Report of the Conference Minister

Many of you will remember the theme of the 2014 Fall Gathering: “Standing at the Threshold.” The artwork for the meeting (see above) was from Connie Rodriguez, who wrote about her piece saying:

Threshold places are liminal places. You are not here nor there. It is like crossing a bridge from one place to another. I often think about ‘The Fool’ card from the tarot deck. The fool has his leg up as if taking the next step. But the next step is empty space. He is looking upward toward the heavens, trusting that all will be well on his journey. He has his dog at his feet, a symbol of the instinctual nature, so he will know what (where) to step next—and he has his pack on his shoulder which is all he needs for his next journey in life.

That describes my place in on the planet from the day of that meeting until I began ministry with you on January 1, 2015. It is true to some extent, even today, that I am neither new nor settled, colleague nor unfamiliar person, known quantity nor stranger whose ways are to be discerned. Though I am not new to Conference ministry, I am still living into this particular role even as we are forming relationship together that will be a common expression of God’s beloved community. I’m convinced that, like the fool of tarot art, we will have everything we need for the journey and will be guided toward our next steps when we travel in trust and mutuality.

For now, enjoy the reporting of the year past and gain energy for what is ahead. Our walking together is of God and will be blessed when we acknowledge our dependence upon grace and our need for one another.

Be at peace, and be in touch, won’t you.

Report of the Acting Co-Conference Ministers

We were privileged to serve as the Acting Co-Conference Ministers sharing one half-time position for four months at the end of 2014. We followed the vibrant Interim Ministry of Rev. Dr. Davida Foy Crabtree and we were present to welcome Rev. John Vertigan as our new Conference Minister in January 2015.

As Interim Conference Minister, Davida had helped to shape the new Conference staffing structure (going from three to two Regional Conference Ministers) and launch the new and smaller Board of Directors. She focused a lot of her time and energy on our fiscal policies and procedures and left us with a well-organized and documented record of everything from endowment funds to Committee on Church & Ministry records. She also began the process of discerning the best way to use the property donated by University UCC/Orlando to support the ministry of the UCC in Florida.

Working from our home in Fort Myers, we agreed that working with the three major committees (Church & Ministry, Budget & Finance and Personnel) and the Conference and Endowment Boards we would help keep the ship afloat and on course.

During our time of service:

- Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund, Western Regional Conference Minister, announced that she had accepted a new Call and would leave at the end of October.

continued on page 2
Acting Co-Conference Ministers Report... from page 1

- Candy Younglove, the Conference Administrative Assistant, underwent required surgery and was on medical leave for almost three months.
- We were well served by the dedication of our part-time staff David Cyril and Beth Shedden in the Orlando office who stepped up and while still doing their own work were also able to cover most of Candy's responsibilities. But this did delay the development of a new Conference website.
- We were blessed by the ministries of Rev. Phil Garrison, Conference Moderator, who like a good pastor keeps the United Church of Christ in Florida constantly before him and Amy Luek, Chair of Budget & Finance, who lives in the Orlando area and filled many of the CFO functions for us.
- We formed a temporary five-person Western Region Ministry Team of clergy to serve as a primary contact for the congregations and authorized ministers of the western region while the Western Region Conference Minister position is vacant. Our thanks to Rev. Kim Wells, Rev. Bud Schroeder, Rev. Dr. Jeanette Sherrill, Rev. Dr. Raymond Hargrove and Rev. Dr. Bill Wealand.
- On our first days on the job we met in Orlando with the Conference Ministers from the Southern Region of the UCC (South Central, Southern, Southeast and Florida) to explore strategies for strengthening the UCC in the South.
- We worked with the Committee on Church & Ministry in conducting a fitness review of an authorized minister.
- We had a wonderful Fall Gathering where we Called Rev. John Vertigan as Conference Minister.
- We noticed how much the Florida Conference has changed since we were on Conference staff (Jim) and served on Conference committees (Sandy). Visiting local congregations reaffirmed our need to discern the present movements of God's Spirit in a particular time and place and not rely on how we use to be or do things. Change was very evident in most of the places we visited.

Report of the Moderator Conference Board of Directors

REV. PHIL GARRISON
ST. ANDREW UCC/SARASOTA

Dear ones of the Florida Conference,

This has been a transforming and transformational year in the life of the Florida Conference. Our Interim Conference Minister, Rev. Dr. Davida Foy Crabtree, completed her work in September, 2014. Rev. Drs. Jim and Sandy Boler capably served as Acting CM following Davida. The Search Committee for our next called Conference Minister, led by Ed Pritchett (First Congregational Church/Orange City) and Rev. Dr. Bruce Havens (Arlington Congregational Church/Jacksonville), completed their search and recommended Rev. John Vertigan. We affirmed the Search Committee’s recommendation at the October Gathering of the Conference held at First UCC/Orlando. John began his work in our midst in January and is serving us with excellence. I am excited about you and your leadership, John!

For the Board of Directors: Thank you. You are the most faithfully wise leadership group with whom I have ever been privileged to serve. You, the Florida Conference Board of Directors, are a gift of leadership to the Conference; I am honored to serve among you. You have surprised me in the ways you have embodied love for each other, the Conference and the world. You have emboldened my faith by your passion for justice: politically, ecologically, personally. You have informed my hope as we have ached, in our times of worship and prayer, for the rainbow of God’s promise. You have delighted me in the ways you have welcomed John Vertigan as our Conference Minister. You are People of the Covenant. Thank you, Board of Directors!

Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund resigned in the summer of 2014 as Western Region Conference Minister to accept her new position as Vice President for Development at Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis. Her book, Blessed Are the Crazy: Breaking the Silence about Mental Illness, Family and the Church, was published to rave reviews. Congratulations Sarah! Five from the Conference have been sharing the load of various aspects of Sarah’s work, and John has initiated a national search for her replacement.

Rev. Dr. Raymond Hargrove, you are a blessing! Thank you for all the ways you have carried out your work and have easily and calmly assumed additional responsibilities as they needed your careful and loving hand.

The 9300 University Property Team, under the able leadership of Rev. Dr. Bill Wealand, has been traversing the terrain of discernment about this legacy gift to the Conference. They have studied the main building and determined that it is structurally sound. The needs for remediation of delayed maintenance have been evaluated and a three-part plan was approved by the Board of Directors at their February, 2015, meeting. The plan includes the relocation of the Conference offices to 9300 University Boulevard, Orlando, by early next year. There will be opportunities for members of the Conference to participate in conversations about other visionary possibilities for the property. It is a very exciting time in our life as a Conference.
## Conference Officers and Board of Directors, Staff and Volunteer Leadership 2014

### Officers
- **Moderator**
  - Rev. Philip Garrison
  - St. Andrew UCC/Sarasota
- **Vice Moderator**
  - Ed Pritchett
  - First Congregational Church/Orange City
- **Treasurer**
  - Rev. John Allen
  - Member, UCC at The Villages
- **Registrar**
  - Martha Synnott
  - Church of the Isles/Indian Rocks Beach
- **Chair and Ministry**
  - Sumner Hutcheson III
  - Church of the Open Door
  - Congregational/Orlando
- **Chair, Budget and Finance**
  - Amy Luek
  - First UCC/Orlando
- **Pres., Endowment Board**
  - Robert Oliveira
  - Naples UCC
- **Chair, Personnel Comm.**
  - Rev. Dr. Laurie Hafner (At Large)
  - Coral Gables Congregational Church

