

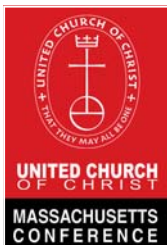


# BE BOLD

IN

VITALITY,  
COLLABORATION,  
AND  
JUSTICE

MASSACHUSETTS  
CONFERENCE,  
UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST



2016  
ANNUAL  
REPORT

“...proclaiming the kingdom of God and teaching about the Lord Jesus Christ with all boldness and without hindrance.”  
- Acts 28:31



May 2016

Dear Friends of the Massachusetts Conference, UCC,

Not a day goes by that I don't pause to give thanks to God for the opportunity to serve among the leaders of the Massachusetts Conference, United Church of Christ. Three of the qualities that most distinguish both the MACUCC staff and our Conference Board of Directors are these:

- We **pay attention** to the churches, the pastors and the leaders of our congregations. We listen to what challenges you are facing and respond, offering our experience, vision and hope.
- We **collaborate** with innovative leaders in Massachusetts and beyond. We join forces with entrepreneurial efforts within the UCC and beyond. And whenever we connect with something worthwhile, we share that connection with you. We are constantly encouraging our churches as well as our lay and clergy leaders to embrace collaboration and interdependence as an expression of faithfulness.
- We believe God is calling the UCC in Massachusetts (and beyond!) to **engage a bold public witness** that can offer a new public narrative of justice and hope.

And one thing more. We believe that as we live out these qualities – listening and responding, collaboration and boldness – we will be enhancing the vitality of our congregations as well as the courage and conviction of our lay and clergy leaders.

These qualities are apparent everywhere in the pages that follow. These stories – your witness – attest to my confidence in the truth of what our General Minister and President, John Dorhauer, is saying about the UCC: The Holy Spirit envisions a future in which we matter!

YES SHE DOES – thanks to our churches and the ministry to which we are called.

Faithfully,

Jim Antal  
Minister and President

# MASSACHUSETTS CONFERENCE MINISTRIES

## INSIDE THIS REPORT

This year, the Massachusetts Conference staff and Board – reflecting the needs expressed by churches and their pastors – has focused primarily on three areas: Vital Churches in a New Day; Collaboration among Conferences and Churches; and Racial, Climate, and Economic Justice. We address these issues in the following pages of this Annual Report.

### VITALITY

#### **BEING VITAL CHURCHES IN A NEW DAY.**

The landscape of ministry is changing – rapidly. Conference staff are constantly seeking new ways and new resources to help churches learn how to adapt and thrive. Find out more about these offerings, and about some new ministry initiatives already happening in our midst, on **pages 4-7**.

### COLLABORATION

#### **COLLABORATION.**

A new sense of collaboration has infused much of our work – from joining together with the Connecticut and Rhode Island conferences on programs and ministry, to working with those outside the denomination on climate change. Read more starting on **page 8**.



*When you see this symbol, you know we are working in collaboration.*

### JUSTICE

#### **RACIAL, CLIMATE AND ECONOMIC JUSTICE.**

The Conference's work on justice issues this year has primarily fallen into these specific areas, in ways such as offering new racial justice training programs, taking on climate justice interns and working with churches on refugee issues. Read more on **pages 10-15**.

Also in this report, you will find:

#### **THE NUMBERS**

Detailed information on the Conference income and spending and on church giving, **pages 17-23**.

#### **DIRECTORY OF RESOURCES**

Is your church taking advantage of all the Conference has to offer? Find out on **pages 30-34**.

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*God is still speaking,*  
**UNITED CHURCH  
OF CHRIST**



## LISTENING, RESPONDING, CHALLENGING



We often hear from church leaders that they want help meeting the challenge of change and, in particular, how to be and do church in a new day.

One thing we're learning is that, today, more people are longing for authentic, welcoming, compassionate communities. They're yearning for places that are making a difference in their neighborhoods and world. They're searching for communities that are deeply grounded in an experience of the Holy. And they're "done" with churches that are primarily focused on status quo or self-preservation.

As we listen to local churches, we're reminded of author Gil Rendle's observation in *Doing the Math of Mission* that a fundamental characteristic of vital, thriving churches is a clear sense of their mission: their identity and purpose given by God. This makes sense. People now are looking for communities of faith that have a clear, God-given sense of their reason for being.

The awareness of this new reality, coupled with the expressed needs of local churches, form the foundation of a number of Conference initiatives:

- The **Crossroads/New Beginnings** program, which invites churches to make a bold and faithful decision in the face of an uncertain future.
- Our new **Churches Alive** program that helps churches to explore what God is calling them to do and be in the next chapter of their lives.
- Our work with churches entering **times of transition**.
- Each of our **Super Saturday workshops**.
- Special presentations by national leaders like Marcia McFee to help our churches enliven **the experience of God in worship**.
- Our ministry to support and guide clergy through **Communities of Practice** and **Tending the Fire**.
- **Eight New Ministry Initiatives** that we're nurturing in our commonwealth.

Our Conference is committed to making God's realm of love and justice real. We know that the primary place that this will take root is through the mission and ministry of local churches. That's why we're working to strengthen congregations and, at times, pushing them to try new things and take faithful risks.

In an era of challenge to institutional religion, we believe our best years still lie ahead and that God is good – all the time.

### MCFEE BROUGHT BACK FOR WORKSHOP DUE TO DEMAND

When was the last time you were told to 'think like a filmmaker' when you are planning worship? That's exactly what Worship Consultant Marcia McFee told the 400+ crowd at the Fall Super Saturday. Drawing on a first career in professional dance and musical theater and equipped with a Master's in Theology and a PhD in Liturgical Studies, she has designed and led worship for regional, national and international gatherings of several denominations for the last 20 years. McFee's keynote address discussed "creating worship with deep soul," and "the rhythms of liturgy and life and the politics of change." She was so well-received by the crowd that they wanted to hear more. In response, the Conference invited her back to present a full day Worship Design Workshop in the Spring.



Super Saturday was a collaboration among the Southern New England Conferences



# CROSSROADS: A BOLD DECISION PROCESS

Many of our churches are at a crossroads – some are seeking renewed vision, some are looking for new purpose, others recognize survival is a deep question and still others know something bold needs to happen.

Certainly times have changed since many of our churches were founded 100, 200 and even 300+ years ago. Within our lifetime we have seen significant shifts in culture, generations and institutions.

As of 2015, 28 congregations who were asking a question about God's future for them have participated in a program we have named Crossroads. In short, it is an assessment to a bold decision process that has given new life and direction to the ministries of these congregations.

The Crossroads journey includes an outside assessment from a trained assessor who looks at participation levels, use of facilities, financial records and neighborhood demographics to create a report. With training and a step-by-step guide, the congregation receives that report and uses it as the focus of a series of small group meetings meant to engage 50% of the worship attendance of the church. From a place of deep engagement and prayer the process leads the congregation to ask three questions: Who are we now? Who is our neighbor? and Who is God calling us to be? The gathered data from the series of conversations leads to discernment of a category of decision and then coaching to fully implement and live into that determination.

Although Crossroads is facilitated by objective consultants, the process works because THE CONGREGATION ultimately reviews the data, hosts the conversation and makes its own decision for the future. It has been a powerful journey for many of these churches in Massachusetts and the 500 plus across the country that have engaged this process. Here are some local stories:



## CHURCHES THAT CHOSE TO BE BOLD AT THE CROSSROADS

### NORTH CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH, WOBURN



North Congregational Church in Woburn redefined its mission: now they are all about "Feeding Body and Soul." Every Thursday night anyone can join the 50-70 people who come to their community meal. Watch their Facebook page for the menu each week.

### FIRST PARISH WESTWOOD



For 30 years, First Parish in Westwood discussed whether they should relocate to one side of the street or the other. With their worship space on one side of a busy street and their fellowship, classroom and office space on the other side they used the Crossroads process to both redefine their mission and relocate to the meeting house side. They exceeded a Capital Campaign goal to expand the meeting house and sold the other building to an Orthodox Christian congregation.

### WEST PARISH IN ANDOVER



West Parish in Andover redefined their mission as a result of Crossroads. This Fall they broke ground on a permaculture project that will be enacted in partnership with the Boys and Girls Club in nearby Lawrence. They also installed solar panels on the church as part of their renewed focus on being of service and caring for God's creation.

### SANCTUARY UCC (FORMERLY THE CONGREGATIONAL CHURCH OF WEST MEDFORD)



The congregation "formerly known as" The Congregational Church of West Medford sold their building and moved from 400 High Street to 458 High Street where they are restarting ministry as Sanctuary United Church of Christ. With a focus on the many dimensions of offering sanctuary they are connecting with their neighbors and forging partnerships in West

Medford. An update from the 2015 Moderator Report: "We offer Sunday morning worship every Sunday at High Street except for the last Sunday of the month, when we participate in Dinner Church with North Park Union Church. We offer meditation every Wednesday evening. We have made significant advances in establishing an Arts and Inspiration Ministry, with three Friday evenings a month (Faithful Fridays) committed to regular Faith and Film, Music for the Soul, and the Art Gallery at Sanctuary events as well as the beginning of "Art Church." We are beginning to connect with people in our community who need what Sanctuary, and what we personally, can offer. We are beginning to effect positive changes in other people's lives."

More info: on Crossroads:  
[Macucc.org/crossroads](http://Macucc.org/crossroads)  
The Rev. Wendy Vander Hart,  
Associate Conference Minister



## UPDATE: NEW MINISTRY INITIATIVES

Our Massachusetts Conference continues to support initiatives that give birth and life to innovative new ministries. Each one has its own style, personality and purpose. Some are based on bringing God's love to people where they live and work. Others want to reach out and reassure those who thought they were not worthy of God's love. And still others are based on specific ministries and spiritual communities. The Church Development Council of the MACUCC provides support and guidance to new ministries as they become established in their local Associations. Here are updates on the most recent new ministries.



### COMMON GROUND – FIRST CHURCHES OF NORTHAMPTON

Innovative Farm-to-Table dinner ministry at First Churches in Northampton

Sarah Buteux had a vision about how we might do church differently. It grew out of her observation that people could come to church – even take communion – and leave without ever having a meaningful interaction with another person. After a visit to a dinner church in Brooklyn, Sarah returned ready to adapt the model to the passions and values of the pioneer valley: care for the earth, the local food movement, self-sufficiency, and spirituality. Sarah combined these into a ministry that weaves the do-it-yourself ethic of preparing a community meal with wholesome local produce. Worship begins as people gather in the kitchen to prep and cook. It continues as people gather in song and prayer and communion that is woven into the meal at the table. A time of conversation and reflection continues as all ages share their experiences and wonderings around faith. Typically enough food is prepared to share with other local groups who are feeding the hungry.

