: www.adifferentchristianvoice.org.)
Transforming Pastors…
Campaign Update: Giving to the Sustaining Pastoral Excellence Endowment Campaign as of April 30, 2012

At our Annual Meeting in 2011, we officially “kicked-off” the Sustaining Pastoral Excellence Endowment Campaign. One year into the five-year campaign, we have raised $933,472, 27% of our $3.5 Million goal.

$592,072 has come from individual donors. This is nearly three times the amount raised from individuals as part of The Gift and the Promise Campaign. It is very affirming that so many people, lay and clergy alike, have stepped up to make significant gifts to sustain the Pastoral Excellence Program.

A combination of wrap-around capital campaigns, one-time gifts, multi-year pledges and special offering proceeds has raised a total of $341,399 from congregations.

As churches continue to recover from the effects of the “Great Recession” and turn their attention to long-deferred building needs, we are confident that many more congregations will participate in “wrap-around” campaigns. This was the single greatest source of giving during The Gift and the Promise Campaign.

For information on how you and/or your congregation can give, contact Andy Gustafson at (508) 875-5233 or gustafsona@macucc.org. Find out the latest on the campaign by visiting macucc.org/excellence.

*So far, five churches have engaged in “wrap-around” campaigns, where a portion of the monies raised as part of their local church capital campaigns has been committed to the Sustaining Pastoral Excellence Endowment Campaign. These are Central Congregational Church, UCC in Attleboro Falls; Second Congregational Church, UCC in Beverly; Christ Church United in Lowell; Central Square Congregational Church, UCC in Bridgewater and First Congregational of Somerville, UCC.

Unified Fitness Review Passed by Eight Associations So Far

Formerly, the Committees on Ministry of each of our 11 Associations conducted their own Fitness Reviews when there was an allegation of clergy misconduct. A Fitness Review is meant to assure that concerns about a pastor’s fitness for ministry are taken seriously and considered in depth, and that decisions rendered, along with resulting actions, are just, fair, appropriate and compassionate for all concerned.

The Conference regional ministers have been working with the leadership of our 11 Associations to agree on a proposal to unify that work into one committee. The proposal provides each of the 11 Associations of the Massachusetts Conference, UCC, with an opportunity to delegate the various functions and adjudication of a Fitness Review to a Unified Fitness Review Committee. The Unified Fitness Review Committee is to be formed by the Associations of the Massachusetts Conference and staffed by an Associate Conference Minister. As of this writing, eight Associations have passed the proposal, and it is anticipated that the other three will consider the proposal in the Fall. See the full proposal here: macucc.org/ufrc.
A Transformation in Ways to Communicate

What do we think? Read the blogs.

The Massachusetts Conference Website took steps over the past year to go from being simply a source for information and resources to a home for dialogue and conversation.

In the summer of 2011, nine Conference delegates to the United Church of Christ General Synod in Tampa, Florida, blogged from the meeting, posting their thoughts and impressions on the business and atmosphere of the gathering. (macucc.org/synodblog)

“This was the first time our representatives to Synod were able to speak so directly and immediately to the folks they were representing,” said Tiffany Vail, Associate for Communication. “It was very exciting to be able to offer our delegates that opportunity, and I’m so glad that so many took us up on it.”

An MACUCC Staff blog and a Board of Directors blog were also launched in 2011. The staff blog features the writing of members of the executive and program staff. Topics so far have included everything from the Occupy Boston movement, to social networking, to covenant, to the need for churches to have clarity of mission (macucc.org/staffblog). The Board blog provides updates on the issues the Board is working on after each meeting (macucc.org/bodblog).

In 2012, a Mission and Justice blog was launched to provide a home for news and opinion related to the many justice issues that engage the members of the Conference, including LGBT concerns, homelessness and economic issues. A blog post by Associate Conference Minister Peter Wells on the Trevon Martin case stirred widespread conversation, and was picked up by the national UCC Justice and Witness e-newsletter (macucc.org/missionjustice).

Blogs relating to other topics within the Conference will be added over the coming months. Blog posts are highlighted through the Massachusetts Conference Facebook page and Twitter feed, and links to them are included in regular emails sent to churches and other mailing lists. Comments from the public are welcomed in response to all blog posts.

“The blogging format allows for give and take, for conversation, rather than limiting us to one-way communication,” Vail said. “It is truly a covenant builder.”