### Board
- **Under 250**
  - Lay Man
    - Mr. Terry Wilkinson
    - Arlington Congregational Church/Jacksonville
  - Clergy
    - Rev. Mark Goforth
    - Community UCC/Lake Park
  - Lay Woman
    - Ms. Sammie Hartwell
    - UCC/New Smyrna Beach
  - Clergy
    - Rev. Alan Coe (At Large)
    - Mayflower Congregational Church/Naples
  - Clergy
    - Rev. Dr. Kathy Rooke
    - Faith Family UCC/Tampa
- **Over 250**
  - Clergy
    - Rev. Dr. Keith Haemmelmann
    - Pass-a-Grille Beach Community UCC/St. Pete Beach
  - Lay Man
    - Robert Harris
    - United Community Church/Sun City Center

### Clergy
- Rev. Shelly Wilson
  - United Church of Gainesville
- Lay Woman
  - Margaret Mahoney
  - Church by the Sea/Bal Harbour
- Lay Man Under 25
  - Thaddeus Elliot
  - Plymouth Congregational Church/Miami

### Staff
- **Interim Conference Minister**
  - Rev. Davida Foy Crabtree
  - (served until September 17)
- **Acting Co-Conference Ministers**
  - Rev. Drs. Jim and Sandy Boler
  - (served September 17 - December 31)
- **Conference Minister**
  - Rev. John Vertigan
  - (Called October 25; service began January 1, 2015)
- **Eastern Regl. Minister**
  - Rev. Dr. Raymond Hargrove
  - (resigned as of October 31; position vacant remainder of year)
- **Western Regl. Minister**
  - Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund
  - (resigned as of October 31; position vacant remainder of year)
- **Southeast Regional Youth Minister**
  - Jeanne Haemmelmann
- **Gulf Coast Regional Youth Minister**
  - Jeanne Haemmelmann
- **Webmaster**
  - Rev. Dr. Bill Wealand
- **Disaster Response & Recovery Ministry Coordinator**
  - Rev. Linn Possell
- **Older Adult Ministry Coordinator**
  - Candy Younglove
- **Executive Assistant**
  - Dave Cyril
- **Financial Assistant**
  - Beth Shedden

### Volunteer Leadership
- **Editor, Celebrate Florida**
  - Rick Carson
- **Associate Editor**
  - Tom Mitchell
- **Celebrate Florida President, Florida Conference**
  - Susan DiAmicis

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**Florida Conference**

*United Church of Christ*

**Annual Report**

Published by Celebrate Florida
Moderator’s Report... from page 2

Board of Church & Ministry, with Sumner Hutchison (Church of the Open Door Congregational/Miami) as chair, has done remarkable work. They are enthusiastic about the faithfulness, skills and leadership of the people under their care who are being called to serve among us. Hurray for excellence!

Amy Luek (First UCC/Orlando) of Budget & Finance and Bob Oliveira (Naples UCC) of the Endowment Fund Corporation are working diligently with their boards to ensure a healthy financial future for the Conference.

Candy Younglove was away from the office for three months for surgery; she is well and has returned to her work. Beth Shedden and Dave Cyril picked up extra responsibilities during her absence. The staff has worked effectively with Davida, Jim and Sandy and now John. Thank you for your fidelity to the Conference!

The Planning Team for the Spring Gathering has been creative in their task. I trust a great many from the Conference will be able to attend the Gathering. Thank you to Coral Gables Congregational UCC and Rev. Dr. Laurie Hafner for your extravagant hospitality. It will be an awesome event!

Members of the Florida Conference, I wish to thank you for your many ways of covenant with each other, with the Conference and with the larger church.

On a personal note, I will not be continuing my service as Moderator of the Conference as of our May meeting. It has been an honor to serve in this role. Ed Pritchett, our current Vice Moderator, is not able to assume the role of Moderator. Both Ed and I are excited about John Vertigan and are pleased with his leadership, and we both love the Florida Conference. These decisions by Ed and me are for personal and family reasons. The Nominating Committee will have a Moderator nominee for you to vote upon at the Spring Gathering in Coral Gables.

In a March lecture at St. Andrew UCC/Sarasota, renowned scholar and prolific author, Matthew Fox, spoke of being at a conference recently with the poet, Mary Oliver. She told those who had gathered that she has learned three things in her 83 years of life: “Pay attention. Be astonished. Share your astonishment.” Her life learnings are my hope for each of you and for the Florida Conference.

Namaste.

2014 Gatherings of the Florida Conference

Spring Gathering — Bold to Go
May 17 – Arlington Congregational Church/Jacksonville

The Gathering was officially called to order by Conference Moderator Susan Cheney (Congregational UCC/Punta Gorda). A brief opening worship followed a welcome from host Pastor Rev. Dr. Bruce Havens. Nominating Committee Chair Rev. Bonnie Lipton (Church of the Isles/Indian Rocks Beach) submitted the Committee’s report of new officer, Board and various committee member nominees.

Rev. Dr. Ben Guess, Executive Minister for Local Church Ministries of the national UCC, delivered the keynote address, “Bold Values, Bold Vision, Bold Voice.” He reminded us of the UCC’s witness, a voice that is both “distinct and pronounced,” God-given of “boldness and truth.” In the UCC preamble we are to “make this faith its own” by joining faith with action.

Delegates and visitors then attended workshops, selecting one from among several options including:

- “Moral Injury and Caring for Our Returning Warriors,” Chaplain Rev. Martin Montonye (United Church of Tampa)
- “Portable Faith for Portable People: Engaging the Whole Child with the Whole Church,” Twila Rhodes (The Community Church/Vero Beach)
- “Reading Changes Lives,” Rev. Dr. Guillermo Marquez-Sterling (Coral Gables Congregational Church)
- “ONA 101,” Andy Lang (Executive Director, UCC Coalition for Lesbian, Gay, Bisexual and Transgender Concerns)
- “Bored Again Christians,” Rev. Dr. Dawson Taylor (Naples UCC)
- “Environmental Justice, Action and Advocacy: Caring for God’s Creation as People of Faith,” Rev. Mike MacMillan (Faith UCC/Dunedin)

When the Gathering resumed after lunch, Susan recognized leadership churches in OCWM contributions before presenting her successor as Moderator, Rev. Phil Garrison (St. Andrew UCC/Sarasota). The financial report was delivered by Budget & Finance Committee chair Rev. Jim Kvetko (Miami Shores Community Church), highlighting the continuing deficits and decrease in OCWM giving by our congregations.

Dr. Ben returned for a Q&A forum, which he preceded with a discussion of the core values and mission plan of the UCC – “the three legged stool of who we uniquely are”: continuing testament, extravagant welcome and a church of changing lives. These are reflected in goals of: speaking with a bold public voice for progressive Christianity; developing welcoming, reachable congregations; creating engaged, empowered disciples; identifying and training excellent, diverse leaders. We are, he said, “living into new ways of being.”
Dr. Davida then delivered her Interim Conference Minister address, as a “New England Yankee, a plain speaker.” She admitted, “I can’t learn Southern ways of expression: what you see is what you get…I’m going to be very direct…I am deeply concerned.” She expressed the need for the Conference to address its financial challenges. The Yankee in her is making her “nickel-and-diming us to make us lean” and to make certain every single penny is accounted for. “Place on your hearts this challenge…if you believe this matters,” she exhorted. She held up as an example of our coventantal relationship that of University Congregational Church/Orange City, whose closeness to University Congregational Church/West Palm Beach is making her “nickel-and-diming us to make us lean” and to make certain every single penny is accounted for. “Place on your hearts this challenge...if you believe this matters,” she exhorted. She held up as an example of our coventantal relationship that of University Congregational Church/Orange City, whose closeness to University Congregational Church/West Palm Beach

The Florida Woman of the Year was presented by Florida UCC Women President Susan DiAmics (Union Congregational Church/West Palm Beach) to the late Martha Ballard of Community UCC/Lake Park.