Common Ground is thriving with an average attendance of 30 on the first and third Thursdays of every month. They have partnered with Grow Food Northampton and currently maintain 3 plots in the community garden that have provided ample ingredients for dinners. Their story has inspired churches from all over the country and has helped breathe new life and energy into the larger church.

More info: [firstchurches.org/common-ground](http://firstchurches.org/common-ground)

### WEST PARISH OF BARNSTABLE

Saturday Church



West Parish of Barnstable started a family-friendly, sing-a-long, shorter Saturday service to bring back young families who were dropping out of weekly service at an alarming rate.

Five years into this Saturday church initiative, new folks are coming and joining, families have returned and there is a new sense of hopefulness in faith life together. Twenty-five new adults joined the church and each one of those adults is part of a family system. Each week there are approximately 35-40 people in attendance – which has not affected the attendance of the main service on Sundays. This year they started a Saturday School and 37 have enrolled. It's a real success story.

More info: [www.westparish.org](http://www.westparish.org)

## CHURCHES ALIVE DISCERNMENT JOURNEY

What does it mean for a church to be healthy, faithful and effective in this changing landscape of ministry? That is the focus of our Churches Alive program, aimed at helping to revitalize churches. Churches Alive is designed to nurture and provoke the vitality of churches who want to deeply explore and discern their future.

In this program your church will explore what it is and has always been gifted to be. It will look at its context and possibilities for mission and ministry. And it will discern God's Call for the next chapter of its life.



## UPDATE: NEW MINISTRY INITIATIVES

### AGAPE

Creative communities of Jesus followers who feel inspired about spiritual groups that speak to them



Agape was formed in Waltham a year ago as a clean slate to create communities of Jesus followers who feel inspired about spiritual groups that speak to them.

“Agape” is a Greek word that points to the unconditional love God has for us. It is the love that we are called to have for each other – a love that welcomes and embraces all, and that reaches out in compassionate service.

Agape has now grown to regular biweekly gatherings of 15-20 people. These gatherings include unique 'church liturgy and service dinners' one week and then small group meetings focused on contemplative practices and spiritual formation another week. These small groups focus on more creative forms of worship like Biblical storytelling, singing, hiking, chanting, or more traditional worship like an Ash Wednesday or Easter service. Agape is continuing to invite the local community to connect with one another and God through a variety of spiritual practices, in the hope to welcome a 'whole' self to nourish mind, heart, body, and soul, and be a blessing in the world.

More info: [www.agapewaltham.org](http://www.agapewaltham.org)

"FREEDOM  
LIES IN BEING  
BOLD."

~ROBERT FROST~

### PHOENIX RISING

A progressive Christian community, inclusive and intentional in making God's love and justice real in the spirit of belonging



When the members of First Congregational Church, UCC, of Haverhill sold their building and set out on two different pathways, it was a rebirth of the congregation. One group chose to continue worship by joining other area congregations and using part of the proceeds of the building sale to continue traditional mission work. A second group, a small band of devotees who had rediscovered the radically inclusive Jesus that speaks to the marginalized, envisioned a new church for a new Haverhill, now called Phoenix Rising, United Church of Christ.

The last year has been an exhilarating one – year of creativity, faith-building and serving. Phoenix Rising developed into a Blessing Brigade – blessing people with animals, with boats and with bikes! The group went to North Shore Pride and had a table in the market place, helped sponsor an LGBT picnic, and even enrolled in a local firemen's chili cook-off. The group gathers for Sunday Service once a month at the Worshipping Oak Tree, a farm and other local areas, as well as at other Conference Churches. Office hours are held twice a week at the Artist Café. Overall, Phoenix Rising has been evolving into a progressive Christian community of the UCC – inclusive and intentional in making God's love and justice real in the spirit of belonging! Their Easter service was attended by almost 50 adults and children.

*Breaking News:* a lease was signed for a Haverhill location and the official new church launch installation and celebration will be held in October, with weekly worship to follow.

More info: [phoenixrisinguccblog.org](http://phoenixrisinguccblog.org)



# COL·LAB·O·RA·TION =

WE ARE ALL BEING CHURCH TOGETHER, IN WAYS THAT INDIVIDUAL CHURCHES CANNOT BE ALONE



In the past year, the Conference has touched upon a common theme of collaboration among its many programs and ministries, from Super Saturday to racial justice to water for Flint. This is no accident. We're in a season of discernment...

When you see this symbol (left), you know it is a program of collaboration.



## SEASON OF DISCERNMENT

FOR CONNECTICUT, RHODE ISLAND, & MASSACHUSETTS CONFERENCES

Led by the Holy Spirit, in September 2015, each of the Boards of the Rhode Island, Massachusetts and Connecticut conferences voted unanimously to adopt a resolution committing to join one another in using the 2015-2016 program year as a season of discernment to listen to how God may be calling to either federate or merge. The fundamental question: Is this collaborative ministry among the three Conferences of Southern New England something God wants us to do? How might it be a sign of faithfulness to God's call?

*Is this collaborative ministry among the three Conferences of Southern New England something God wants us to do?*

### Two Approaches to Discernment

We invite you to engage in discernment both as part of a group at various UCC gatherings, and as an individual participating in a survey. Check the website for details on events, discernment resources and FAQs, and find the survey: [www.macucc.org/rimact](http://www.macucc.org/rimact).



## PATRICK CAGE RETURNED FOR THREE-CONFERENCE TOUR

Former MACUCC Environmental Justice Intern Patrick Cage, who attended the historic Climate Conference in Paris this past December, spoke at churches in Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island during April.

Cage talked about exciting global developments at the Climate Conference. He also discussed how anyone can be a part of the effort to tackle climate change, and focused on particular areas where individual participation can be especially important.

Cage served as the Massachusetts Conference's first environmental justice intern for six months in 2015. He is currently a Fellow for the Carbon Institute of the GHG (Greenhouse Gas) Management Institute.



Patrick Cage with the US Chief Climate Negotiator Todd Stern just hours before Mr. Stern signed the Paris COP21 agreement.





## MA, CT, RI SHARE ACM FOR COMMUNICATIONS

In February 2016, the Conference Ministers in Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island announced the appointment of Tiffany Vail as the new Associate Conference Minister for Communications, serving all three of the UCC conferences of Southern New England. Vail has worked in communications part-time for the Massachusetts Conference since 1996 and was offered the new position in the spirit of Conference collaboration and in the wake of the announcement that Rev. Eric Anderson, Connecticut's Associate Conference Minister for Proclamation, Identity, and Communications, would be returning to parish ministry.



The shared staff member will use all available communication vehicles to:

- Facilitate interdependence and covenant by helping all settings of the UCC in the three Conferences to share mission and ministry opportunities, resources and stories;
- Enhance church vitality by linking local church leaders with resources and training opportunities available through the wider church, and by identifying and encouraging best practices related to local church communications.

You can read more here: [macucc.org/comacm](http://macucc.org/comacm)



## 3 CONFERENCE MINISTERS CALL FOR ACTION ON FLINT – SPEAKING AS ONE

After news hit that the residents of Flint, Michigan, were poisoned by their own tap water when corrosives dissolved in Flint River water degraded the city's delivery system, resulting in contamination and lead levels well in excess of EPA standards, Conference Ministers called for action.



Working in interdependent partnership, the Rhode Island, Massachusetts, and Connecticut Conferences encouraged local churches to take action by praying, donating, and urging members to call or register their opinions online with Michigan officials as well as the president of the United States. Donations would be dedicated to a fund that would provide aid to Flint, both to protect their health, and to help them obtain justice. Through gifts via the United Church of Christ's Emergency USA Fund, filtering systems were installed. In addition, a small delegation met with leaders in the area, bearing our care and concern in person, and building the relationships we will need to support them through the long-term recovery.

More details here: [macucc.org/flint](http://macucc.org/flint)



BOARD OF DIRECTORS  
VOTE  
ON DEVELOPING A RACIAL  
JUSTICE PROGRAM WITH  
CT CONFERENCE

~PAGE 10~



# RACIAL JUSTICE

*The goal of the Racial Justice Ministry of the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ is to engage every setting of the Conference in the work of unmasking, dismantling and eradicating racism in its personal, inter-personal, institutional and cultural forms, to make God's love and justice real. Here is how we, as a Conference, and as local churches, are answering the call to change the way we live.*



## BOARD OF DIRECTORS VOTE ON DEVELOPING A RACIAL JUSTICE PROGRAM WITH CT

The Massachusetts Conference has entered into a formal strategic partnership with the Connecticut Conference in the area of Racial Justice Ministries. This partnership, financed through the Friends of the Conference fund, will help facilitate the development of an array of programs or avenues by which local congregations can engage with the work of ending racism. These will include programs oriented toward spiritual formation, education, and faith-based activism. The Connecticut Conference has already developed curriculum, training, resources, and experts on the subject. Check the Conference website at [macucc.org/racejustice](http://macucc.org/racejustice) for the latest details.

### PROGRAM ASSOCIATE TO BE HIRED

Plans are underway to hire a full-time Program Associate to do work in the area of Racial Justice Ministries. We have funding in hand to hire someone for two years, and hope to raise further funds to continue the position for at least a third year. The funding plan is to use the remaining

money from the Barnes Fund for Mission and Justice Ministries, an expendable legacy from Arthur and Sidney Barnes, along with some income from a new endowment recently given by the Everett Church at its closing.

Q  
&  
A

“How can I work for racial justice where there are few people of color in most of our UCC churches and suburban landscapes?”

- Build relationships with our local police departments and ask about their practices and experiences.
- Meet with school officials and ask about curriculum and diversity of stories.
- Look at our worship services and faith formation opportunities and ask how deep and wide they are and yet could be.