Social Media Seeps into Local Church Traditions

This past year, many churches put their toes into the oceans of the latest technologies. In an effort to reach people who spend much of their time sitting in front of a computer or gathering information with their smartphones, some churches have initiated programs that involve social media, YouTube, twitter, blogs, and Facebook. Here are some of spotlights that might inspire you to take the plunge. (See entire stories at macucc.org/spotlight.)

In this age of MTV, movie trailer commercials on iPhones, and just-released movies downloaded on demand, what better way to bring VBS to the attention of kids and parents than by producing a music video? First Congregational Church in Norwood promoted vacation bible school and shared the children’s exuberance via music videos. The result was a fun, inspiring, promotional 4-minute video that was uploaded to YouTube and the church’s Facebook page, among other sites.

During Advent, 2010, the Congregational Church of Belchertown, UCC told a piece of the Christmas story each day in 140 characters or less using Twitter. In 2011, the church told the story via YouTube. The Belchertown church also came up with a web-accessible version of an Advent Calendar that housed video clips and messages. The messages were posted on Facebook, so followers received notice of them and could post them to their own pages for sharing.

QR Barcodes were printed on the back of Congregational Church of Topsfield service orders to retrieve supplemental resource information about the sermon using smart phones or a 3G-enabled Apple® iPad® while in church. This interactive way of worshipping is one of the bridges that will keep worship life ‘current,’ and members connected, while maintaining the integrity of the church’s traditions.

There’s one social media item that keeps popping up among these technologically innovative churches: Facebook. Many churches are using Facebook as their main vehicle of communication. If you don’t yet have a Facebook page, consider publishing one and monitoring the feedback. You may be pleasantly surprised at how quickly your word spreads.

(Visit macuccwiki.org and click “Social Networking” for setting up a Facebook presence for your church.)
Transformation Tools

Crossroads Massachusetts

Helping churches choose their own futures

In the past year, several churches found themselves with sparsely-populated pews, thin budgets, aging membership, a decline in financial resources, or overwhelming facility costs -- and members didn’t know if they had any options or where to turn. They can now turn to Crossroads. Crossroads Massachusetts, a new Conference ministry, is designed for congregations that find themselves at a crossroads and want to intentionally discern their path forward.

At this writing, nine churches have gone through a detailed assessment, and have received training on how to discuss that assessment within the church (in meetings, small groups, etc.) with a goal of making a bold decision about their future. Such decisions might include moving, creating a new vision, “re-starting,” nesting another congregation or closing. Crossroads does not force change on a congregation; neither does it settle conflicts. Crossroads does, however, assess the strengths and challenges of a congregation as it seeks to make a faithful decision about the future of its ministry in the community. Once a decision is made, members are mentored in carrying it out. It is expected that the nine churches will make their decisions in the Fall of 2012.

For more information, go to macucc.org/crossroads.

Inspiring Generosity... Together

More than 160 people attended 6 different regional breakfasts offered free of charge by the Stewardship and Mission & Justice ministry teams. These breakfasts bring participants together to discuss best practices for being a generous church -- within and beyond the local congregation.

The Resource Center

Looking for resources to help enrich or transform your ministries? The Framingham Resource Center can provide:

- the best curriculum to use in Church School
- materials for Lenten Adult Education programs
- materials for integrating children more fully into the church’s worship life
- Christmas Eve service items
- mission project ideas
- Confirmation resources
- scripture to undergird the work of committees

Just contact the Resource Center (call, email, or drop in). You’ll get help finding videos, DVD’s, books, curriculum samples and web-based materials on these subjects and so much more. Contact Martha Cook at coookm@macucc.org, or visit macucc.org/resource-center for an online searchable database of available resources.
Hispanic Ministries Update

This past year the Evangelism and Vitality Commission launched a new initiative to support Hispanic Ministries in the MACUCC.

- A funding campaign has begun, seeking support for each of our Hispanic congregations to help this ministry become sustainable.
- A gathering was held in January of 2012 to acquaint people with the life-changing impact of these ministries.
- A steering committee has been formed to help support and integrate the ministries of our Hispanic churches into the life of our Conference of churches.
- Members of Iglesia Hispana de la Comunidad in Lowell will be part of music and worship leadership at Annual Meeting.

Adams Square Church Members Transform a Building into a Legacy

The Adams Square Congregational Church closed its doors on January 16, 2011 after a long and fruitful ministry in the Burncoat neighborhood of Worcester. Like most churches which close, despite being a loving and faithful congregation, the dwindling membership became too small to effectively continue. A lasting legacy is left in the hearts of all those who were touched by the church’s ministries over the years.