Moderator Susan delivered her report on behalf of the Board of Directors. The closing worship included the installation of officers and the Board of Directors, with Dr. Ben offering his message, “Grace Was Given,” followed by Holy Communion.

Prior to the Spring Gathering, a pre-Gathering symposium on “ONA: From Identity to Ministry,” was held on Friday, May 16, at the church. Chaired by Rev. Don Wilson (Venice UCC), it was an effort to energize churches toward a move from proclaiming an ONA identity to an exciting engagement in ONA ministries. The session began with a keynote panel discussion moderated by Rev. Dr. Bernice Powell Jackson (First United Church of Tampa) with panelists: Rev. Dr. Ben Guess (Executive Minister for Local Church Ministries for the national church), Rev. Dr. Kathy Rooke (Faith Family UCC/Tampa), Rick Carson (Editor, Celebrate Florida) and Rev. Dr. Dawson Taylor (Naples UCC). Workshops were presented on several LGBT-related topics.

The event concluded with a worship service, which included a message delivered by Rev. Dawson, special music and Communion.

Thanks to Arlington Congregational for its extravagant hosting.

Fall Gathering — Standing at the Threshold

October 25 – First UCC/Orlando

With Conference Moderator Rev. Phil Garrison (St. Andrew UCC/Sarasota) chairing the meeting and by a vote of the delegates, Rev. John Vertigan was called to become the next Conference Minister of the Florida Conference. His ministry among us would begin on January 1.

Rev. John was presented to the delegates by Ed Pritchett (member, First Congregational Church/Orange City) and Rev. Bruce Havens (Arlington Congregational Church/Jacksonville), co-chairs of the Conference Minister Search Committee, after which Rev. John introduced himself and offered a few words from his heart about the plague of violence in the United States over the weekend. This was then followed by a series of questions from delegates covering a number of topics and concerns in the church and Conference, and he addressed them all with depth, insight and faithfulness.

The theme of the Fall Gathering was “Standing at the Threshold,” and that theme was expressed in the worship and the business of the meeting. Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund, Regional Minister for the Western Region, spoke about what she sees at the threshold as she prepares to leave Florida. Three other voices of the UCC in Florida spoke about what they see: Rev. Dr. Guillermo Marquez-Sterling (Coral Gables Congregational UCC), Haley Knapp (Church of the Isles/Indian Rocks Beach) and Rick Carson (Pass-a-Grille Beach Community UCC/St. Pete Beach).

In business sessions, a balanced 2015 budget was adopted as presented, the proposed bylaw amendment was adopted and gifts were presented to David McFarland (First United Church of Tampa) as he ended his term as chair of the Endowment Corporation Board and to Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund as she ended her ministry here to become vice president for advancement at Christian Theological Seminary in Indianapolis.

A highlight of the day was a presentation of the financial reports and the proposed 2015 budget by Amy Luek (First UCC/Orlando), chair of the Budget & Finance Committee. She spoke of the real possibility of finishing 2014 in the black if we continue to keep expenses low and congregations and individuals meet OCWM, per capita and Friends of the Florida Conference projections.

The Conference thanks the members of First UCC/Orlando and their pastor, Rev. Leigh McCaffrey, for the extravagant welcome they offered and to all who led worship, including the many talented musicians from Windermere Union Church and First Congregational Church/Winter Park.

Delegates respond to Moderator Rev. Phil Garrison’s call for Rev. John Vertigan to be Conference Minister
Greetings Brothers and Sisters of the Florida Conference UCC. Another year of ministry with and among the churches of the Florida Conference has passed. As always it has been a challenging but good year. Some of the ministries and activities that I’ve been involved in this past year are:

**Church Growth and Vitality**
- Worked with Interim Pastor and Lay Leaders at **Miami Lakes Congregational UCC** to organize and implement “Craft Church” church growth and vitality workshop led by Rev. Mike Piazza, Center for Progressive Renewal staff. The workshop was a Conference-wide event hosted by Miami Lakes.
- Coordinated and participated in “Come and See” church growth and vitality gathering led by the Rev. David Schoen, Minister for Congregational Assessment & Support/Local Church Ministries for the national church.
- Participated in UCC Church Finances Workshop led by Rev. Sheri Lovell, UCC Cornerstone Fund staff, at **First Congregational UCC/Winter Park**.
- Coordinated and participated in the “New Beginnings” church growth and vitality initial on-site assessment sessions at each of the three participating congregations: **Seabreeze UCC/Daytona Beach**, **Longwood Hills Congregational UCC/Longwood** and **Union Congregational UCC/West Palm Beach**.
- Led leadership development workshop at **First Congregational UCC/Port St. Lucie**.
- Worked with pastors of UCC at **The Lighthouse/Naples** and **New Vision Congregational UCC/Yulee** to complete and submit funding applications to Local Church Ministries and the Florida Conference.
- Began meeting with the Pastor and several lay leaders of **Riverside UCC/Jacksonville** to help develop strategies related to leadership development, church growth and vitality.
- Participated in a meeting of the Florida Conference New Church Start Ministry Team.

**Support to Congregations and/or Pastors**
- Met, trained and maintained ongoing consultation with the pastoral search committees at:
  - **Cocoa Beach Community UCC** (Interim Pastor)
  - **New Hope UCC/DeLand** (Supply)
  - **Church of the Palms UCC/Delray Beach** (Settled Pastor)
  - **First Congregational UCC/Fort Lauderdale** (Settled Pastor)
  - **CrossRoads Community UCC/Melbourne** (Interim Pastor)
  - **Plymouth Congregational UCC/Miami** (Settled Pastor)
  - **Miami Shores Community UCC** (Interim Pastor)
  - **UCC/New Smyrna Beach** (Settled Pastor)
  - **Riviera UCC/Palm Bay** (Interim Pastor)
  - **Faith Congregational UCC/Port St. Lucie** (Settled Pastor)
  - **First Congregational UCC/Port St. Lucie** (Stated Supply)
  - **Hope UCC/Rockledge** (Interim Pastor)
  - **Coral Isles Church/Tavernier** (Interim Pastor)
  - **New Vision Congregational UCC/Yulee** (Stated Supply Pastor)
- Met and consulted with pastor and/or lay leaders of following churches:
  - **Seabreeze UCC/Daytona Beach**
  - **New Hope UCC/DeLand**
  - **Delta UCC**
  - **Edgewater Union UCC/Edgewater**
  - **The Lord’s House UCC/Hallandale Beach**
  - **First Congregational UCC/Port St. Lucie**
  - **Hope UCC/Rockledge**
  - **New Vision Congregational UCC/Yulee**
- Met and consulted with candidates seeking ministerial authorization in the UCC.
- Met with and offered pastoral support to clergy and congregations as requested.
- Participated in regularly scheduled regional clergy gatherings as able.

