

September 15, 2026

Oh, what a year it has been!

Over the past year, there has been so much happening across the Maine Conference, United Church of Christ. We began construction on the Farmhouse Project, continued the work of developing our proposed Vision and Mission Statements, launched a new Capital Campaign to support the Farmhouse Project, and navigated what have been some incredibly challenging political and social times.

Through it all, I am filled with hope and gratitude for the work we continue to do together.

Personally, I am incredibly hopeful and excited as we look toward the Blessing of our New Conference Offices at the Farmhouse. This project has been the hope and dream of so many people throughout our Conference, and seeing it come to fruition feels like the ultimate homecoming. Bringing our Conference ministries and staff together in one physical location will be a tremendous blessing—not only for our staff and ministries, but for all of us who call the Maine Conference home.

Our dedicated Board of Directors has continued throughout the year to faithfully carry out the fiduciary and organizational work that keeps our Conference moving forward. While this work may not always be glamorous, it is deeply important. It has been a privilege to sit around the table together, engaging in deliberate, thoughtful, and prayerful conversations about the many issues and opportunities affecting our shared ministry.

One of the Board's significant areas of work this year was the development of our proposed Vision and Mission Statements. This process required time, reflection, listening, and discernment as we considered who we are as a Conference and where God is calling us next. I am grateful for the care and intention that went into this work.

We also spent time learning more about the intricacies of our Conference finances and strengthening our understanding of the resources entrusted to us. A special thank-you goes to Jerrod Oltmann, Conference Treasurer, and Nancy Bartlett, Treasury Coordinator, for their dedication, accuracy, transparency, and willingness to help the Board better understand and steward our financial resources.

As we moved into the summer months, the Board's attention shifted toward continued updates on the Farmhouse Project, including navigating a few minor delays; preparations for our Annual Meeting and the opportunity to welcome our special guest, Rev. Dr. Karen Georgia Thompson; and planning for leadership transitions on the Board.

Our three-person Governance Committee worked tirelessly to identify and fill most of the open positions on the Board and our various committees. Their work is essential to ensuring that the

Conference continues to benefit from the gifts, experience, wisdom, and energy of people from across our churches and ministries. I am deeply grateful for their commitment and perseverance.

As I bring this report to a close, I find myself feeling a bit bittersweet.

I am incredibly proud of the good work and forward progress the Maine Conference has made during my time as your Chair. I have been honored to serve alongside so many faithful, thoughtful, compassionate, and committed people. The work is not always easy, and there are certainly moments when the path forward is unclear. Yet again and again, I have witnessed people of faith come together with courage, generosity, humor, prayer, and love.

Thank you all for the opportunity to serve as your Chair. Thank you for your support, your guidance, your encouragement, and your constant love—not only during these past two years, but throughout my lifetime in the Maine Conference.

This Conference has been a part of my faith journey for as long as I can remember, and I leave this role with a heart full of gratitude for all that we have shared and all that lies ahead. May we continue to listen for God's call, care for one another, embrace the work before us, and step boldly into the future God is creating among us.

In deep love, gratitude, and continued blessing,

Stephenie Michaud
Chair, Maine Conference, United Church of Christ