The congregation also left a lasting financial legacy. In addition to gifts to local Worcester churches, Adams Square Congregational Church gave $50,000 to the Massachusetts Conference. $10,000 was directed to help victims of Hurricane Irene. More details on this gift and how it has been used can be found at: http://www.macucc.org/adams.

The other $40,000 was unrestricted. The Board of Directors of the Mass. Conference voted to place the unrestricted portion of the gift into the Sustaining Pastoral Excellence Endowment Fund. In this way, the legacy of Adams Square Congregational Church will live on through vital congregations who benefit from the Pastoral Excellence Program by having well trained, well resourced and well supported pastors. (See page 12.)
40 MACUCC Churches Reach 5 for 5 Status in 2011

“5 for 5 Churches” have contributed to Our Church’s Wider Mission Basic Support and all 4 Special Offerings in 2011:

• One Great Hour of Sharing  • Neighbors in Need  
• Strengthen the Church  • Christmas Fund

These churches exemplify excellence in Christian mission by supporting all the ways the United Church of Christ is changing lives, whether through disaster assistance, hunger programs, justice work, church vitality, leadership development, youth and children’s ministries, new church starts, or assistance to low income retired clergy.

First Congregational Church, Amherst, UCC  
West Parish Church of Andover  
United Church of Pelham, Belchertown  
UCC Congregational of Boxborough  
Central Square Congr. Church, UCC, Bridgewater  
Christ Congregational Church, UCC, Brockton  
South Congregational Church, Centerville  
Central Congregational Church, Chelmsford  
West Concord Union Church, Concord  
Allin Congregational Church, UCC, Dedham  
First Congregational Church of Dudley, UCC  
Union Congregational Church, UCC, Groton  
First Congregational Church, Hatfield  
Chaffin Congregational Church, Holden  
Lakeville United Church of Christ  
Pilgrim Congregational Church, Lexington  
Mashpee Congregational Church, UCC  
The United Church of Christ in Medfield  
First Church Congregational UCC, Methuen  
Central Congregational Church UCC, Newburyport  
The Second Church in Newton, UCC  
Trinity Church Northborough  
First Church in Pembroke  
Church of the Pilgrimage, UCC, Plymouth  
Houghs Neck Congregational Church, Quincy  
Wollaston Congregational Church UCC, Quincy  
First Church of Christ, UCC, Sandwich  
First Congregational Church of Sheffield, UCC  
First Congregational of Somerville, UCC  
Congregational Church of South Hadley Falls  
First Congregational Church of South Hadley  
First Congregational Church UCC, Spencer  
First Congregational Church UCC, Stoughton  
Townsend Congregational Church, UCC  
Union Congregational Church, UCC, Walpole  
West Yarmouth Congregational Church, UCC  
First Congregational Church UCC, Whitman  
The First Congregational Church in Worcester, Inc.  
United Congregational Church, Worcester

Open and Affirming Hits 1,000 — (110 in Massachusetts!)
When the Massachusetts Conference Annual Meeting passed the first Open and Affirming Resolution in 1984, it would have been hard to foresee that 28 years later there would be 1,000 ONA churches across the country. That’s what happened on February 21, 2012, when The Pillar of Love Fellowship UCC in Chicago was added to the ONA registry. Just over 10% of all ONA churches in the UCC are in the MA Conference. Massachusetts Conference ONA churches now number 110, and “A Different Christian Voice” — the new church start in Middleton, MA, started in 2011 — began as an ONA church.

Changes

• Orthodox Congregational Church, Petersham, #3700 — Withdrew Jan. 30, 2011
• Pleasant Street Congregational Church, Arlington, #190 — Closed Feb. 5, 2011
• Union Congregational Church, Winthrop, #5340 — Closed May 1, 2011
• United Riverside Congregational Church, Lawrence, #2430 — Transferred to National Association of Congregational Christian Churches May 12, 2011
• Northbridge Centre Congregational Church, #3450 — Closed June 5, 2011
• Adams Square Congregational Church, Worcester, #5380 — Closed Nov. 4, 2011.