**Preaching/Participation in Special Services/Celebrations**
- Participated in a Service of Installation of the Pastor at **Faith Congregational Church/ Port St. Lucie**
- Participated in four Services of Ordination and Installation to a 4-Way Covenant
- Participated in the church anniversary celebration services at **Hope UCC/Rockledge**
- Participated in the 30th Anniversary of Ordination celebration service for the **Rev. Dr. Bruce Havens** at **Arlington Congregational UCC/Jacksonville**
- Participated in eight Ecclesiastical Councils
- Participated in Services of Farewell for the former pastors of UCC congregations in **Cocoa Beach, Daytona Beach, Melbourne, Miami Shores, Tavernier** and **Yulee**
- Preached, worshipped and made pastoral visits to churches throughout the region.
**General Participation**

- Coordinated and participated in the Conference clergy boundary trainings
- Participated in two Conference-wide youth events
- Participated on the authorized clergy retreat planning committee; participated in the authorized clergy retreat
- Participated in a conference call with Conference Ministers from the Southern Region (FL, SE, South Central and Southern) on the topic of church development
- Participated in the meetings of the Northeast and Southeast Regional Church & Ministry Teams
- Participated in the spring and fall meetings of the Conference Committee on Church & Ministry
- Participated in an online training event for Search & Call staff led by Rev. Elizabeth Dilley, Minister for Ministers in Local Churches, Ministerial Excellence, Support and Authorization (MESA)
- Participated in an online training event for search and call staff led by Rev. Kristina Lizardy-Hajbi, Director of Center for Analytics, Research and Data, Local Church Ministries
- Participated in Authorized Ministry for the 21st Century (AM 21). This is a gathering of UCC middle judicatory staff from across the 38 Conferences to share best practices and latest developments in ministerial authorization and accountability in the UCC. The event is organized by the UCC Ministerial excellence, Support and Authorization (MESA) Team.
- Serve on the Daniel Hand Fund Committee (Local Church Ministries)
- Participated in the Spring Gathering Planning committee meetings
- Participated in the General Synod delegates’ conference calls
- Participated in Conference Board meetings
- Participated in Conference staff meetings

I remain excited about ministry with and among the churches of the Florida Conference, and I look forward to the future as God allows it to unfold before us.

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Rev. Dr. Sarah Lund resigned her ministry effective October 31 and the Western Region has been ably ministered to in the ensuing months by the following persons while the search for a new Western Regional Minister continues:

**Rev. Kim Wells** (Lakewood UCC/St. Petersburg),
**Rev. Dr. Jeannette Sherrill** (member, First Congregational Church/Sarasota),
**Rev. Bud Schroeder** (member, Naples UCC),
**Rev. Dr. Raymond W. Hargrove** (Eastern Regional Conference Minister),
**Rev. Dr. C. William Wealand** (Disaster Response & Recovery Ministry Coordinator)

Our gratitude goes out to those who have been serving the Conference in special ways during this time of transition.
The details of the 2014 Income and Expense Statement and the Balance Sheet for the Conference can be found on the Conference website. For the purpose of the Annual Report, I have included a five year comparison for both of these reports.

For the first time in several years, we ended the year with a surplus, which will be transferred to the General Reserve Fund of the Conference. This surplus is a result of the generous giving of many churches but also attributable to the financial support the Endowment now provides to the Conference. That amount is included in the “Transferred Income” line for 2014. The Transferred Income represents the transfer of funds of existing accounts held by the Conference that are designated for specific purposes, such as Youth Ministry.

### Income and Expense Comparison

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2010 Actual</th>
<th>2011 Actual</th>
<th>2012 Actual</th>
<th>2013 Actual</th>
<th>2014 Actual</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Income</td>
<td>$894,771</td>
<td>$873,174</td>
<td>$869,582</td>
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<td>Transferred Income</td>
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<td>$143,096</td>
<td>$134,727</td>
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<td>Total Income</td>
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<td>$1,016,270</td>
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<td>Expenses</td>
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<td>$1,058,880</td>
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<tr>
<td>NET</td>
<td>-$50,476</td>
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</table>

Note also that the income and expense for 2014 includes $137,758 in other mission giving, such as OGHS (One Great Hour of Sharing) and NIN (Neighbors in Need), that has not previously been reported as part of the Income and Expense Statement. If you reduce the total expenses by that amount, our expenses in 2014 were actually less than in 2013. The same holds true for income. A comparison of OCWM (Our Church’s Wider Mission) and Per Capita giving year-over-year continues to reflect a decline. The careful control of expenses in 2014 also attributed to the surplus income.

The Balance Sheet Comparison for the past five years is included below. A few items to note as you review this chart:

Accounts Receivable represents the outstanding loan balance to two churches.

“UCF” means United Church Funds and that is the total of the Board-designated Funds and the General Reserve of the Conference invested in mutual funds of the United Church Funds.

There has been a decline in total assets over the past years as a result of the deficit spending. In 2014 you see a slight increase in “Total Assets.”

The “Current Liability” of $98,833 represents the loan from the Endowment to pay off the mortgage on the 9300 University property and to cover the operation of that building.

There is much to celebrate as we review the end results for 2014, but it also creates a great challenge for 2015 to continue on this positive path. Every church in the Conference can impact the direction we head in 2015! Together let us continue on a path of financial well-being to support the work of the Conference and the work of the UCC nationally and globally.

### Budget & Finance Committee Members

**Class of 2017**
Amy Luek (First UCC/Orlando), Chair

**Class of 2016**
Rev. Donald Wilson (Venice UCC)
Rev. Gaye Bosley-Mitchell (member, Coral Gables Congregational Church)
Sherian Buller (Port Orange UCC)
LM Sandra Cencebaugh (First UCC/Hollywood)
Lorrin Shepard (First United Church of Tampa)
Rev. A. Bertram Miller (member, Church by the Sea/Bal Harbour)

**Ex-Officio**
Rev. John Allen (member, UCC at The Villages), Treasurer
Rev. Philip Garrison (St. Andrew UCC/Sarasota), Moderator
Ed Pritchett (First Congregational Church/Orange City), Vice Moderator
Robert Oliveira (Naples UCC), Endowment Committee Chair

**Staff**
Rev. John Vertigan, Conference Minister
Report of the Treasurer

REV. JOHN ALLEN
MEMBER, UCC AT THE VILLAGES

In 2014 the Florida Conference of the UCC had a balanced budget. We want to thank all those who worked hard to achieve this goal. Some have worked to reduce expenses while others have given generously. It has been several years since we had a balanced budget and we are blessed in achieving that goal.

Churches’ giving to OCWM (Our Church’s Wider Mission) totaled $452,299. The Per Capita income was $247,730. Our total income for the year was $1,054,140 and the total expenses were $1,036,626, leaving a balance at the end of the year of $17,514. The 2014 Conference Budget was not impacted by the acquisition of the 9300 University Boulevard property (University Congregational UCC/Orlando).

Endowment Fund Corporation

ROBERT OLIVEIRA, NAPLES UCC
PRESIDENT

This past year the Endowment Fund Corporation (EFC) received “with regrets and appreciation for his service” the resignation of Dr. David McFarland (First United Church of Tampa), President and Chair of the Endowment Fund Corporation. At the February 26, 2015 EFC Meeting, I was nominated and approved as the new President and Chair of the Endowment Fund Corporation.

Properties

Trinity UCC/Winter Haven: The EFC has received a gift designated for “debt repayment” and, after due consideration, the EFC Board has determined to use this gift in settlement of the Trinity UCC debt to the Florida Conference. The conference is pleased to celebrate this opportunity for the renewal and revival of Trinity UCC in Winter Haven.

DeLand: The property on South Blue Lake Avenue in DeLand was sold. The Board directed that the revenue for the sale be credited to the Charles Burns 20/20 Vision Fund as that was its original source.