## RACIAL JUSTICE FACILITATORS AVAILABLE

Through a partnership with the Connecticut Conference, the Massachusetts Conference now has facilitators available to hold racial justice training programs at local congregations – free of charge. Congregations wishing to work on racial justice issues can request a facilitator to come to them to lead either:

- A Level One *Realms of Racism* Training, which seeks to create a common language around racism, to unmask racism so that all participants can see, hear and recognize it, and to encourage long-term engagement in racial justice ministry. The training can be scheduled in a one, two, or three-session series.
- A 90-minute *Sacred Conversation on Race*, which through the narrative of a recent event will seek to humanize the issue of racism and engage participants at the level of heart and intention. This option is offered as a supplement to congregations and communities who are engaging racial justice in other ways as well – through training, study and/or intentional conversation.

During the first year of this program, groups who engage in either a *Sacred Conversation* or a training need only pay for any food or site costs. Facilitator fees will be paid out of a small Racial Justice Fund which consists of gifts given to the Conference for this purpose over the past several years. This program is part of a larger collaboration with both the Connecticut and Rhode Island Conferences. To request a facilitator, visit: [macucc.org/racejustice](http://macucc.org/racejustice) and use the form there.



## LOCAL CHURCHES, CONFERENCE LEADERS RESPOND TO CHARLESTON SHOOTINGS

Conference Minister & President Jim Antal sent out a Conference-wide email, calling for action along with praying and grieving following the Emanuel AME church shootings. Massachusetts Conference staff called on trained facilitators to offer conversations on race at various locations across the state, and many local churches answered the call as well. Here are a few examples:

- Special Bible studies were held by United Parish of Auburndale, East Weymouth Congregational Church and Old South Church in Boston.
- Visual tributes or shrines were set up by First Congregational Church of West Tisbury, South Church in Andover, and United Parish of Lunenburg.
- Vigils, prayer services, and marches were held by First Congregational Church of Wellfleet, First Church in Sterling, and First Congregational Church (UCC) in Milton (with the Milton Interfaith Clergy Association).
- Easthampton Congregational Church held a "Sing for Unity" concert, which included a free-will offering to benefit the Emanuel AME Church.
- Special sermons were preached by clergy at Rehoboth Congregational Church, First Church Somerville, and Franklin Federated Church.
- Charlemont church held a 3-day conversation on race.
- The Federated Church in East Orleans held a "Police and Community Creating Justice Together" forum.

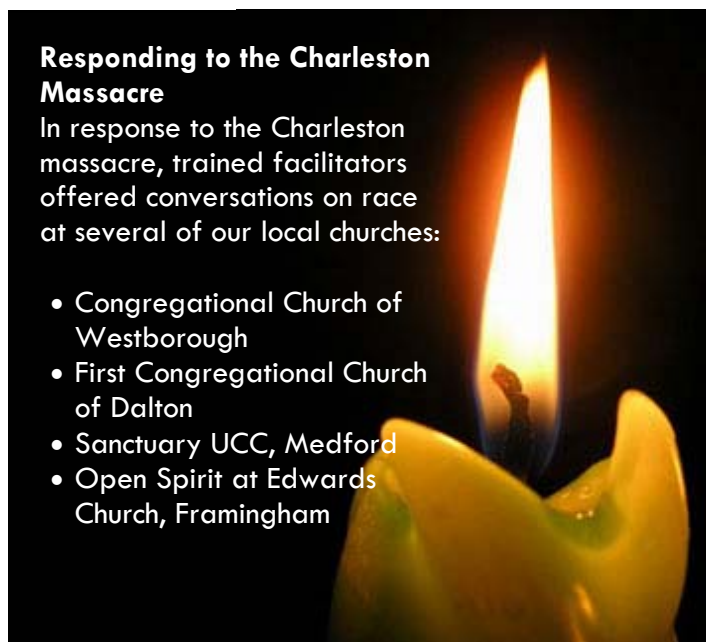
- Some churches [First Congregational Church, UCC, Reading and Wellesley Congregational Church (known as Village Church)] are reading *Waking Up White*; others (like United Church of Christ, Congregational in Burlington) are reading *Between the World and Me*.

Get more info at: [www.macucc.org/racejustice](http://www.macucc.org/racejustice)

### Responding to the Charleston Massacre

In response to the Charleston massacre, trained facilitators offered conversations on race at several of our local churches:

- Congregational Church of Westborough
- First Congregational Church of Dalton
- Sanctuary UCC, Medford
- Open Spirit at Edwards Church, Framingham





# Climate Justice and Environmental Activism

Today's environmental realities call us to examine anew how we live. As people of faith, we look to the scriptures for guidance for the choices we make in our lives. Genesis 1 says that when God created the heavens and the earth, God saw that everything was "very good." We learn in Genesis 3 that as humankind has the freedom to make moral choices, each of us lives with the responsibility for our personal actions or inactions. With God's gift of free will, the prophet Micah guides us towards moral and responsible lifestyle choices: we are to do justice, love mercy, and walk humbly with our God [Micah 6:8].

## MEET THE INTERNS

### Climate Interns Appointed



Alyssa Browning-Gray is a member of Newman Congregational Church, a Rhode Island UCC congregation. She recently graduated from Brown University with a Bachelor of Science degree in environmental science and religious studies. Browning-Gray is working to support the New England Regional Environmental Ministries (NEREM) and to enable people in the Conference to take personal and political action for the environment.

Since she started her internship, Alyssa has continued growing our network of environmental contacts, learning what actions individual churches are taking, targeting their needs, and building covenantal connections. Alyssa has also begun to engage with and support Massachusetts churches near pipelines, working with organizations they've identified as critical in working against their installation. She is now focused on working to improve our online resources, promoting our mission, and bringing greater awareness of conference engagement with climate issues through blogging, email communication, forums, presentations, and sermons.

The Massachusetts Conference first hired a climate justice intern – Patrick Cage – a year ago using funds from the Friends of the Conference appeal, which supports projects that are not funded through the Conference's regular budget. Cage

also served for six months. Following his tenure, an anonymous donor came forward and offered the funds to pay for the next climate intern.



Emma Brewer-Wallin, a sophomore at Wellesley College where she is double-majoring in Peace & Justice Studies and Religion, is engaging with local churches – whether through preaching, facilitating conversations on our role in responding to climate change, or working with youth to become powerful voices for change in their (church) communities.

Emma works one day a week for course credit, and has teamed up with Alyssa Browning-Gray. In the past two months, they have designed, written, and executed the sixth year of the Ecumenical Lenten Carbon Fast, a publication of New England Regional Environmental Ministries (NEREM), which is viewed by several thousand people every day. They worked with the national setting of the UCC to plan and launch April's focus on climate. And in May they hosted Youth AFIRE, an ecumenical event for high schoolers of faith around New England to educate, energize, and organize around climate and environmental justice.



### Witnessing Paris Negotiations

Former Climate Intern Patrick Cage, who went to Paris to monitor the ongoing negotiations, returned to the Conference in April for a speaking tour. See story on page 8.



### Youth and Climate

Youth AFIRE (Acting Faithfully, Inspiring Radical Eco-Justice) was an opportunity for high school aged youth of faith from around New England to educate, energize, and organize around church-based responses to climate change and environmental injustice. At this May event coordinated by Climate Intern Alyssa Browning-Gray, attendees learned from young leaders and one another through worship, workshops, sharing meals together, and more.



## TAKING ACTION

Many of our churches have taken climate action by divesting from fossil fuels, installing solar panels, creating gardens, and becoming “Green Congregations.” Find out what you can do, or tell us what you have done so you can inspire others: [www.macucc.org/actionstakenbycongregations](http://www.macucc.org/actionstakenbycongregations).



### FOSSIL FREE UCC

#### DIVEST YOUR CHURCH

Clean your endowment of fossil fuel stocks and help move society towards renewable energy solutions to climate change.

These local churches have taken some divestment action:

- First Congregational Church, Amherst
- Church of the Covenant, Federated, Boston (UCC/PCUSA)
- First Church in Cambridge, Cambridge
- Hancock United Church of Christ, Lexington
- Eliot Church of Newton, UCC
- Trinitarian Congregational Church, Warwick
- First Congregational Church UCC, Williamstown

Join these other churches and add your church to the list. Visit [FossilFreeUCC.org](http://FossilFreeUCC.org) for resources and logos you can use to publicize your divestment.



#### INSTALL SOLAR PANELS

These churches have installed or voted to install solar panels to generate electricity.

- South Congregational Church Amherst, UCC
- West Parish Church in Andover
- South Church in Andover, UCC
- United Church of Assonet
- Central Square Congregational Church, UCC, Bridgewater
- Edwards Church UCC, Framingham
- Pilgrim Congregational Church, Harwichport
- First Congregational Church in Melrose, UCC
- Eliot Church of Newton
- First Congregational Church, Stoneham
- Townsend Congregational Church, UCC

Join these other churches and add your church to the list. Visit [macucc.org/actionstakenbycongregations](http://macucc.org/actionstakenbycongregations) to see how they did it.

### Action Opportunities



[www.macucc.org/climateaction](http://www.macucc.org/climateaction)

#### OTHER INITIATIVES

These local churches have come up with other ways to be green.

- West Parish Church, Andover is growing a permaculture garden
- Many people have joined the Ecumenical Lenten Carbon Fast
- 132 members of the clergy pledged to participate in the NEREM (New England Regional Environmental Ministries) *Season of Prophetic Climate Witness through Preaching, Prayer, and Practice* and preach through the season of prophetic climate witness. (Visit [www.climatewitness.org/a-new-awakening.html](http://www.climatewitness.org/a-new-awakening.html) for additional NEREM resources)
- Over 3,800 people are active subscribers to our environmental justice newsletters

Join these other churches and add your church to the list of churches taking climate action.



CONFERENCE TO  
COLLABORATE WITH  
WESTERN MASS.  
EPISCOPAL DIOCESE  
TO HIRE CREATION  
CARE MISSIONER

~PAGE 24~



## ECONOMIC JUSTICE

### RESPONDING TO THE SYRIAN REFUGEE CRISIS

Over the past four years, the brutal civil war in Syria has resulted in over 4 million refugees and one of the worst humanitarian crises in history. The gravity and scale of the crisis moved many in the Conference to want to do more to help refugees, and to do it with greater urgency.

Working with partners inside the country of Syria and in surrounding countries, the United Church of Christ is providing emergency assistance to refugees who are trying to flee the conflict there. Through One Great Hour of Sharing and through gifts specially designated for this critical situation, food, water, blankets, hygienic items, essential medicines, medical supplies and equipment have been and will continue to be provided, just as they are in response to many other disasters. In addition, psychological, emotional, spiritual,

and social support is being given, as are clothes and other non-food items.