Seafarer’s Friend
Celebrated 185 years in the port of Boston
Since 1827, the mission of Seafarer’s Friend is to extend the ministry of the church, to meet the unmet spiritual, social, emotional, and practical needs of the maritime community in New England.
## 2011 Top 30 Giving Churches (Per Member)

Includes 5 for 5 (Our Church’s Wider Mission Basic Support, One Great Hour of Sharing, Neighbors in Need, Strengthen the Church & Christmas Fund), Fellowship Dues, Disaster relief and all other designated giving through the Conference.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Church</th>
<th>Association</th>
<th>Members</th>
<th>Received</th>
<th>Per member</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The Second Church in Newton, UCC</td>
<td>Metropolitan Boston</td>
<td>328</td>
<td>$67,817.41</td>
<td>$206.76</td>
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<tr>
<td>Faith United Parish, Fitchburg</td>
<td>Central</td>
<td>64</td>
<td>$13,001.33</td>
<td>203.15</td>
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<tr>
<td>United Parish of Auburndale, Newton</td>
<td>Metropolitan Boston</td>
<td>160</td>
<td>$32,492.50</td>
<td>203.08</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Congregational of Somerville, UCC</td>
<td>Metropolitan Boston</td>
<td>123</td>
<td>$16,870.70</td>
<td>137.16</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Congregational Church, UCC, Reading</td>
<td>Metropolitan Boston</td>
<td>248</td>
<td>$33,706.38</td>
<td>135.91</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mount Vernon Congregational Church, Boston</td>
<td>Metropolitan Boston</td>
<td>52</td>
<td>$6,860.00</td>
<td>131.92</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Richmond Congregational Church UCC</td>
<td>Berkshire</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>$7,863.20</td>
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<tr>
<td>The First Congregational Church of Rockport, UCC</td>
<td>Essex</td>
<td>174</td>
<td>$22,033.91</td>
<td>126.63</td>
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<tr>
<td>Newton Highlands Congregational Church, UCC</td>
<td>Metropolitan Boston</td>
<td>148</td>
<td>$18,048.10</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Church in Cambridge</td>
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<td>464</td>
<td>$54,812.80</td>
<td>118.13</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The Federated Church of Orleans</td>
<td>Barnstable</td>
<td>235</td>
<td>$27,592.46</td>
<td>117.41</td>
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<tr>
<td>Church of the Covenant, Federated, Boston</td>
<td>Metropolitan Boston</td>
<td>65</td>
<td>$7,626.01</td>
<td>117.32</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Feeding Hills Congregational Church, UCC</td>
<td>Hampden</td>
<td>59</td>
<td>$6,694.00</td>
<td>113.46</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Hancock United Church of Christ, Lexington</td>
<td>Metropolitan Boston</td>
<td>695</td>
<td>$78,646.97</td>
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<tr>
<td>Roslindale Congregational Church, Boston</td>
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<td>$4,738.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Congregational Church in Winchester, UCC</td>
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<td>475</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Congregational Church UCC of Harwich</td>
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<td>176</td>
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<tr>
<td>Old South Union Church, Weymouth</td>
<td>Pilgrim</td>
<td>416</td>
<td>$43,917.51</td>
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<tr>
<td>UCC Congregational Church of Norwell</td>
<td>Pilgrim</td>
<td>394</td>
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<td>West Concord Union Church</td>
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<td>162</td>
<td>$16,674.06</td>
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<tr>
<td>Tabernacle Church Congregational, UCC, Salem</td>
<td>Essex</td>
<td>133</td>
<td>$13,636.46</td>
<td>102.53</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Old South Church in Boston</td>
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<td>638</td>
<td>$64,820.00</td>
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<tr>
<td>North Congregational Church, UCC, Amherst</td>
<td>Hampshire</td>
<td>22</td>
<td>$2,234.50</td>
<td>101.57</td>
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<tr>
<td>Plainfield Congregational Church, Inc.</td>
<td>Hampshire</td>
<td>42</td>
<td>$4,170.80</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Congregational Church UCC, Stoughton</td>
<td>Pilgrim</td>
<td>166</td>
<td>$16,407.80</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>UCC Congregational of Boxborough</td>
<td>Central</td>
<td>204</td>
<td>$19,949.80</td>
<td>97.79</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First United Parish of Everett</td>
<td>Metropolitan Boston</td>
<td>38</td>
<td>$3,653.60</td>
<td>96.15</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>United Parish of Lunenburg</td>
<td>Central</td>
<td>159</td>
<td>$15,140.23</td>
<td>95.22</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>First Congregational Church of Leverett</td>
<td>Hampshire</td>
<td>71</td>
<td>$6,667.40</td>
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<tr>
<td>First Parish of Westwood, UCC</td>
<td>Metropolitan Boston</td>
<td>231</td>
<td>$21,692.20</td>
<td>93.91</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Membership based on most recent report received. Received is the amount received between 1/1/2011 and 12/31/2011
All the funds the Massachusetts Conference receives come from God’s generous people, who seek to change lives for Christ through supporting the work that can only be done by the wider church. This support comes in a number of ways:

♥ **Fellowship Dues**, paid by congregations on a per-member basis. This rate is set each year by the Annual Meeting. In addition, Associations add a small amount to cover Association programs and expenses. In 2012, the Conference portion of the dues is $17.20, unchanged from 2011.

♥ **Our Church’s Wider Mission Basic Support**, given by congregations and shared with the national setting. In 2012, 53% will be remitted to the national setting and 47% retained by the Conference.

♥ Income from a variety of **endowments**, some unrestricted and some restricted for specific purposes. The endowments have been built over the years from a combination of planned gifts from individuals, monies donated by churches which have closed, and through gifts from both congregations and individuals as part of capital campaigns, such as The Gift and the Promise Campaign and the Sustaining Pastoral Excellence Endowment Campaign.

♥ **Designated giving by both individuals and congregations**. This includes giving for disaster relief, special offerings, Sustaining Pastoral Excellence Endowment Campaign, Hispanic Ministries, new church starts, and other purposes. Much of this flows through the Conference to the national setting or other agencies who are carrying out the mission; in these cases, the Conference forwards 100% of the funds contributed.

♥ **Grants** have provided a major source of financial resources for the Conference. The Lilly Endowment grants for the Pastoral Excellence Program are well known. The Conference has also received numerous grants from the Carpenter Foundation for various purposes over the years, most recently for the Celebrating Call conference and for Hispanic Ministries.

♥ **Individual donations to the Annual Fund** and to special projects of the Conference.

♥ **Net revenue from Pilgrim Day Camp**.

♥ **Income from participation fees for events and communities of practice**.

Churches are more vital, they are connected more strongly together in covenant, and God’s love and justice is made real to more and more people – thanks to all the generous support given by the people and congregations of the Massachusetts Conference, United Church of Christ!
### How Much Goes Where?

**RESOURCES ANTICIPATED - 2012** ...............$3,663,700

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Source</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Basic Support National Share</td>
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<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Basic Support Conference Share</td>
<td>$789,150</td>
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<tr>
<td>Fellowship Dues</td>
<td>$970,700</td>
<td>27</td>
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<tr>
<td>Lilly Endowment Grant Funds</td>
<td>$411,500</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pastoral Excellence Program Income</td>
<td>$44,000</td>
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</tr>
<tr>
<td>Income from Endowments</td>
<td>$302,000</td>
<td>8</td>
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<tr>
<td>Net Retreat Center &amp; Camp Revenue</td>
<td>$106,100</td>
<td>3</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Individual Donations &amp; Miscellaneous Income</td>
<td>$150,400</td>
<td>4</td>
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</table>

**MINISTRIES TO BE FUNDED (see next page for details)** ...............$3,663,700

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Use</th>
<th>Amount</th>
<th>Percentage</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Support of Nat’l UCC Ministries</td>
<td>$889,850</td>
<td>24</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Regionally-based Ministries</td>
<td>$643,900</td>
<td>17</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Leadership Development &amp; Pastoral Excellence</td>
<td>$437,350</td>
<td>12</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evangelism, Church Starts &amp; Turnarounds</td>
<td>$130,400</td>
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<tr>
<td>Stewardship &amp; Financial Development</td>
<td>$199,900</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ecumenical Partnerships</td>
<td>$58,600</td>
<td>2</td>
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<tr>
<td>Mission &amp; Justice</td>
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<tr>
<td>Educational Ministries</td>
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<td>Communications</td>
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<tr>
<td>Office &amp; Administrative</td>
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<tr>
<td>Buildings &amp; Equipment</td>
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<tr>
<td>Minister &amp; President Office, Governance</td>
<td>$210,700</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Where Does The Money Go?