Orlando 9300 University: Formerly the University Congregational Church/Orlando, the property is now owned by the Florida Conference. The Conference formed an exploratory committee to determine future usage and renovation cost if the Conference were to retain the property for its own office space. The renovated property would replace the Conference’s grossly inadequate and costly existing offices spaces. The EFC agreed to assist the Conference to refurbish the facility for dual usage as the Florida Conference Center and a new church start.

Davie: The original buyer opted to not pursue the purchase the property in Davie. However, a second prospective buyer has come forward and is very interested in purchasing the property.

The EFC Board at its February meeting unanimously approved the go ahead to sell the 10 acre Davie property upon final review by the Corporation’s attorney.

Policies

In addition to the policies and guidelines approved by the Board last year, the EFC Board has reviewed and approved a Funds Guide and a detailed Investments Policy this past year. Moving forward, the expectation is to continue evaluating existing and creating additional guidelines and policies to effectively meet the future challenges of the Corporation.

Audit

At the Corporation’s February meeting, the EFC Board requested an independent audit. The Board believes periodic audits will continue to ensure the transparency of the organization’s fiscal actions.

Investments

The approximate investment allocation of Endowment Corporation investments is 45% in domestic core equity, 25% in bonds and 30% in a balanced fund. Last year the investments grew on the order of 2%. Although some adjustments were made in the fall, the mediocre performance of the markets in 2015 has resulted in balances that are basically unchanged from year end. The funds committee is meeting and will present its recommendation to the Board at the EFC Board meeting in Coral Gables on May 1.

Corporation Members
Robert Oliveira (Naples UCC), President
Dr. Bonnie Blomberg (Plymouth, Congregational Church/Miami), Vice President
Donald Stoner (Community Church of Vero Beach), Secretary
Dennis Rodrigues (Coral Gables Congregational Church), Treasurer
Dianne Townsend (UCC at The Lighthouse/Naples), Ex-Officio
Rev. Phil Garrison (St. Andrew UCC/Sarasota), Moderator
Ed Pritchett (First Congregational Church/Orange City), Vice Moderator
Rev. John Allen (member, UCC at The Villages), Board Treasurer
Valerie Thomison, Board/Asst. Treasurer
Amy Luek (First UCC/Orlando), Budget & Finance Chair

Staff Support
Dave Cyril, Beth Shedden, Candy Younglove
The Committee:

• Met as a full board twice; the three Regional Committees met several times during the year
• Approved one person for ordination pending an Ecclesiastical Council and a Call
• Approved six individuals for Privilege of Call pending an Ecclesiastical Council
• Approved three individuals for Commissioned Minister standing pending an Ecclesiastical Council
• Conducted two Fitness Reviews
• Adopted a policy on conflict of interest for committee members in deliberations on committee matters
• Recommended to the Board a policy on church “steeple jacking” in which a pastor attempts to change a congregation’s theology

Northeast Region
Rev. Tim Woodard (Riviera UCC/Palm Bay), Chairperson
Jo Pritchett (First Congregational Church/Orange City), Scribe
Rev. Karen Curtis-Weakley (member, New Hope UCC/DeLand)
Jan Bates (CrossRoads Community Church/Melbourne)
Rev. Donna Cooney (UCC/St. Augustine)
Rev. Steve Heath (Union Congregational Church/Holly Hill)
Rev. Vonshelle Beneby (member, UCC/New Smyrna Beach)

Southwest Region
Bil Detore (Arlington Congregational Church/Jacksonville)
Paul Capaldo (Hope UCC/Rockledge)

Southeast Region
Andrea Burt (Plymouth Congregational Church/Miami), Chairperson
Rev. Phyllis Parthem (member, Jensen Beach Community Church), Scribe
Rev. Harold Thompson (Miami Beach Community Church)
Rev. Georgia Hillesland (Boyonnt Beach Congregational Church)
Josef Spencer (Coral Gables Congregational Church)
Rev. Dr. Fay Golding (member, Faith UCC/Tamarac)
Rev. Dr. David Schnepf (Jensen Beach Community Church)
Suzanne Lewis (First Congregational Church/Fort Lauderdale)
William Generette (Miami Shores Community Church)

Western Region
Rev. Phil White (Fort Myers Congregational Church), Chairperson
Joseph P. Ebbing (Faith Family UCC/Tampa), Scribe
Rev. Donna Ives (member, Spring Hill UCC)
Rev. Deborah Kunkel (Sanibel Congregational UCC)
Rev. Vincent Amlin (United Church of Gainesville)
Jackie Sorensen (First Congregational Church/Winter Park)
Jerry Holderness (Pass-a-Grille Beach Community UCC/St. Pete Beach)
Rev. Dr. Bernice Powell Jackson (First United Church of Tampa)

Ex-Officio
Rev. Philip Garrison, Moderator (St. Andrew UCC/Sarasota)
Martha Synnott, Board Registrar (Church of the Isles/Indian Rocks Beach)

Staff
Rev. John Vertigan, Conference Minister
Rev. Dr. Raymond Hargrove, Eastern Regional Conference Minister

The newly-formed Personnel Committee has worked over the past months on a new employee handbook. This document sets forth the personnel policies and methods of work for the staff of the Florida Conference.

Our hope as a committee is that these policies reflect fairness, justice and consistency in the employment practices of both our clergy and lay employees.

It is also our goal in the coming year to begin employee evaluations and to bring support to our outstanding and valuable staff.

Members of the Personnel Committee
Rev. Dr. Laurinda Hafner (Coral Gables Congregational UCC), Chairperson
Rev. Dr. Dawson Taylor (Naples UCC)
Ed Pritchett (First Congregational Church/Orange City)
Gary Hill (First Congregational Church/Fort Lauderdale)
Margaret Mahoney (Church by the Sea/Bal Harbour)
Rev. Phil Garrison (St. Andrew UCC/Sarasota)
Robert Harris (United Community Church/Sun City Center)
Valerie Thomison
William Clarke (Church of the Open Door Congregational/Miami)

Nominating Committee
Dyanne Edds (Hope UCC/Rockledge), Chairperson
Dory Lingo (Church of the Open Door Congregational/Miami)
Rev. Drew Willard (UCC at The Villages)
Rev. Dr. Guillermo Marquez-Sterling (Coral Gables Congregational Church)
Jan Steinberg (First Church of North Miami Congregational)
Rev. Linda Grouex (Riverside UCC/Jacksonville)
Rev. Dr. Steve Huddler (Christ Congregational Church/Miami)
Committee meetings and work on the search process which began July 2013, continued. Ministerial profiles of candidates from all over the country were received, read and evaluated. Phone and in-person interviews were conducted. The committee decided by consensus that the Rev. John D. Vertigan was the best candidate for the Florida Conference.

Rev. Vertigan was recommended to the Board of Directors in early October. After meeting with him, the Board voted to recommend him to be elected at the Fall Gathering as the Conference Minister. Rev. Vertigan was duly elected Conference Minister on October 25 at First UCC/Orlando, the site of the Fall Gathering. All the details of the Call Agreement were agreed upon including Rev. Vertigan’s start date of January 1, 2015.

Thanks to all who supported the committee and the search process. A special thanks to the committee members for their time, diligence and prayerful discernment.