Local churches responded to calls for prayers from members, families, and friends to pray for all people fleeing their homes for safety. In addition, many sent gifts to the national setting of the UCC, designated to "Syria Humanitarian Crisis," to help Syrian refugees and those who are internally displaced in the Middle East and in Europe.

The Conference created a special web page with resources, reflections, awareness ideas, and advocacy contact information to help address the crisis. You can access it here: [macucc.org/syriancrisis](http://macucc.org/syriancrisis).

### IMMIGRATION AND REFUGEE CONCERNS TASK TEAM

Refugees, migrants, immigrants, and asylum seekers have existed since early humankind. People have been pushed from their homes by hunger, fear, and war, and pulled by hope for a better future. This year, we have witnessed this truth as tens of thousands of children crossed the U.S. border and became a prime-time news story. Questions arose for our nation about how we would deal with these children. And now as the news has dwindled away, the newscasters moving on to more timely stories, lives continue to be held in the balance. This issue of people crossing into the U.S. is not a new issue, nor is it an issue that is going away. It is an issue that, as Christians living in our world, we must face.

The Immigration and Refugee Task Team's purpose is to educate our church community in Massachusetts about issues related to immigration, to provide information and materials so that churches can educate their congregations and their communities, to look for ways to help those who are immigrating or have immigrated to this country, and to watch and influence policies that relate to immigration.

Visit the Immigration and Refugee page for additional details on the task team and some suggested resources around immigration and refugee issues: [macucc.org/immigration](http://macucc.org/immigration)



# LOCAL CHURCHES RESPOND TO WORLDWIDE DISASTERS

UCC Disaster Ministries Executive Zach Wolgemuth sent a letter of appreciation to the members of the Massachusetts Conference. Here are excerpts from his letter:

It seems these days that disasters and human suffering are all around us and have become so prevalent that we expect that any time we turn on the news there will be some report of flooding, severe storms, a refugee crisis, a terror attack, a drought, a typhoon or even a man-made water crisis. Each year UCC Disaster Ministries responds to these and dozens of other types of disasters all around the world and 2015 was no exception.

As a ministry we work hard to support sustained long-term recovery and take a holistic approach that engages and empowers the local community in their recovery. Long-term recovery work is usually the least funded and the least glamorous phase of recovery even though it stands out as the phase with the greatest need.

... Micah 6:8 states "...What does the Lord require of you? To act justly and to love mercy and to walk humbly with your God." To "Act Justly" in the wake of a disaster is to walk the long road to recovery hand in hand and in solidarity with our fellow sisters and brothers.

Those of you who have contributed to One Great Hour of Sharing (OGHS), International Emergency Relief or Emergency USA funds understand the importance of a ministry that "Acts Justly" and responds with compassion and support for those whose lives have been impacted and turned upside down by the not so normal circumstances they find themselves faced with.

Thank you for building houses, providing medicine and medical supplies, clean water, emotional and spiritual care, emergency food relief, vocational training, livestock, fishing boats, storm shelters, seeds and solidarity in the name of Christ.



In 2015 MACUCC members provided over \$135,000 to OGHS and nearly \$100,000 for specific disasters through the Emergency USA and International Emergency Funds.



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CONFERENCE MINISTERS CALL  
FOR ACTION ON FLINT –  
SPEAKING AS ONE VOICE

~PAGE 9~

## 2015 responses

- Missouri (flooding)
- Flint, Michigan (water crisis)
- North and South Carolina (flooding)
- Texas (flooding and wildfires)
- California (wildfires)
- Nebraska (tornadoes)
- New Jersey (Hurricane Sandy)
- Oklahoma (tornadoes)
- Joplin, Mo. (tornadoes)
- South Dakota (tornadoes)
- Iowa (flooding)
- Florida (flooding)
- Louisiana (Hurricane Katrina)
- Colorado (flooding)
- Nebraska (flooding)
- Baltimore (riots)
- Southwest Virginia (flooding)
- Sri Lanka (floods)
- India (floods)
- Pakistan (earthquake)
- Ecuador (volcano)
- Malawi (flooding)
- Lao People's Democratic Republic (floods)
- Myanmar (cyclone)
- Nepal (earthquake)
- Madagascar (Cyclone Chedza)
- Vanuatu (Cyclone Pam)
- Mozambique (flooding)
- Angola (flooding)
- Korea (flooding)
- Philippines (Typhoon Haiyan)
- Japan (earthquake / tsunami)
- Haiti (earthquake)
- Iraq (fire)
- China & Taiwan (Typhoon Soulelor)
- Philippines (Typhoon Lando)
- Malawi (low food production due to weather)

# WHO IS THE MASSACHUSETTS CONFERENCE, UCC?



Rooted in the grace of God, the mission of the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ (UCC) 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 363 active churches with over 63,000 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 UCC, which has over 5,000 churches and almost one million members. The UCC is a distinct and diverse community of Christians who come together as one church to join faith and action.

The motto of the UCC is **"That They May All Be One."** This is from the prayer of Jesus (John 17:21 NSRV) for the unity of the church. Members of the United Church of Christ have been leaders in the movement to heal the divisions in the Christian church, and local congregations welcome into membership people from a diversity of religious backgrounds. Today, approximately two-thirds of our members have come to the UCC from other denominations, or from no denomination.

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, 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.

## 2015 STATS



**604 ACTIVE**

**878\***

**CLERGY**

**274 RETIRED**

\*These numbers have been updated; original numbers were incorrect in the printed edition.

**63,348**

**MEMBERS**



**363**

**ACTIVE CHURCHES**

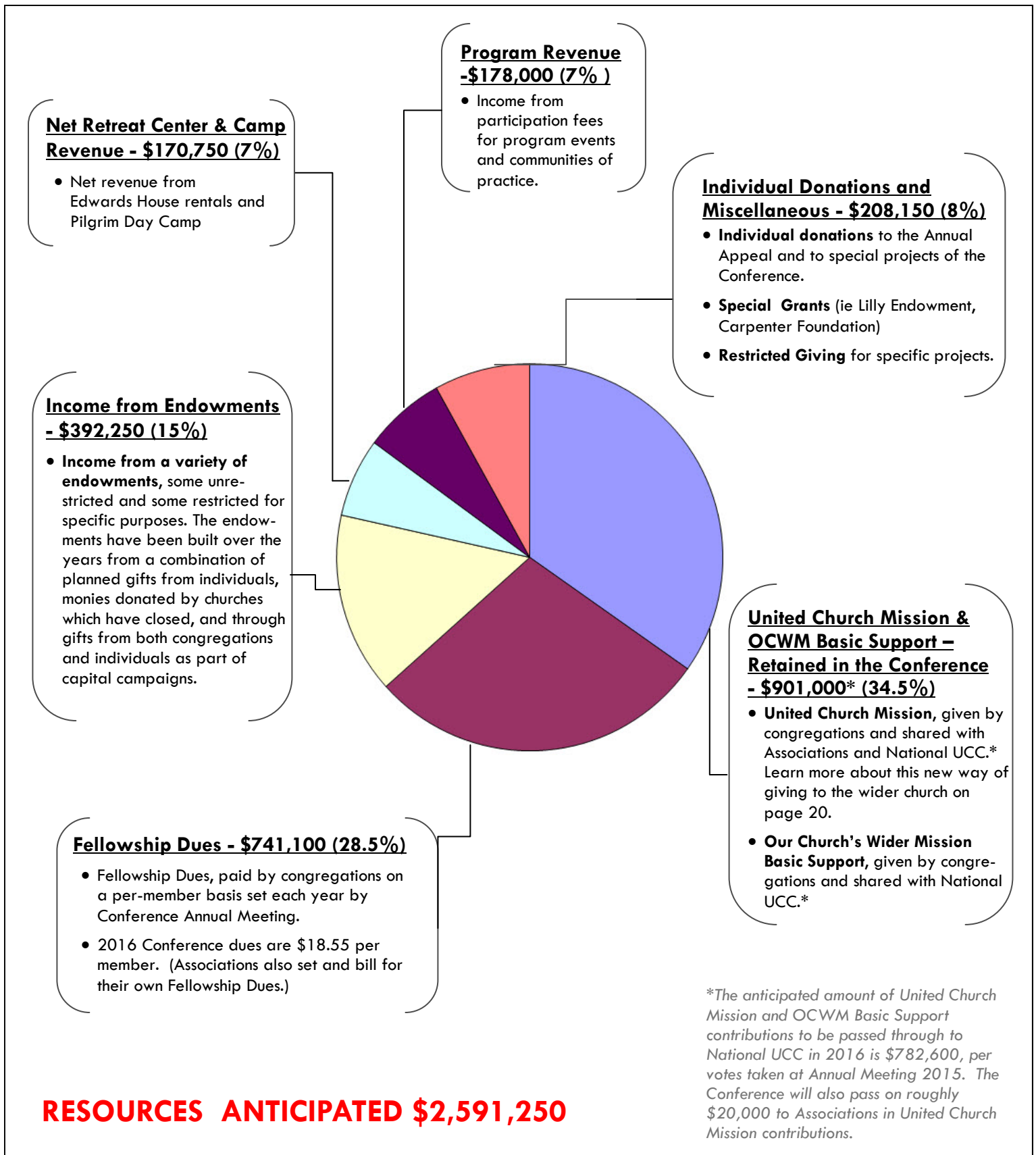


**CLOSED OR WITHDREW**

- United Church of Christ, Canton
- First Parish Congregational, Wakefield
- First United Parish of Everett, Everett  
(see Everett story on page 26)

# WHERE DOES THE MONEY COME FROM?

All the funds the Massachusetts Conference receives are given by 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, as illustrated.