![Pie chart showing the distribution of funds.](chart.png)
Conference Ministries to be Funded - 2012

**Support for National UCC Ministries - $889,850 (24%)**
- Wider Ministries
- Justice and Witness Ministries
- Local Church Ministries
- Office of General Ministries

**Regional Ministries - $643,900 (17%)**
- Pastoral search and call
- Conflict intervention and resolution
- Support for churches and pastors
- Assistance/support for Association boards & committees
- Regional programs

**Leadership Development - $437,350 (12%)**
- Compensation guidelines for clergy & other church employees
- Pastoral Excellence Program
- Clergy Communities of Practice
- New Clergy Groups
- Colloquies and continuing education
- Safe Church information

**Educational Ministries - $95,000 (3%)**
- Seasonal Sunday school resources
- Curriculum
- Christian educator training, networking, certification
- CE educator cluster groups
- CE consulting
- Connect: Christian educator’s e-newsletter
- Resource Center Curriculum Open Houses

**Youth Ministry**
- *Education for Effective Youth Ministry* trainings
- Confirmation retreats
- Mission trips
- Resources for youth ministry

**Evangelism and Church Vitality - $130,400 (3%)**
- Oversight of new church start pastors and revitalization projects
- Church visioning & vitality resources and consulting
- MissionInsight demographic data

**Mission and Justice - $131,600 (4%)**
- Disaster Response Ministries
- Mission Partnerships in Chile and South Africa
- Task forces on Race & Justice, Jubilee, Environmental Ministries, Homelessness, MA Innocence Commission, and Restorative Justice
- Open & Affirming and marriage resources
- MassReLeaf ministry
- *Ever Flowing Streams* newsletter

**Stewardship and Financial Development - $199,900 (5%)**
- Super Saturdays
- Local church consulting on stewardship, planned giving, endowments and capital campaigns
- OCWM mission interpretation
- *Being a Generous Church* regional breakfasts
- Clergy Income Tax Workshop
- *Inspiring Generosity* newsletter
- Local Church Finance Handbook & other resources

**Communication/ Technology - $208,300 (6%)**
- Conference web site
- Resources for church web sites
- Webfests for local church staff and lay leaders
- Communications “wiki” for local churches
- Social media work and resources
- Spotlight emailing series
- Tips on talking to the media
- UCC Identity resources
- Emailing and “The Mailing” info packets
- Annual Report and other publications
- Phone, mail and email costs

**Ecumenical Partnerships - $58,600 (2%)**
- Dialogue and advocacy with other denominations
- Support of Boston-Cambridge campus ministries

**Minister & President/ Governance - $210,700 (6%)**
- Oversight of Conference ministry, program and budget
- Liaison with national and ecumenical agencies
- Representation of Conference in public media
- Minister and pastor among MACUCC churches
- Board of Directors
- General Synod delegation
- Annual Meeting

**Administration - $452,100 (12%)**
- Financial management, audit and accounting
- Legal
- Office expenses
- Routine office building maintenance and utilities
- Property and liability insurance

**Buildings and Equipment - $206,000 (6%)**
- Equipment for all offices
- Major repairs to Conference-owned property at Craigville and Framingham
Annual Meeting 2011
Directory

Staff

Based in Framingham

One Badger Road, Framingham, MA 01702-5517
Phone (508) 875-5233
Fax (508) 875-5485

The Rev. Dr. Jim Antal
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Ms. Tiffany Vail
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Based in Regional Offices

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Conference Facilities

Diane Montgomery
Site Manager
Edwards House Meeting and Retreat Center
Framingham, MA
montgomeryd@macucc.org; ext. 271
edwardshouseframingham.org

Ms. Mary Woodbury, Director
Craigville Retreat Center
Centerville, Cape Cod
508-775-1265
info@craigvilleretreats.org
craigvilleretreats.org

National Setting

UCC Headquarters
700 Prospect Avenue
Cleveland, OH 44115-1100
Web site: www.ucc.org

Office of General Ministries
216-736-2100

Justice and Witness Ministries
216-736-3700

Local Church Ministries
216-736-3800

Pension Boards
212-870-2777

Global Ministries
866-822-8224

UCC Insurance
(Information) 800-437-8830
(Claims) 800-832-7839

Wider Church Ministries
216-736-3200

Other Useful Contact Information

Church World Service
Disaster Hot Line: 800-456-1310

City Mission Society of Boston
617-742-6830

Congregational Library
617-523-0470

Massachusetts Congregational Fund
800-514-1111

Massachusetts Council of Churches
617-523-2771

Worcester Area Mission Society
508-832-3937

Andover Newton Theological School
617-964-1100

Seafarer’s Friend
617-889-6315