

CUMBERLAND ASSOCIATION
MAINE CONFERENCE
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

189TH ANNUAL MEETING
Congregational Church of Cumberland Center
Rev. Diane Bennekamper, Pastor
Judith Braun, Assistant to the Pastor

WORSHIP: Rev Diane Bennekamper

Rev Bennekamper led the delegates in worship around the theme of Mission outreach.

CALL TO ORDER- HARRY MARSTERS, MODERATOR

ROLL CALL: The Clerk declared a quorum was present. 18 Churches were represented by 30 delegates and 18 Pastors. There were 5 other pastors, 4 visitors, 8 Association Officers, and 7 Members in Discernment. Total: 74

BUSINESS MEETING

1. Treasurer's Report – Gerard Moore

Action: Voted to accept Treasurer's Report

Budget: Fellowship dues rate increased by 5 cent, to \$1.50 per members. Stipend increase 3%. Balanced budget.

Acton: Budget accepted.

2. Church and Ministry Report – Robert Morse, Chair

1) Bob Morse called attention to Page 12 of the Annual Reports. He expressed appreciation of the work of the members, and the clerk, and David Gaewski.

2) Bob reported that during the past year, the Committee on Church and Ministry has developed a new set of Member in Discernment guidelines, including new Commissioning Guidelines. The Committee worked on what a "Call" to ministry was appropriate for ordination. Also Boundary Training has been offered both last year and this year on November 8. The program this year includes not only clergy, but laity as well.

3) Bob call to the attention of the delegates the anniversaries of ordination of Association Clergy on five-year increments from 60 year to five years. He named them and asked those present to stand.

4) He named the 10 persons who are in the Member in Discernment process and introduced those who were present. Judith Braun, Linda Mawhorter, Holly Morrison, James Parr, Vanessa Colesworthy, Petra Smyth were present and recognized.

5) Bob went into some detail about the MID Guidelines, highlighting the fact that it is a clear step by step manual which should enable candidate, Churches and the Committee, Advisors to be on the same page. The psychological

assessment will be moved nearer to the beginning of the process. Some printed copies are available, but it can be had in a digital format, which can be printed out.

6) The Boundary Training this year is focused not only for Clergy but also for laity. It features Dr. Marvin Ellison, Professor at Bangor theological Seminary, Nancy Hopkins, experienced with congregations that have experience clergy abuse, and Becky Bell, RN, and a survivor of clergy misconduct. It will be held on November 8 from 9 am to noon at the First Congregational Church of South Portland. Bob gave information on Boundary Training on Nov. 8.

3. Nominating Report –Deborah Tate Breault, Chair, Judith Blanchard, Rachel Beyer, and Janice Beinema.

Election of Officers & Committee Members

Harry shared the that Deborah’s mother died recently and she is unable to be present. He then summarized the new officers and committee members which included:

Gina Finocchiaro Moderator

Mark Terison, Falmouth Congregational Church, Vice Moderator

Kent Allen, Church and Ministry

Harry Marsters: Church and Ministry

Janet Dorman, Church and Ministry

Deborah Breault will continue as Chair of the Nominating Committee.

A concern raised:

A concern was expressed regarding Gina Finochairo’s nomination as moderator and her working in New Hampshire. Gina is serving as Interim minister in Wolfeboro. The concern is her ability the role as moderator at a time when there are so many changes happening in the Maine Conference. Harry answered that both the Executive Committee and Deborah Breault (Nomination Committee Chair) have discussed this with Gina.

A concern raised that Gina is Moderator, is concerned. Gina is an interim pastor in Wolfeboro, NH. The concern was her ability to fulfill that role with the many changes in the Maine Conference. Harry answered the question that it has be raised and discussed. Gina responded. She explained her rationale for accepting the role being a commitment she made and feels she will be able to fulfill her responsibilities. She is a member at the Foreside Church. However, she is willing to step aside if the Association feels a person living in state should be moderator especially since the Conference is in making change.

Acton: Nomination Report. Voted with two abstentions.

4. Annual Report: The Annual Report was accepted as corrected.

Corrections: Left out of list of Members in Discernment: Judith Braun, Linda Mawhorter. On Nominating Report: Gerard Moore: Church is now a member of Woodfords Congregational Church. Notice had wrong date on it. All corrections are made in the Official Copy and the corrections were emailed to Churches, clergy, and committees.

The Report was emailed to all clergy and churches with emails.

Action: Annual Report is accepted as corrected.

Presentation to Harry Marsters: Harry was recognized for his service as Moderator with a tiepin, but more importantly, a sum of money was given in Harry's name to UCC Military Chaplains ministry to Veterans.