# WHERE DOES THE MONEY GO?



## **Equipping the Saints – Lay Development Ministries - \$346,200 (13%)**

- Super Saturdays and other training events
- Conference communications, including macucc.org and e-newsletters
- Consulting with churches on finance, stewardship and fundraising
- CE Communities of Practice and Certification
- Faith formation and youth ministry training
- Resources for faith formation, youth ministry, worship, mission and justice, church administration and communication, finance, stewardship, planned giving, capital campaigns
- Confirmation programs, youth retreats and other events

## **Justice and Witness Ministries - \$258,650 (10%)**



- Disaster Resource Ministries
- Racial Justice Ministries
- Task forces on Environmental Ministries, Homelessness, MA Innocence Commission, Israel/Palestine, Immigration, and Restorative Justice
- Open & Affirming and marriage resources
- Dialogue and advocacy with other denominations
- *Ever Flowing Streams* newsletter

## **Nurturing Pastoral Excellence – Clergy Development Ministries - \$338,600 (13%)**

- Compensation guidelines for authorized ministers and other church employees
- Boundary Awareness Training
- Pastoral Excellence Program
- Clergy Communities of Practice
- New Clergy Groups
- Worship and preaching workshops
- Safe Church information



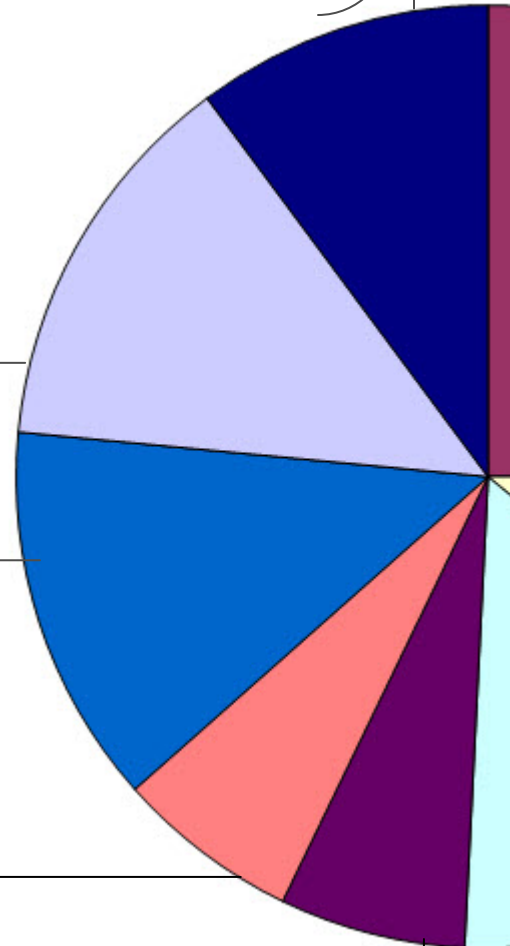
## **Nurturing Church Vitality – Church Development Ministries - \$163,600 (6%)**

- Support and authorization of New Ministry Initiatives
- Hispanic Ministries
- Church visioning & vitality resources and consulting
- Training of Redevelopment Guides
- Resourcing and networking small membership churches
- Help in answering the question “Who is Our Neighbor?” (e.g. MissionInsite and other tools)

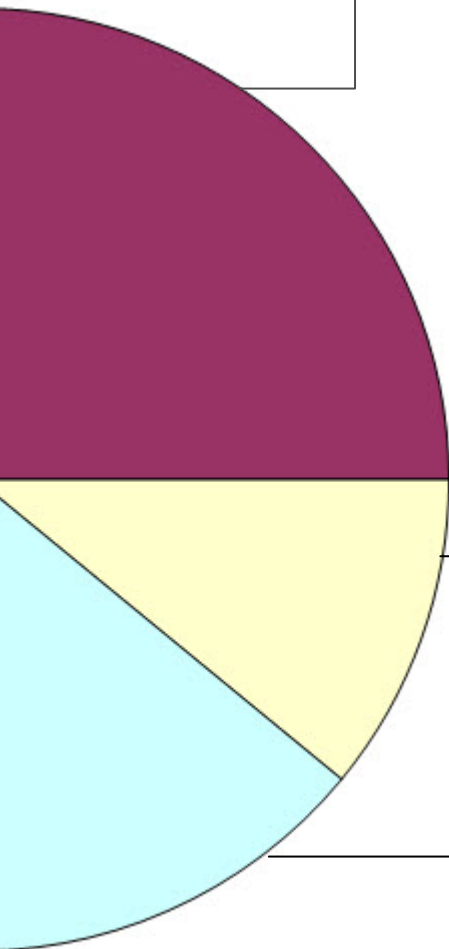


## **Housing and Empowering our Ministries - Buildings and Equipment - \$165,400 (6%)**

- Equipment for all offices
- Major repairs to Conference-owned property in Framingham



# OUR PLAN TO MAKE GOD'S LOVE AND JUSTICE REAL



## **Supporting Churches and Pastors - Regional Ministries - \$648,700 (25%)**

- Sharing best practices and provoking creative thinking
- Guidance and support during times of staff transition
- Church assessment and visioning tools & support
- Support in times of crisis and conflict
- Assistance and support for Association boards & committees
- New Beginnings, Crossroads and Churches Alive programs
- Legacy work with congregations



## **Leading our Church - Minister & President/ Governance - \$284,750 (11%)**

- Minister and pastor among MACUCC churches
- Liaison and collaboration with National and ecumenical agencies
- Representation of Conference in public media
- Board of Directors
- General Synod delegation
- Annual Meeting



## **Stewarding our Resources - Administrative Costs - \$385,350 (15%)**

- Financial management, audit and accounting
- Legal
- Fundraising costs
- Routine office building maintenance and utilities
- Liability insurance



**MINISTRIES TO BE FUNDED: \$2,591,250**

# UNITED CHURCH MISSION UPDATE

## A NEW WAY OF FUNDING OUR COMMON MISSION

### What is United Church Mission?

United Church Mission (UCM) is a new way of funding our common mission through the Conference, Association, and National setting of the United Church of Christ. UCM contributions are based on a percentage of the prior year's total income received by a local congregation. Approved by the Annual Meeting of the Massachusetts Conference in 2014, for those churches that opt in, UCM replaces Conference and Association Fellowship Dues and Our Church's Wider Mission (OCWM) Basic Support as the primary way congregations contribute to the shared ministries of the UCC beyond their local setting.

### How many churches have opted in to United Church Mission?

To date, 63 churches – over 17% – spanning every Conference Association have opted in to UCM. (See next page for a list of these churches.) More have planned to join UCM in 2017.

### How does UCM work?

A UCM Initial Giving Percentage is established, based on wider church giving in relation to total income. The total income figure includes general operating income from all sources, as well as general missions giving, but not special giving such as capital campaign contributions, disaster relief, or special offerings. (See the UCM Fact Sheet at [macucc.org/unitedchurchmission](http://macucc.org/unitedchurchmission) for a complete list of sources to be included in the UCM total income figure.) For their first year of UCM, churches commit to giving at least what they contributed in the prior year in combined Dues and Basic Support. After year one, UCM churches apply their UCM Initial

Giving Percentage to prior year total income to determine the next year's contribution. UCM churches are encouraged to consider increasing this percentage over time as they are able.



### Why might our church want to join UCM?

Churches tell us they appreciate UCM for a number of reasons:

- eliminates the Fellowship Dues "head tax" that keeps some churches constantly cleaning their membership rolls to reduce payments
- streamlines wider church giving and makes it easier to explain to church members
- mirrors the message of proportional giving we give church members as well as the biblical principles of percentage giving that support this approach
- invites generosity generally, promoting giving to the wider and local church as well
- emphasizes that all church giving is mission giving
- it's fair – all settings of the church rise or fall together

### What else do we need to know about UCM decision-making?

Despite its advantages, a decision to opt in to UCM may not be without its challenges. UCM discussions go best when church leaders consider the varied perspectives of people who have questions about the transition and how it might affect the things they

care about most. Sharing more information about UCM, more often than one might think necessary, will help make decision-making about UCM go as well as possible. The Conference has developed resources and

approaches to help equip church leaders to guide their churches in decision-making about UCM. We encourage churches to be in touch with Conference staff regarding their interest in United Church Mission as

early as possible in the church's decision-making process.

### How do we join UCM?

UCM is neither automatic nor mandatory, so churches must choose to join UCM and notify the Conference. Churches are asked to inform the Conference of their decision to join UCM for 2017 by December 15, 2016. With advance notice, it is also possible for churches to make a final decision about opting in to UCM at January or February 2017 annual church meetings. When notified of a church's desire to join UCM, Conference staff will contact the church to obtain relevant financial information and work through UCM calculations.

### How do we get more UCM information or assistance?

If you want more information about UCM, would like a Conference representative to visit with your church leaders to speak about UCM, or are already in discussion about possibly opting in to UCM, please contact Jonathan New, Associate Conference Minister for Stewardship and Financial Development. Jonathan may be reached at [newj@macucc.org](mailto:newj@macucc.org) or (508) 875-5233 ext. 231. More information is also available at [macucc.org/unitedchurchmission](http://macucc.org/unitedchurchmission).



# United Church Mission Opt-In Churches for 2016

*Thanks for making the switch to UCM!*

Main Street Congregational Church, UCC	Amesbury	Millbury Federated Church	Millbury
First Congregational Church, UCC	Amherst	First Congregational Church of Natick	Natick
West Parish Church of Andover	Andover	Central Congregational Church UCC	Newburyport
First Congregational Church, UCC	Ashfield	First Congregational Church UCC	North Adams
First Church of Christ Congregational	Bedford	Trinitarian Congregational Church (UCC)	North Andover
Second Congregational Church of Boxford (UCC)	Boxford	First Congregational Church	North Attleboro
First Congregational Church	Brimfield	Edwards Church of Northampton	Northampton
First Church in Cambridge	Cambridge	Trinity Church Northborough	Northborough
Canaan Congregational Church	Canaan, NY	UCC Congregational Church of Norwell	Norwell
West Concord Union Church	Concord	The Federated Church of Orleans	Orleans
Cotuit Federated Church	Cotuit	First Congregational Church, UCC	Reading
First Congregational Church UCC	Dalton	First Congregational Church of Sheffield, UCC	Sheffield
First Congregational Church of Dudley, UCC	Dudley	First Congregational Church, UCC	Shrewsbury
First Congregational Church UCC	East Longmeadow	First Congregational of Somerville, UCC	Somerville
Grace Congregational UCC	Framingham	Foster Memorial Church, UCC	Springfield
Union Congregational Church, UCC	Groton	First Congregational Church UCC	Stockbridge
The Congregational Church of Harvard, UCC	Harvard	The First Church in Swampscott, Congregational	Swampscott
Pilgrim Congregational Church	Harwich Port	First Christian Congregational Church	Swansea
The Haydenville Congregational Church UCC	Haydenville	First Congregational Church of the UCC	Wellfleet
First Congregational Church, UCC	Huntington	West Parish of Barnstable	West Barnstable
First Congregational Church of Lee	Lee	First Congregational Church of West Boylston	West Boylston
Church on the Hill, UCC	Lenox	The First Church	West Bridgewater
Pilgrim Congregational Church	Lexington	The Second Church in Newton, UCC	West Newton
First Church of Christ in Longmeadow	Longmeadow	Stratford Street United Church	West Roxbury
Pawtucket Congregational Church	Lowell	First Congregational Church UCC	West Springfield
Union Church of Ludlow	Ludlow	The Congregational Church of Westborough	Westborough
First Church in Marlborough, Congregational	Marlborough	Westhampton Congregational UCC	Westhampton
Mashpee Congregational Church, UCC	Mashpee	The Congregational Church of Weston	Weston
Sanctuary United Church of Christ	Medford	First Parish of Westwood, UCC	Westwood
First Congregational Church in Melrose, UCC	Melrose	Original Congregational Church, UCC	Wrentham
Forest Street Union Church	Methuen		
North Congregational Church	Middleboro		
First Congregational Church of Milford, UCC	Milford		