Conference Minister Search Committee

Rev. Dr. Bruce Havens (Arlington Congregational Church/Jacksonville), Co-Chair
Ed Pritchett (First Congregational Church/Orange City), Co-Chair
Rev. Jacques Mervil, Shalom Center Ministry/Jacksonville
Chasmine Marsden, Naples UCC
Johnathon Makara, Naples UCC
Mark Vannoy (under 30), Fort Myers Congregational Church
Maria Burt, Plymouth Congregational Church/Miami
Aaron Mohammed (under 30), Church by the Sea/Bal Harbour
Rev. Jacques Mervil, Shalom Center Ministry/Jacksonville
Rev. Vonshele Beneby (member), UCC/New Smyrna Beach

Florida Conference General Synod Delegates

Class of 2015
Lay
Samuel Conde, First Congregational Church/Winter Park
Chasmine Marsden, Naples UCC
Johnathon Makara, Naples UCC
Mark Vannoy (under 30), Fort Myers Congregational Church
Maria Burt, Plymouth Congregational Church/Miami
Aaron Mohammed (under 30), Church by the Sea/Bal Harbour
Clergy
Rev. Jacques Mervil, Shalom Center Ministry/Jacksonville
Rev. Vonshele Beneby (member), UCC/New Smyrna Beach

Class of 2017
Lay
Robyn Firth, Coral Gables Congregational Church
Marcelino Rivera, First UCC/Orlando
Haley Knapp, Church of the Isles/Indian Rocks Beach
Lorrin Shepard, First United Church of Tampa
Clergy
Rev. Leigh McCaffrey, First UCC/Orlando
Rev. Mark Goforth, Community UCC/Lake Park
Rev. Dr. Dawson Taylor, Naples UCC
Rev. Dr. Kathy Rooke, Faith Family UCC/Tampa
During the past year, the Disaster Ministry team of the Florida Conference had been active in a number of ways in several locations. With the help of Betzi Yungclas, a long term volunteer for the United Church of Christ, we have been supporting the long-term recovery work in the Pensacola area caused by the spring 2014 flood. Betzi coordinates the work of groups of volunteers who respond to the national UCC website announcement of locations where volunteer work is needed. The volunteers help repair flood-damaged homes belonging to people for whom FEMA and insurance funds are not adequate to repair their homes. Two of our tool trailers are in use by volunteer groups in Pensacola and other Florida Panhandle flood locations.

The Disaster Ministry team distributed more than 500 emergency kits in 2014. The kits, created by members of congregations in our Conference, included flood clean-up bucket, hygiene, school and baby kits. Additional kits from the Church World Service warehouse in New Windsor, MD, were also distributed.

The team has been making arrangements with the manufacturers of Heater Meals to make the meals available for sale to members of our congregations. The meals are being introduced at the Spring Gathering of the Conference. They make it possible for people to “shelter in place” following a disaster. The meals are self-heating and store without refrigeration for five years. Additional information will be available at the Heater Meals display booth and will also be sent to churches in the Conference.

Team members have continued to assist congregations to plan and prepare. The Red Cross Ready Rating program is available at no cost for a congregation to assess its level of preparedness and to chart a path toward the improvement of its level. With tools provided by team members, congregations can prepare to help its members following a disaster in their community.

A number of training events have been offered to team members during 2014 and will continue to be offered in the future.

Our Churches Being Church — 2014

The arts at The UCC at The Villages

Marching with farm workers for fair pay
## MEMBERS IN DISCERNMENT

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Name</th>
<th>Church and Location</th>
<th>Institution</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>James Andrews</td>
<td>Lakewood UCC/St. Petersburg</td>
<td>University of South Florida</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Allison Baker</td>
<td>Windermere Union UCC</td>
<td>Chicago Theological Seminary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ian Beason</td>
<td>Longwood Hills Congregational Church/Longwood</td>
<td>Asbury Theological Seminary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Jenny Gragg Carson</td>
<td>Plymouth Congregational Church/Miami</td>
<td>Princeton University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sandra Cencebaugh</td>
<td>First UCC/Hollywood</td>
<td>Florida International University</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cynthia Drew</td>
<td>Coral Gables Congregational UCC</td>
<td>Christian Theological Seminary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Rick Harrell</td>
<td>First Congregational UCC/Sarasota</td>
<td>Bethel Seminary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Cynthia Lee</td>
<td>Miami Beach Community Church</td>
<td>Eden Theological Seminary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Elizabeth LeSeuer</td>
<td>Coral Gables Congregational UCC</td>
<td>Eden Theological Seminary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>John D. Letson</td>
<td>First Congregational Church/Fort Lauderdale</td>
<td>Florida Center for Theological Studies</td>
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<tr>
<td>Sara Martz</td>
<td>The Community Church of Vero Beach</td>
<td>Asbury Theological Seminary</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pamela McCorry</td>
<td>Union Congregational Church/West Palm Beach</td>
<td>Drew University Theological School</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Jennifer McDowell</td>
<td>Arlington Congregational Church/Jacksonville</td>
<td>Bethel Seminary/St. Paul (graduated with MDiv)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Elizabeth Miles</td>
<td>United Church in Tallahassee</td>
<td>Florida Center for Theological Studies, Emory</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>David Clyle Morse</td>
<td>First Congregational Church/Fort Lauderdale</td>
<td>Florida Center for Theological Studies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pamela Oliveira</td>
<td>Naples UCC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Amy Rovell-Rix</td>
<td>United Church of Gainesville</td>
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<tr>
<td>Twila Rhodes</td>
<td>The Community Church of Vero Beach</td>
<td>Chicago Theological Seminary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Greg Smith</td>
<td>Naples UCC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Ronald A. Thompson</td>
<td>Naples UCC</td>
<td>Lexington Theological Seminary</td>
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<tr>
<td>Terri Vincent</td>
<td>Coral Gables Congregational UCC</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pierce Withers</td>
<td>United Church in Tallahassee</td>
<td>Andover Newton Theological School</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

## 50 Years (1965)
- Kenneth Jack Briggs
- C. David Dean
- John E. Fielding
- Lloyd Arthur Hunter
- Diana Reed Jackson
- Walter Harvey Kramme
- Joseph W. Ladu
- Martha L. McInnes
- Charles Raymond Mory
- Luther Calvin Pierce

## 25 Years (1990)
- Patrick J. Powers
- Andrew P. White
- Donald R. White
- John Wiedenheft

## 2015 Church Anniversaries

### 50 Years (1965)
- St. Andrew UCC/Sarasota
- Deltona UCC
- United Church of Gainesville

### 25 Years (1990)
- Faith Congregational Church/Port St. Lucie
- Pilgrims’ UCC/Fruitland Park
Youth Ministry

Southeastern Regional Youth

It is truly a blessing to have served another year as the Southeast Regional Youth Minister for the Florida Conference. The following is a report of the year in review.

At the top of the year, planning was well underway for the annual Walk on Water Youth Retreat, which yielded approximately 100 participants, its largest turnout in recent years. It was held at Union Congregational UCC/West Palm Beach January 17-19. The time spent together highlighted creative opportunities for engaging in spiritual development while building relationships through fellowship.

Over the following months, much time was spent on planning for the Southern Regional Youth Event whereby I was tasked with spearheading the worship, plenary and workshop sessions. While lots of additional meeting and planning time was spent for the SRYE, low registration caused the event to be canceled. With some youth still interested in gathering during the summer, I partnered with my colleague, Jeanne, and we organized a “meet up” gathering at the annual Night of Joy event held at Walt Disney World, which offered lots of spiritual music and fun attractions, too. Also, throughout the summer months, planning was underway for the 2015 Walk on Water. In addition, I made myself available to be a resource for the 2014 Fall Youth Retreat planning for the Southeast region of the UCC. Unfortunately, I was not invited to be part of the planning team nor could I attend due to a prior scheduling commitment out of the area. Concerns were later raised about the Fall Retreat, and the Conference addressed them as expeditiously as possible.

