

**Report of the Board of Directors**  
**April 21, 2020**



Dear friends in the Maine Conference,

Grace and peace to you in Christ in this season of Easter new life, even in this challenging time for our congregations, communities, and indeed, the world.

The Board of Directors of the Maine Conference gives thanks for the faithful witness, service, and care that have been shown around the state. In new ways, and in ancient ways, you have shown Easter hope in a time that often feels grounded in the grief of Good Friday. Similarly, we hope that you have felt supported by the Conference and its expanded offerings, such as gatherings, programs, and information to support you in our need to connect in a time of physical distancing.

We recognize the profound losses and challenges that this moment brings to all in our Conference, and the struggles that lie ahead for our congregations in terms of our ability to gather, worship, serve, and sustain our ministries in the ways we have in the past. Today, we offer this update with steps that we have taken to secure our common ministry during the COVID-19 crisis:

- The Board has approved the application and acceptance of a Paycheck Protection Program Loan backed by the SBA, utilizing the funds in keeping with the program so that they may be forgiven per the terms of the loan. These funds will help to maintain our staffing through the short term.
- The Board and Finance Committee have created an ad Hoc team to begin creating projections and recommendations for managing Conference finances and budgets as we understand more clearly the ways in which present crisis will affect our ministry in the short and long term.
- The Board has met with the Rev. Jennifer Paty, our Outdoor Ministry Director, to offer support to her and to the Pilgrim Lodge Leadership Team as they carefully consider the forms and timing of programs from Pilgrim Lodge this year.

Other work continues:

- In keeping with our commitments to Annual Meeting, the Conference Minister Evaluation Team has gathered evaluation responses and is working on their report. They will meet with the Conference Minister to review their report and recommendation, which will then be presented to the Board on May 16.
- Planning continues for what we hope will be a meaningful gathering at Annual Meeting 86 in Waterville in October.
- Work continues to update personnel policy and staffing in the midst of transitions and changing needs of our Conference, and our congregations.

Finally, we acknowledge the sadness that we will not be able to gather as a body in one place to celebrate the ministry of the Rev. Darren Morgan as he completes his service as Associate Conference Minister. Yet, as you all have been showing, we are capable of being the church in new and different ways, sharing in our life and ministry together! Watch your email from the Conference for gatherings for you to meet with, bless, and give thanks for Darren and to remotely join a service of release and thanksgiving for him on Saturday, May 9<sup>th</sup> at 2pm.

For now, may you be assured of Christ's Easter promise of new life, as we continue to carry that promise to a world that longs to hear it.

God's Peace,  
Maine Conference, UCC Board of Directors