# TOP GIVING CHURCHES 2015

*Includes Fellowship Dues, United Church Mission, Our Church's Wider Mission Basic Support, One Great Hour of Sharing, Neighbors in Need, Strengthen the Church, and Christmas Fund*

Association	Church	Town	Received	Membership	Per Member
Here are the top two churches from each Association for overall giving. *Churches with an asterisk have opted into United Church Mission.					
<b>Barnstable</b>	Federated Church of Orleans *	Orleans	\$26,293.21	232	\$113.33
	First Congregational Church UCC of Harwich	Harwich	\$17,016.40	154	\$110.50
<b>Berkshire</b>	Canaan Congregational Church *	Canaan, NY	\$3,398.00	41	\$82.88
	First Congregational Church of Sheffield, UCC	Sheffield	\$10,003.10	122	\$81.99
<b>Central</b>	Edwards Church	Framingham	\$15,412.10	159	\$96.93
	First Parish Church of Berlin	Berlin	\$3,859.10	42	\$91.88
<b>Franklin</b>	Trinitarian Congregational Church	Warwick	\$2,084.00	38	\$54.84
	First Congregational Church, UCC	Montague	\$3398.00	63	\$53.94
<b>Hampden</b>	First Congregational Church UCC *	West Springfield	\$10,250.00	102	\$100.49
	Feeding Hills Congregational Church, UCC	Feeding Hills	\$5,725.70	264	\$40.53
<b>Hampshire</b>	First Congregational Church of Leverett	Leverett	\$5,279.60	56	\$94.28
	Westhampton Congregational UCC *	Westhampton	\$16,269.50	209	\$77.84
<b>Metropolitan Boston</b>	The Second Church in Newton, UCC *	Newton	\$73,999.00	332	\$222.89
	United Parish of Auburndale	Newton	\$27,296.50	135	\$202.20
<b>Northeast</b>	The First Congregational Church of Rockport, UCC	Rockport	\$19,027.05	189	\$100.67
	Tabernacle Congregational Church, UCC	Salem	\$9,345.20	102	\$91.62
<b>Old Colony</b>	Lakeville United Church of Christ	Lakeville	\$10,003.65	138	\$72.49
	Mattapoisett Congregational Church, UCC	Mattapoisett	\$15,172.40	254	\$59.73
<b>Pilgrim</b>	First Congregational Church UCC	Stoughton	\$12,734.40	107	\$119.01
	UCC Congregational Church of Norwell *	Norwell	\$38,398.00	403	\$95.28

# "5 FOR 5" CHURCHES 2015



## 5 for 5 Churches Exemplify Excellence

"5 for 5 Churches" have contributed to Our Church's Wider Mission Basic Support and all four Special Offerings in the past year.

- 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.

## 5 for 5 Churches in 2015

\* UCM opt-in churches

* First Congregational Church, UCC - Amherst
* West Parish Church of Andover
* West Parish of Barnstable
First Congregational Church in Billerica, UCC
Church of the Covenant, Federated - Boston
UCC Congregational of Boxborough
Central Square Congregational Church, UCC - Bridgewater
Brighton-Allston Congregational Church, UCC - Brighton
Christ Congregational Church, UCC - Brockton
United Church of Christ, Congregational - Burlington
* First Church in Cambridge
South Congregational Church - Centerville
First Congregational Church, UCC - Chatham
First Church of Danvers, Congregational
Allin Congregational Church, UCC - Dedham
* First Congregational Church of Dudley, UCC
First Congregational Church - Fairhaven
Rollstone Congregational Church, UCC - Fitchburg
* Union Congregational Church, UCC - Groton
First Congregational Church of Hadley
First Congregational Church - Hatfield
* The Haydenville Congregational Church UCC
First Congregational Church of Hinsdale

Chaffin Congregational Church - Holden
Lakeville United Church of Christ
* Church on the Hill, UCC - Lenox
The Congregational Church of Christ - Leominster
* Pawtucket Congregational Church - Lowell
First Congregational Church of Marion
* Mashpee Congregational Church, UCC
First Church of Monson, UCC
* Edwards Church of Northampton
* Trinity Church Northborough
* UCC Congregational Church of Norwell
First Church in Pembroke
The Church of the Pilgrimage, UCC - Plymouth
First Church of Christ, UCC - Sandwich
* First Congregational Church of Sheffield, UCC
First Congregational Church of South Hadley
First Congregational Church UCC - Stoughton
Townsend Congregational Church, UCC
United Church in Walpole
First Congregational Church of West Brookfield
West Yarmouth Congregational Church, UCC
* The Congregational Church of Westborough
* First Parish of Westwood, UCC
First Congregational Church UCC - Whitman

## CONFERENCE SHARES MISSIONER FOR CREATION CARE WITH WESTERN MASS. EPISCOPAL DIOCESE



The Rev. Dr. Margaret Bullitt-Jonas is now serving both the Episcopal Diocese of Western Massachusetts and the Mass. Conference as the non-stipendiary Missioner for Creation Care. Bullitt-Jonas seeks to inspire and support a wave of religious activism to address the climate crisis, deepen reverence for God's creation, and create a more just and sustainable society.

What may possibly be the first joint appointment of this kind between the two churches represents the effort to strengthen ecumenical collaboration, communication and Christian witness around the critical issue of climate change. Read her blog posts at: [macucc.org/jonas](http://macucc.org/jonas).

## CONFERENCE INVOLVED IN TWO AMICUS BRIEFS

### AMICUS BRIEF SIGNED RE DRUG OFFENSES

The Board voted to sign on to an amicus brief in a Supreme Judicial Court case challenging mandatory minimum sentences for drug offenses. The Board took this action on behalf of the Conference because of the Resolution of Christian Conviction that was presented by Christ's Community Church (UCC), Chicopee, Massachusetts, and passed last June at the Annual Meeting. The Resolution called for an end to discriminatory systems of mass incarceration in Massachusetts, including an end to mandatory minimums.

### CONFERENCE JOINS AMICUS BRIEF ON TAXATION OF RELIGIOUS PROPERTY

The Massachusetts Conference joined with the Massachusetts Council of Churches and numerous other denominations in filing an amicus (friend of the court) brief with the state's Supreme Judicial Court in a case revolving around taxation of religious property.

The case involves the decision of the Attleboro Tax Assessors to charge property tax on portions of the Shrine of LaSalette that they felt were not used for worship or religious education, including a cafeteria, gift shop and 110 acres of wooded space. The Shrine has appealed that decision.

"We believe the tax assessor's attempt to categorize and then divide religious space is both not right and not possible," said Laura Everett, Executive Director of the Massachusetts Council of Churches.

"The tax assessors of Attleboro, or anywhere, cannot divide religious spaces from non-religious

spaces within a church-owned property. For many religious traditions, worship, service, and charity are indivisible and inseparable," she said. "The tax assessors have made false distinctions that go to the heart of religious self understanding. Defining 'houses of religious worship' to include only those 'structures' that a local assessor may understand to be 'traditionally' associated with religious organizations opens the door to favoritism and marginalization.

"The First Amendment and the Massachusetts Constitution safeguards that the church, synagogue, mosque, gurdwara or shrine (not the government) determines their religious practices for themselves," she said.

The Massachusetts Conference Board of Directors voted by email to join the brief, given its likely importance to local churches who may be impacted by it.

The case was argued before the Superior Court on Tuesday, April 5.

Read the Council's press release and the full text of the brief here: <http://masscouncilofchurches.org/news/>

You can follow the case here:

[www.ma-appellatecourts.org](http://www.ma-appellatecourts.org)  
SUPREME JUDICIAL COURT for the Commonwealth  
SHRINE OF OUR LADY OF LA SALETTE vs. BOARD OF ASSESSORS OF ATTLEBORO  
Case Docket: SJ-12021



## OPEN AND AFFIRMING - LIVE EXTRAVAGANT WELCOME!

The ONA movement continues to expand, healthy and committed, in the Massachusetts Conference. Four new ONA churches adopted covenants between June 2015 and the end of January 2016, bringing the total to 154 churches and one new church start. There are at least another ten churches currently working with the Conference ONA Team to become ONA. Here are some of the year's highlights:

- In June, Hingham Congregational Church celebrated the 20th anniversary of their ONA vote by adopting an updated and fully transgender-inclusive ONA covenant. Other churches have done this in recent years. All churches with older covenants are urged to revisit their covenants and make them inclusive of people of all gender identities and expressions.
- The Coalition's annual National Gathering took place in Cleveland prior to General Synod in June, and celebrated the 30th year of the national ONA Program with the theme "100% ONA." A number of Massachusetts Conference staff and members of the ONA Ministry Team were on hand. The "ONA 30" worship parameters created by Katrina Clinton and Jo Ellen Fisher for the Mass. Conference 30th celebration went to Cleveland for the event. At Gathering, three MACUCC members were awarded *Emeritus Status* by the Coalition: the Rev. Ann B. Day and Donna Enberg, for twenty years the ONA Coordinator and Administrative Staff, respectively, and Kathie Carpenter, Chair of the Mass Conference ONA Ministry Team, who retired in June from her post as National ONA Consultant and Registrar (2007-2015).
- Rainbows ruled in Cleveland as the Supreme Court decision on marriage equality came down the first day of General Synod. In this new reality, many local and visiting clergy married same gender couples in and around the Cleveland Convention Center.