For back-to-school, some of the youth in the Southeast region were interested in gathering together again. In an effort to meet this interest, I partnered with Church of the Open Door Congregational/Miami for a Youth Revival. It was such an inspirational experience, which included live contemporary praise music and a youth-centered sermon.

UCC/Hallandale Beach also invited me to speak with their youth during a Friday evening event, and I shared lots of information about the Conference and UCC support of its youth. Fall also involved more time planning WOW and finalizing details of the weekend agenda, which incorporated my goal of web streaming for training youth leaders/groups while creating space and opportunity for sharing best practices/challenges amongst youth groups.

In short, 2014 involved my being available as a spiritual resource for Conference youth ministry and communicating with congregations in this regard, especially with those churches interested in developing new youth groups. To this end, I have had the privilege of communicating resources and/or youth ministry opportunities with the following churches:

- Port Orange UCC
- Miami Beach Community Church
- Plymouth Congregational Church/Miami
- Church by the Sea/Bal Harbour
- Coral Gables Congregational UCC
- Faith UCC/Port St. Lucie
- First Congregational Church/Port St. Lucie
- Congregational Church of Boca Raton
- First Congregational Church/Fort Lauderdale
- Lord’s House UCC/Hallandale Beach
- Christ Congregational Church/Miami
- Naples UCC
- Church of the Open Door Congregational/Miami
- Community UCC/Lake Park
- Arlington Congregational Church/Jacksonville
- Shalom Center Ministry/Jacksonville
- Jensen Beach Community Church
- Key Biscayne Community Church
- CrossRoads Community Church/Melbourne
- Riviera UCC/Palm Bay
- Church of the Isle/Indian Rocks Beach
- UCC/St. Augustine
- First Congregational UCC/Sarasota
- Community Church/Vero Beach
- Union Congregational UCC/West Palm Beach
- North Port Community UCC
- First Congregational Church/Winter Park.

Peace and blessings.
I continue to be amazed at the many churches and youth in our Conference who are willing to be the hands and feet of Jesus as they seek to live out the gospel.

The early part of the year was spent on planning for the Southern Regional Youth Event with my colleague, Sheila, and others from varying Conferences. While lots of additional meeting and planning time was spent for the SRYE, low registration caused the event to be canceled.

I was honored to be a co-leader in January for Certification School, which was held in conjunction with the Florida Conference and Vibrant Faith Ministries. We had two of our own people go through this wonderful program.

March 1-3 was the annual Peace River Camping and Canoeing Trip and was attended by 182 youth and adult leaders representing 15 different churches. We celebrated 27 years of Peace River!

In September I again partnered with Sheila and we held a meet-and-greet at Disney’s “Night of Joy.” It was a great time to meet some new people and listen to incredible spiritual music. We gave each person who attended a Night of Joy pin as a reminder of our time together.

In December I attended the NOWCYM UCC (Network of Wider Church Youth Ministry) gathering, which was held in Savannah. I am honored to be the Moderator of this group for two years. It was a wonderful opportunity to meet and interact with other Conference youth leaders, as well as have the opportunity to share time with presenters Revs. Ben Guess, Ivy Beckwith and Waltrina Middleton from the national church.

I continue to love my interactions with various churches and leaders throughout the Conference. I have gone and shared presentations for parents and youth to several churches over the years. The opportunity to be an ongoing resource is one I cherish.

Synod is rapidly approaching, and I am looking forward to participating in that event with the youth of our Conference.

It is an exciting time as we have new leadership, and I look forward to what is ahead. It continues to be an honor to serve the Florida Conference.
Florida United Church of Christ Women

Susan Diamicis, President
Member, Union Congregational Church/West Palm Beach

Last year’s Spring Gathering held in Jacksonville was our opportunity to say “goodbye” to Rev. Kent Siladi who was leaving Florida as our Conference Minister. It was a bittersweet time—losing a leader who helped our Conference grow into a more computerized time, but knowing he was growing into a new position further up the UCC “Ladder of Leadership.” We welcomed our Interim Conference Minister Rev. Dr. Davida Foy Crabtree and looked forward to working with a leader who already has taken other Conferences to newer levels.

June brought about the inspection of a new site for the 88th Annual Meeting of the Florida UCC Women. The Life Enrichment Center in Fruitland Park, just west of Leesburg, was looked over for the 2015 meeting and given approval by the board. We contracted with the Center for May 29-31, 2015, which is the weekend after Memorial Day weekend.

The summer passed by quickly with the By-Laws Committee still hard at work and the ladies being busy with the planning of “In the Company of Women” to be held in Fort Myers on October 4, 2014. The theme selected was “When Life Gives You Lemons, Make Lemonade!”

The following weekend our 2nd Vice President, Lavern Goforth (Lake Park Community Church) attended the planning meeting for the Biennial Southern Region Conference meeting which will be held at Sumatanga Conference Center in Gallant, AL, on October 16-18, 2015. All women from the Southern region UCC Conferences—Southern, Southeast, South Central and Florida—are encouraged to attend. The theme selected is “Come Celebrate the LORD of the DANCE,” referencing Psalm 150:1,4-6.

October, November and December went quickly with all the UCC women working in their own churches for their various holiday events.

With the ringing in of 2015, the regions throughout Florida held their own annual meetings to get all UCC women on track for the upcoming events. As President, I was able to attend each of the following:

- January 17th – Gold Coast, under the leadership of E. Camille Moite (Faith UCC/Tamarac), held their meeting at Faith UCC/Tamarac. Its theme was “Lace, Nails & Running Shoes,” and the topic was “Soul Scandal: The Outrage of Loneliness and Its Effect on the Souls of Women.” Guest Speaker was Dr. Juanita H. Bandford, Ed.D.
- January 31st – Southwest, under the direction of Judi Wilson (Pilgrim UCC/Port Charlotte), was held at First Congregational UCC/Sarasota.
- February 7th Miami-Dade/Monroe under the direction of Jan Steinberg (First...
This past year Older Adult Ministry was focused on raising awareness, education and support for individuals living with dementia and their families through the following:

- Celebrate Florida newsletter articles
- Contacting local churches
- Providing support on Facebook caregiver support group
- Offering workshops
- A Clergy Guide to Dementia is now published and available on Kindle

Some local churches did express interest in this ministry; however, we had difficulty organizing an event. Therefore, individuals interested in this topic attended other workshops that I held in Florida. I would request that this topic be considered as a presentation at a future annual Gathering. I now travel throughout the US and Canada teaching dementia care and have been contacted by several churches in other denominations throughout the country to speak and teach at their conferences. Many of these churches have asked for my help with their growing ministries focused on dementia.

UCC... from previous page

Church of North Miami Congregational, Patsy McDowell (Church of the Open Door Congregational/Miami) and Bunny Gruntler (Miami Shores Community Church/Miami) held their meeting at First Church of North Miami Congregational. Their theme was a shortened version of “When life gives you lemons, make lemonade.” They also had an “upcycling” service project: upcycling is taking something old and of little worth and turning it into something that is of greater value.

- February 14th – Central West region under the direction of Eleanor Rouse (Trinity UCC/St. Petersburg), conducted their annual meeting at Faith UCC/Dunedin. Unfortunately, this small region did not have many present due to illnesses and other commitments, but a very informative meeting was held.

- February 21st – Central East’s meeting was held under the direction of Dyanne Edds (Hope UCC/Rockledge), at CrossRoads Community Church/Melbourne. Their topic was “Hunger: What are WE Doing about It?” The guest speaker was Tara Pagliarini, Executive Director of Family Promise of Brevard. There were also afternoon workshops that were very enlightening.