5. Greetings from the Maine Conference: Rev Susan Craig Conference Minister.

1. Susan noted that this is the first time been at a meeting of the Association. She was glad to come.
2. She brought greetings on behalf of all Conference Staff.
3. She thanked the Association Church for their gifts to the Conference.
4. She asked that the Association hold Deborah Breault, Bryan Breault, and their son, Eric, in prayer upon the death of Deborah's mother. Condolences can be sent to 99 Leighton Road, Falmouth, 04105.
5. The Fall Learning Even with John Dominic Crossan has over 200 registered. It will be held on November 4,5 at Falmouth Congregational Church.
6. She reported that Rockcraft Lodge has been sold. A family bought it as a family meeting place and plan to restore it It sold for \$1.9 million. Land across the street was held for future use or sale .
7. Conference will do some visioning about the future, which was suggested by the Cumberland Association. A leader is under consideration.
8. Youth Programs: Middle age youth conference is full.
9. She brought a chair and used it as an object lesson to describe the UCC, from local church to Association, to Conference, to UCC. Consider all the connections to hold the church together.

6. News from Congregations and Delegates:

1. Joanne Painter: asked the Association for resource people.
She will send the final copy to the Clerk, who will send it to Clergy and Churches.
2. David Weiss, a pastoral counselor, is offering a clergy support group.
3. The Association is Installing: Rev Deborah Davis-Johnson as a pastor with dual standing in the UCC, and Williston-Immanuel United Church as a member of Cumberland Association. The Church is dually aligned with the UCC and the American Baptist Churches, USA.

7. Business adjourned.

The Program: Mission In Honduras:

Rev. Sally Colegrove, pastor of the Windham Hill UCC, gave an introduction to the Honduras Partnership between the Maine Conference and the Evangelical and Reformed Church of Honduras. A copy of her address is added to these minutes.

The focus of the Maine-Honduras Partnership has been a multi-faceted one. The original mission work has continued and expanded. There have been pastors' retreats in Maine and Honduras, with time for fellowship and exchange of theological ideas. Most recently seventeen pastors and eleven spouses were with us here in Maine, maybe even in your church, for two weeks in September. The Maine Conference has helped with maintenance work on the Seminary in San Pedro Sula. Groups of our young people from the Maine Conference visited Honduras in 1997 and 2006. Young people from Honduras have visited Maine in 1999 and 2007 and several of them have come to Maine to work on the Pilgrim Lodge staff over the years. Now our young people who have been to Honduras maintain their friendships by e-mail, Facebook and Skype. The two communities of young people are becoming more fluent in each others languages.

When Hurricane Mitch devastated the country of Honduras in October of 1998 the Maine Conference was quick to respond with generous donations of money, clothing, blankets, sleeping bags and medical supplies. Maine work teams went to Honduras and helped to build houses for those who had lost their homes. This crisis propelled the Maine-Honduras Partnership to a new level of activity.

The work of Maine churches in Honduras is coordinated by the Honduras Partnership Committee and is scheduled at Mission Councils, which meet biennially in San Pedro Sula to design the partnership for the next two years. In 2007 - 2008 seventeen churches, associations and conference wide mission trips worked with local churches on projects ranging from expanding church buildings to roofing parsonages, running medical brigades, repairing church school classrooms, installing computers, putting down floors, amongst many other needed improvements. This was our most active biennium so far. There were Mission Councils in 2008 and 2010 which set in motion limited numbers of trips due to unrest in the country of Honduras, unrest which has stabilized, creating a new climate for increased work and visits. During the years from 2008 to now however, the Partnership has fulfilled a promise to build nine new homes in the village of La Vuetoza, a mountaintop hamlet where there was disease caused by poor housing. You may have heard of his project, which was called Above the Clouds.

During 2009 and 2010 local churches resumed mission trips. The Franklin Association and the York Association also sent mission teams to Honduras. We have gotten excellent reports back from all of these ventures. Our Honduran brothers and sisters have worked with us to keep the mission teams safe and supported. They meet us at the airport and accompany us throughout our visits.

In February 2012 the Maine Conference will be sending a group of 30 young people and advisors to Honduras for a six day trip. This event will focus not only on mission, but on fellowship and cultural awareness. The group will work in the village of La Masica, building church school classrooms, then will visit Copan, site of the great Mayan ruins, and finally will spend two days in San Pedro Sula meeting and playing with youth groups from around Honduras. This will be the start of new friendships, which will carry the Partnership into the future.

There will be a next mission council in Honduras next August. If your church would like to consider a mission trip in 2013 or 2014 you need to stay aware of getting a proposal form in to the Partnership. Those forms will be available at the next Annual Meeting of the Conference and will be on the Partnership website which is linked to the Maine Conference Website. *(end)*