Part of the Conference ONA work in 2015 and 2016 has been to rally churches, individuals, and Conference staff to urge legislators to pass protections in areas of public accommodations for transgender people. On the heels of that legislation, the ONA Team will be calling on people again to campaign to end so-called "conversion therapy" (a discredited program that claims to 'convert gays to being straight') in the Commonwealth in early 2016.

To learn more, visit the Mass Conference ONA Page at [macucc.org/lgbt](http://macucc.org/lgbt) or by clicking on the rainbow comma on any page of the Conference website. Contact the ONA Ministry Team (Kathie Carpenter, chair, [kacarp@comcast.net](mailto:kacarp@comcast.net)) if your church is considering becoming ONA.

## CLERGY, LAITY, AND CONFERENCE WORKING TO UPDATE CLERGY COMPENSATION GUIDELINES

The Clergy Compensation Task Force, comprised of both clergy and laity, surveys churches and reviews the data every year to help develop relevant clergy compensation guidelines.

The Rev. Quentin Chin, who leads the Conference's clergy compensation task force explained that the team's objective is to rework clergy compensation so that it benefits the clergy and the church in order to foster a sustainable relationship between pastor and congregation. The task force believes that fair compensation contributes in subtle ways to the congregation's health and well-being.

As a result of the past year's review, the Task Force expects to publish guidelines for 2017 that are simpler to understand and implement. They will be presented at Annual Meeting and will be available on the Conference website.

## FIRST UNITED PARISH OF EVERETT ENDOWMENT

### PROCEEDS TO SUPPORT MISSIONS AND NEW CHURCH DEVELOPMENT

The Conference received more than \$880,000 from the First United Parish of Everett at its closing in 2015.

The church bylaws contained a clause stipulating that if the congregation were to disband, the value of the building would be donated to the Conference for the purposes of aiding missions and new church development. The gift, which included the proceeds from the sale of the building plus some residual assets, was placed into a new Special Endowment Fund, the First United Parish of Everett Fund for Missions and New Church Development, by vote of the Conference Board of Directors in December. Income from the fund will help to sustain our shared ministries in a period when traditional sources of Conference revenue (Basic Support and Dues) continue to gradually decline.

“All congregations want to be generative – and the story of the First United Parish of Everett shows that even in its closing, a congregation can have a tremendous impact,” said Minister and President The Rev. Jim Antal. “First United Parish of Everett will be remembered long into the future because their legacy gift to the Massachusetts Conference UCC will give the Conference greater flexibility as we support missions and new church development.”



## CONFERENCE-OWNED CRAIGVILLE BUILDING SOLD

### PROCEEDS TO SUPPORT PASTORAL EXCELLENCE AND YOUTH MINISTRY

One of two Massachusetts Conference-owned properties at the Craigville Retreat Center, Minnie’s Seaside Rest, has been sold to a private party for the asking price of \$840,000.

Annual Meeting last year approved putting up for sale the two Craigville properties owned by the Conference, after the Conference Board of Directors decided not to continue leasing and managing the Craigville Retreat Center. The other house, which was used to house the retreat center director, is being prepared for market.

The Christian Camp Meeting Association owns most of the buildings that make up the

Craigville Retreat Center, which had been operated by the Conference since 1960. United Camps, Conferences and



Retreats took over management of the center on Jan. 1.

Minnie's Seaside Rest was a gift to the Conference from the UCC's Wider Church Ministries, and it came with a restriction

saying that if it was sold, proceeds were to be used to create a permanent endowment called the Minnie’s Seaside Rest Fund. The restriction states that the earnings from the fund will be used for “outreach ministries in accordance with the bylaws of the Conference.”

The Conference Board of Directors proposed to Annual Meeting last June that most of the income from the Minnie’s Seaside Rest Endowment be used to support the Pastoral Excellence Program. In response to concerns raised at the meeting, the Board agreed that some of the proceeds may also go to support youth ministry initiatives.





**WHAT POSTMODERN CHURCH LOOKS LIKE**

Nearly 700 people came to the UMass Fine Arts Center to hear Nadia Bolz-Weber — the Lutheran pastor and author considered by many the “Face of the Emergent Church” — expound on the state of the church today.



Bolz-Weber said people shouldn’t take the Pew Research Center surveys showing fewer people are attending church to mean that they don’t care about Christianity anymore. “That would be like saying because there are no phone booths, no one cares about talking on the phone anymore, or because there are no more Blockbuster stores, no one cares about being able to watch movies at home,” she said.

“People have the same desires,” said Bolz-Weber. “But the delivery method has changed.”



**But we have this treasure in clay jars, so that it may be made clear that this extraordinary power belongs to God and does not come from us.” — 2 Corinthians 4:7**



For their 26 hours together, the 500 attendees of the Annual Meeting were surrounded by clay jars., a reminder that God chose such humble, imperfect vessels in which to hold treasure.



The first Andy Gustafson Award was presented to the Rev. Jena Roy, an active member and leader at First Congregational Church, UCC Winchester, who has been very active in stewardship ministry.



## SEARCH COMMITTEES CAN ACCESS MORE INFORMATION

Due to advances in internet connectivity, digital media, and technology, the clergy search process has evolved over the past few years. The Ministerial Profile has been a key piece of information used in the process, but many thought it was too limited in its ability to express the range of experience, insight and skill, both secular and church, that a person brought with them to ministry. There are also some fundamentally different approaches between the information that Search Committees find most helpful and that pastors feel give them the best format to convey their experience, approach and style.

*MESA acquired feedback from Pastors and Search Committee members throughout the UCC*

Over the last five years MESA (the UCC's Ministerial Excellence, Support and Authorization group) has been revising the Ministerial Profile to better suit the clergy and search committees' needs. MESA acquired feedback from Pastors and Search Committee members throughout the UCC. As a result of these responses, ministerial profiles, resumes, and the search process have been enhanced. Key changes include the ability to link web pages or Facebook sites to the profile and Snapshot, the searchable database available to Conference staff where pastors can share some of their preferences for positions and opportunities.

## IS THIS A BURNING BUSH MOMENT?



Right Top: The Rev. Traci Blackmon, Pastor, Christ the King United Church of Christ, Florissant, MO and newly appointed Acting Executive of the UCC Justice and Witness Ministries, was the keynote speaker at the 2016 Spring Super Saturday event in Killingly, CT. She said "Moses also had to turn aside from tending his flock of sheep to see the burning bush....In my early days, I used to preach that text as if Moses was the answer. But life has taught me that it's quite possible that bush had been burning all along....We have no way of knowing how long the bush had been burning... We have no way of knowing whether others had passed this holy moment without a pause....New understandings of God require our attention."

More than 500 people from Massachusetts, Connecticut, and Rhode Island Conferences attended Super Saturday workshops and presentations in Killingly, CT. The event was co-sponsored by all three Conferences.

More info: <http://www.macucc.org/newsdetail/super-saturday-raises-burning-question-4143249>





# LOCAL BOLD MOVES IN THE SPOTLIGHT

*Throughout the past year, many churches boldly reached out to the community to help those less fortunate.*

## OPEN & AFFIRMING TO SPECIAL NEEDS

**Christ Congregational Church, UCC, in Brockton** holds an inclusive worship service for people with special needs and their families. The worship service is full of joy, providing a place for children from the congregation, and children and adults from the community. The singing, the participation, the core message that everyone is valued and loved fill the room. The pastor said: "You know it is worth it when we call people forward to receive communion saying 'all are welcome at this table' and people come with tears in their eyes."

## POCO A POCO

The **First Congregational Church in Stoneham** shares its chapel with the Spanish-speaking congregation of Iglesia Adventista (The Stoneham Spanish Seventh-Day Adventist® Church). When it became clear that the chapel was in need of refurbishment, members from both congregations worked side by side; and little by little they managed to bring new life to an old space. Although Iglesia Adventista had been using the chapel before the renovations, the two have signed their first mutual agreement for lease of the facility. That action brings stability to both churches' planning efforts and established genuine relationships between the two congregations who now consider themselves fellow travelers on their faith journeys.

## POWER TO THE PEOPLE

The **Monterey United Church of Christ** used the power of empowerment to double the size of membership in their small church.

Because they felt empowered to dig deep and express their own ideas, they came up with programs that made visitors feel welcome and accepted. One member said, "Hearing others speak thoughtfully and openly – even making themselves vulnerable in a way – inspires trust and creates a sense of community." And that's what makes the visitors stay on to become members.



*Different dresses, but same smiles from makers and recipients.*

## BBQ FOR THE HOMELESS

When the members of **The Eliot Church of Newton, UCC** became aware that approximately 66 families were housed in two local motels, they decided to get the community involved and hold summer cookouts for the families. The church provided a meal, fellowship, and open space in their playground and adjoining park for the children to run and play. Volunteers from the community, including other religious and charitable organizations, helped with transportation, food, games, and crafts. The pastor believed that with more reaching out to local communities in need that the church can be renewed in mission, energy and spirit.

## MORE THAN A "SEW-SEW" GROUP

Anyone over the age of ten is welcome at both the **Wilbraham United Church** and the **Federated Community Church in Hampden** to join sewing sessions where folks create simple dresses for the Dress a Girl program. This is a program of Hope 4 Women International that supplies new dresses to the poor around the world. The church group has shipped more than 80 dresses that reached vulnerable young girls living in utter poverty.

## PASTORAL CARE COMMUNICATION PLACE

The **First Congregational Church of Dudley** offers more than news in their newsletter. The pastor believes that "PJ's Place" – which is a weekly print and email communication – clearly keeps the congregation engaged throughout the week. It has become a great vehicle for including newcomers – as proven by its readership numbers, which are double the membership of the church. "People yearn for a place.... my hope is that when someone gets that email, they get a sense of place and grounding. It's not a physical place in the general sense of the word, but it's a place for readers to feel connected... to the church, to the community, to God."

Note: See [www.macucc.org/spotlight](http://www.macucc.org/spotlight) for full stories

# IS YOUR CHURCH TAKING ADVANTAGE OF ALL THE CONFERENCE HAS TO OFFER?

The Massachusetts Conference has been a pioneer in creating an environment in which our clergy, churches, and members are joyfully supported, no matter where they are on their journey. On the next few pages, we have listed just some of the resources the Conference has to offer.