All year long we have been reading selections from our List of Reading for Renewal Books, which were chosen by chairperson Terri Crawford (Fort Myers Congregational Church). Some of the churches turn this educational part of our yearly program into a challenge to see which church has the most books read and which has the most readers. Terri will announce the tally at the Annual Meeting in Fruitland Park.

Also to be announced at the Annual Meeting will be a Lay Woman of the Year, chosen from names submitted by any UCC church in Florida. Second Vice President Lavern Goforth will be making that announcement.

There are always lots of things to look forward to if you care to join in the activities of the UCC Women. Every woman in our Florida UCC churches is a member of the UCC Women and can attend local, regional or state functions—it’s lots of fun and an opportunity to meet many new friends.

Officers

President - Susan DiAmicis (Union Congregational Church/West Palm Beach)
1st Vice President - Patsy McDowell (Church of the Open Door Congregational/Miami)
2nd Vice President - Laverne Goforth (Community UCC/Lake Park)
Recording Secretary - Carol Shores (Lakewood UCC/St. Petersburg)
Treasurer - Barb Coons (Fort Myers Congregational Church)
Historian - Barbara Smith (Hope UCC/Rockledge)
Spiritual Life - Pastor Sandy Cencebaugh (First UCC/Hollywood)
Mission Study - Rhea Taie-Tehrani (Miami Shores Community Church)
Reading for Renewal - Terri Crawford (Fort Myers Congregational Church)
Social Concerns/Community Outreach - Bert Perry (New Hope UCC/DeLand)

Regional Representatives

Miami-Dade/Monroe Counties – Jan Sterling (First Church of North Miami Congregational)
Gold Coast - Camille Moite (Faith UCC/Tamarac)
St. Johns - Open
Central East Coast - Dyanne Edds (Hope UCC/Rockledge)
Southwest - Judith Wilson (Pilgrim UCC/Port Charlotte)
Central West Coast - Eleanor Rouse (Trinity UCC/St. Petersburg)
MINISTERIAL CHANGES IN THE FLORIDA CONFERENCE  
(since our 2014 Spring Gathering)

Clergy New to Florida
Jen Daysa ......................... Good Samaritan Church/Pinellas Park
Diane Langworthy ....................... UCC/New Smyrna Beach
Mark Williams ......................... United Church of Marco Island
Robert Hunter ..................... Faith Congregational Church/Port St. Lucie
Al Bunis .............................. Plymouth Congregational Church/Miami
Attila Szemesi .......................... North Port Community UCC
Patrick Rogers .................. First Congregational Church/Fort Lauderdale
John Vertigan .................. Conference Minister/Florida Conference UCC

Ordinations
Mairolet Vega ........................ VITAS Hospice Care Miami/Dade
Robert Cemillan .................. VITAS Innovative Hospice Care Miami/Dade
Sonja Williams ....................... Faith UCC/Tamarac
Star Valino ............................ Arlington Congregational UCC/Jacksonville
Yosladi Izquiendo-Yglesias .... Coral Gables Congregational UCC

Licensure
Michael Cain ........................ First United Church of Tampa (10/30/14)
Marcelino Rivera .................... First UCC/Orlando (2/17/15)
Dan Lamey ................................ Naples UCC (1/18/15; no longer active)

Privilege of Call
Todd Weber ............................... Pending a call

Commissioned
Jeanne Haemmelmann ............ Pass-A-Grille Beach
Community UCC/St. Pete Beach (9/28/2014)

Retired
Jim Kvetko ............................... 7/25/2014
Phil White ................................ 1/17/2015
Donna Ives ............................... 1/17/2015
Donna Papenhausen .................. 1/17/2015
Fred Fourie ............................... 7/12/2014

Help Us Spread the Good News
Want your friends to share in hearing the good news of what the churches of the Florida Conference are doing?
Please provide info about links to this Annual Report and current and recent issues of Celebrate Florida in your Sunday church bulletins, in your newsletter and on your website.

Visit www.uc-cfla.org/uccfla/Celebrate_Florida.html

IN MEMORY

Norman Farnum ....................... April 9, 2014
Jim Reilly ............................. September 14, 2014
Arden Yakimow ..................... December 4, 2014
Roy Weed ............................. December 25, 2014
Al Goddard ............................. March 14, 2015
William T. Scott .................. March 19, 2015
When the members of University Congregational Church/Orlando determined that it was necessary to terminate the legal existence of the congregation, they created a legacy gift in the form of their property and building at 9300 University Boulevard in Orlando (in Orange County near the Seminole County line, off State Route 417). This gift given to the Conference in January 2014, has enabled the Board of Directors to determine that it will become the new home of the Conference office and staff and that it will become a program center, a nesting facility for a new congregation, a teaching center for environmental care and energy efficiency and a center for life-long learning events. The modifications necessary to house the Conference will be completed by the end of 2015.

A six-member team has been working to create a plan to repair and replace dysfunctional and damaged components of the building and to renovate portions of the building to serve as office space for the Conference staff and meeting/program space for the Conference. The team is striving to make the newly-renovated structure as energy-efficient as possible in keeping with our commitment to live responsibly on this planet.

A LEED Certification Coach has been helping the team to better understand the process of renovation and design that exercises great care and concern for the environment. The LEED website states that it stands for green building leadership. LEED is transforming the way we think about how buildings and communities are designed, constructed, maintained and operated across the globe. LEED-certified buildings save money and resources and have a positive impact on the health of occupants while promoting renewable, clean energy. LEED — or Leadership in Energy & Environmental Design — is a green building certification program that recognizes best-in-class building strategies and practices. To receive LEED certification, building projects satisfy prerequisites and earn points to achieve different levels of certification. Prerequisites and credits differ for each rating system, and teams choose the best fit for their project.

The rendering shows possibilities of a roof that reflects the sun’s rays instead of absorbing much of their heat. With additional insulation, new windows and doors, the building’s “envelope” will be tight and permit no leakage of outside warmth into the building’s interior.

This new home for the Conference holds the potential for: helping a new congregation to be formed; community involvement in the creation of edible landscaping and community garden programs; collaborating with the University of Central Florida students and faculty to offer educational programs about green buildings, neighborhood gardening, energy efficiency in churches and homes and others. The goal is to have the building ready to house the Conference office and staff by January 2016.

Members of the Planning Team of the 9300 University Property Committee

- Rev. Dr. Bill Wealand (Union Congregational Church/Holly Hill), Chairperson
- Barry Rosson (Coral Gables Congregational UCC)
- Rev. John Allen (member, UCC at The Villages)
- Ron Cross (First UCC/Orlando)
- Bob Harris (United Community Church/Sun City Center)
- Rev. Shelly Wilson (United Church of Gainesville)
- Ex-Officio: Rev. Phil Garrison (St. Andrew UCC/Sarasota), Conference Moderator, and Conference Minister Rev. John Vertigan

9300 University Property Committee

REV. DR. BILL WEALEND, CHAIRPERSON

9300 before renovations
(R) Remembering the fallen from 9/11 and their families and honoring present day heroes at First Congregational Church/Lake Helen.

(L) Youth from Pass-a-Grille Beach Community UCC/St. Pete Beach at work on a mission trip

(R) Moderator Rev. Phil Garrison tearing out old carpet at 9300 University property

(L) UCC Women in fellowship

(Below) Youth at Peace River

(Below) Marching in St. Pete Pride Parade

(L) Walking the Labyrinth at UCC/New Smyrna Beach

(R) Blessing of the Animals at Faith UCC/Bradenton