## SUPPORT DURING TIMES OF GROWTH, INNOVATION, TRANSITION, CONFLICT, AND VISIONING

Members of the Massachusetts Conference staff are available to assist your church at times of innovation and growth as well as transition or crisis. Churches can begin with their regional Associate Conference Minister for:

- **Coaching** on best practices from across the country and multiple church traditions, gleaned from churches that have found ways to be effective in the current changing landscape of ministry.
- **Support** for discerning God's vision for their next chapter, including help reflecting on identity and purpose and tools to learn about and listen to the culture and community around them.
- **Consultation** with pastors and leaders during times of conflict to determine the depth and extent of the conflict and the best resources to guide the church to a healthy and faithful outcome.
- **Search and Call Assistance** in times of transition, when search committees are putting together their church profiles and looking to find the best candidate to serve as their next settled or interim pastor. (See more at [macucc.org/search.call](http://macucc.org/search.call).)
- **Reflection** that recalls what your church has been and done in the past, challenges it to see itself more honestly and clearly by bringing an outside perspective, and holds up a mirror to help your church recognize strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats.

See more about support during times of growth, innovation, transition, conflict, and visioning at [macucc.org/growingyourchurch](http://macucc.org/growingyourchurch).

Below is the contact information for each of our Associate Conference Ministers:

### REGIONAL ASSOCIATE CONFERENCE MINISTERS



Kelly Gallagher  
Serves Central and Hampshire Associations  
[gallagherk@macucc.org](mailto:gallagherk@macucc.org)  
(413) 210-1124



Donald Remick  
Serves Barnstable, Old Colony and Pilgrim Associations  
[remickd@macucc.org](mailto:remickd@macucc.org)  
(508) 875-5233, ext.235



Jill Graham  
Serves Berkshire, Franklin and Hampden Associations  
[grahamj@macucc.org](mailto:grahamj@macucc.org)  
(413) 589-7034



Wendy Vander Hart  
Serves Northeast and Metropolitan Boston Associations  
[vanderhartw@macucc.org](mailto:vanderhartw@macucc.org)  
(781) 890-1444

# SUPPORT FOR CLERGY VITALITY

The Massachusetts Conference has been a pioneer in creating an environment in which pastoral excellence is vigorously pursued and joyfully supported. With a grant from the Lily Foundation, the Pastoral Excellence Program was launched in 2002 to develop, promote, and sustain excellent pastoral leadership for the churches in the Conference. It was a model that is now being duplicated in other UCC Conferences and denominations around the country. We continue to support the vitality of our clergy.

## Clergy Resources

[www.macucc.org/  
clergyresources](http://www.macucc.org/clergyresources)



Ellie Richardson  
Associate Conference Minister for  
Lay and Clergy Leadership  
Development  
richardson@macucc.org  
(508) 875-5233, ext.233

Some specific resources to support clergy include:

- The **Pastoral Excellence Program** is designed to develop, promote, and sustain pastoral excellence. To accomplish this goal, we have created a vibrant Conference-wide network of small groups and large learning events for our clergy in every season of ministry, offering opportunities for collegial support and ongoing development in the practices of pastoral ministry.
  - **Clergy Communities of Practice (CCOPs)** offer more experienced pastors opportunities to hone their practices of ministry and develop meaningful and supportive collegial relationships. Counteracting the risks of isolation and burnout, CCOPs are designed to help clergy navigate the challenges of ministry and enhance growth. There are currently 16 different groups of 8-12 clergy who support their colleagues, learn from each other, and grow in faith together.
  - **New Clergy Groups (NCGs)** are designed for clergy in their first three years of ministry. NCGs meet monthly in small groups of three to five, assisted by a more experienced pastor who is trained to serve as facilitator and mentor. Here, new pastors find the support and guidance they need to navigate the transition from seminary into pastoral ministry. They will learn best practices of meeting the challenges of the first years of ministry and developing habits that will enable them to thrive for a lifetime of effective service.
- The **Board of Ministerial Aid** provides confidential financial assistance and counseling both to clergy and their families who serve, or have served in the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ and other churches of the "congregational way".
- Conference-wide **Learning Events** are designed to provide rich opportunities for learning from expert practitioners and conversation with colleagues on particular topics.
- **Renewal events** for clergy, such as the Tending the Fire retreat series, offer opportunities for spiritual rejuvenation.

SUPPORT  
FOR CLERGY

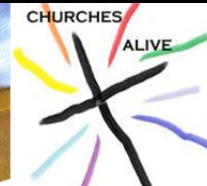
# NURTURING CHURCH VITALITY

Part of the core mission of the Massachusetts Conference is to nurture church vitality, and the Conference carries out this mission by providing resources for people involved in varying aspects of church life, including: Church Growth, Justice & Witness, Christian Education and Faith Formation, Stewardship, Communication, Finance, and daily operations. Here are just some of the resources the Conference has to offer.

SUPPORT FOR  
CHURCH LEADERS, LAY AND CLERGY

## Growing Your Church

[www.macucc.org/growingyourchurch](http://www.macucc.org/growingyourchurch)



Donald Remick  
Associate Conference Minister  
remickd@macucc.org  
(508) 875-5233, ext.235

As the Body of Christ our vitality comes when our churches increase in health, faithfulness and effectiveness. Our Conference continues to offer programs and coaches to assist you in your journey in understanding the dynamics of your church and the mission field that you are in.

- **Churches Alive** program, designed to nurture and provoke the vitality of churches who want to deeply explore and discern their future.
- **Crossroads Massachusetts** program addressing sustainability or viability.
- **Church Resilience Program**, designed to help a church assess and develop its skills around communication and conflict.
- **Pearl Pastorates** program to help churches with 75 or less in worship be more healthy, faithful and effective.
- **Super Saturday** networking and workshops.
- **MissionInsite** demographics information.

## Christian Education / Faith Formation

[www.macucc.org/faithformation](http://www.macucc.org/faithformation)



Elsa Marshall  
Resource Director, Associate for  
Christian Faith Formation and Youth  
Ministry  
marshall@macucc.org  
(508) 875-5233, ext. 274

The Conference offers a wealth of resources for nurturing faith formation in your church.

- Resources, links and publications on **Safe Church** Conduct Policies, School **Curriculum**, **Baptism**, and **Vacation Bible School**
- Resource Center **Lending Library** of videos and DVDs available for use at your church
- **Events** (ie confirmation retreats and national youth gatherings)
- **Christian Educators' Certification Program**, designed to equip people for the educational ministry of the church.
- Educational & networking opportunities, including Christian Education **Communities of Practice**



## Justice & Witness

[www.macucc.org/changingourworld](http://www.macucc.org/changingourworld)



Kelly Gallagher  
Associate Conference Minister  
gallagherk@macucc.org  
(413) 210-1124

The churches and people of the Massachusetts Conference of the United Church of Christ have a very long history of looking at the world and prayerfully working to make it a better place. We offer support, resources, and the tools to connect with others in the Conference working on the same issues, including these:

- Climate Action
- Homelessness
- Immigration and Refugee Concerns
- Interfaith Action and Ecumenism
- LGBT Concerns
- Racial Justice
- Restorative Justice
- Innocence Commission
- Israel Palestine
- Chile Partnership
- Disaster Resource
- Hispanic Ministries

## Stewardship

[www.macucc.org/stewardship](http://www.macucc.org/stewardship)



Jonathan New  
Associate Conference Minister for Stewardship and Financial Development  
newj@macucc.org  
(508) 875-5233, ext. 231

Generosity is a gift of the spirit. Inspiring generosity is one of the most important tasks of the church as we seek to make God's love and justice real for everyone. This is best accomplished by a year-round cycle. We provide advice and resources to help you inspire your congregation to new levels of generosity, through:

- Annual giving
- Planned giving
- Capital campaigns
- Endowment policies

## Communication & Websites

[www.macucc.org/communication](http://www.macucc.org/communication)



Tiffany Vail  
Associate Conference Minister for Communications  
vailt@macucc.org  
(508) 875-5233, ext.229

Having a church sign outside your doors is no longer enough to convey your message to people. Churches must use digital communication in order to attract, educate, and inspire. The Conference offers online resources, videos, audio recordings, advice, workshops, and resources on:

- Church use of social media
- Building church websites
- Communicating identity

SUPPORT FOR  
CHURCH LEADERS, LAY AND CLERGY

## Meeting/Retreat Space

[www.edwardshouseframingham.org](http://www.edwardshouseframingham.org)



Diane Montgomery  
Site Manager  
[montgomeryd@macucc.org](mailto:montgomeryd@macucc.org)  
(508) 875-5233, ext.271

Facility space that is conducive to relaxed conversation, contemplation and community, as well as to providing a productive working environment is available to churches at our Edwards House, Framingham location. The building houses 7 bedrooms, 6 baths, a living room, and lounge for:

- Day or overnight meetings
- Retreats

## Financial

[www.macucc.org/financial](http://www.macucc.org/financial)



Help for treasurers and financial managers

- **Church Finance Resources:**  
A wealth of resources for treasurers and others involved with the finances of the church.
- **Church Property Management:**  
Resources on cell phone antenna installation, capital improvement loans, energy conservation and more.
- **Compensation Guidelines & Staffing Resources:** Compensation guidelines, job descriptions and other resources related to church employees, clergy and non-clergy.

## ADDITIONAL HELPFUL CONTACT INFORMATION

### National Setting

UCC Headquarters  
700 Prospect Avenue  
Cleveland, OH 44115-1100  
[www.ucc.org](http://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  
800-642-6543

Global Ministries  
866-822-8224

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

### Other

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

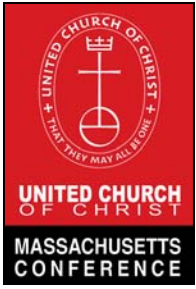
Worcester Area Mission  
Society: 508-832-3937

Andover Newton  
Theological School  
617-964-1100

Seafarer's Friend  
617-889-6315

Wider Church Ministries  
216-736-3200





*Following Jesus and rooted in the grace of God, nurturing local church vitality and the covenant among our churches to make God's love and justice real.*

Massachusetts Conference  
United Church of Christ  
1 Badger Road  
Framingham, MA 01702-5517

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