



Highlights of the Fall 2013 United Church of Christ Board Meeting
Rev. Dr. Bernard Wilson, Chair
October 23, 2013

It is an honor and a privilege for all of us Directors of the first United Church of Christ Board, to serve with our time, talents, treasures and visionary energy. The first Fall meeting of the United Church of Christ Board (UCCB) met in Cleveland, Ohio October 9-12, 2013 following our initial Organizational Meeting after the General Synod in Long Beach, California, on July 2, 2013.

A significant part of the fall agenda included work sessions. Orientation segments were integrated on the work of the Board, on good governance, on diversity training and on the various committees of the Board. Some of the Standing Committees, particularly Finance & Budget and Investments & Endowments, held conference call meetings prior to this Board meeting in order to acquaint members with the complexities of these matters that were addressed in depth by the full Board.

I conducted the meeting with Vice Chair, Dale Bonds. Worship and prayer were woven throughout our work with excellent preaching and leadership from members of the Board. All but one member of the Board was present (the absent member had an emergency and was excused).

Highlights of the meeting include:

► **Worship and Prayer:** Our General Minister and President, The Rev. Geoffrey A. Black, preached on the *Power & Possibility of a Word*. Board members exchanged stones marked with their own powerful words as a prayerful and prophetic reminder of the work of the United Church of Christ until the next quarterly teleconference meeting, followed after that by the Spring Board Meeting on site in Cleveland March 13-15, 2014.

► **Charge** to the new United Church of Christ Board: we will focus on two areas this biennium: *Fiscal Sustainability* and *Solid Relationships with Board and Executives* to support the bold and prophetic work of the national setting in the life of the United Church of Christ.

► **Adoption of a Member Behavior Covenant**

► **Orientation** to a board that serves the whole church, and to good governance, with Rev. Dr. Anita Bradshaw and UCC General and Associate General Counsel: Don Clark and Heather Kimmel.

► **General Synod Planning Updates**

► **Multi-media Ministry Reports of Executives and Officers**

► **Budget** The Board of Directors, working in close association with the Officers of the Church, passed a budget for the 2014 calendar year reflecting the constraints of diminishing OCWM revenues with the mutual pledge to bring about long-term fiscal stability at the National Setting of the United Church of Christ.

► **Ministry Committees** met as educational and generative “thinktanks.” The Board members will rotate on these committees each biennium and plan to look for synergy, innovation, idea sharing to lift up and support the work.

► **501(c)(3):** The Board unanimously approved a resolution providing that certain UCC related organizations must either seek and obtain their own 501(c)(3) status within three years from the date of passage of the resolution or meet several governance requirements to remain covered by the UCC’s group 501(c)(3) exemption, following healthy discussion on the tension of being fiduciary representatives and in covenantal relationships.

► **Generative Reflection on Church (Now)** – In his address, the General Minister and President invited sharing on church and mission for postmodern times. The Board looked at the BIGs, our Bold Inspirational Goals, with some

reflection on a General Synod Committee on Structure paper “UCC Ecclesiology” from 1991. Geoffrey noted its four goals, proclaiming the Gospel – gathering and supporting communities of faith - laboring for justice – and manifesting more fully the breadth and unity of humankind and creation, have compelling ties to Vision Plan goals created through many rounds of consultation: **bold public voice, welcoming reachable congregations, engaged discipleship, and excellent diverse leaders.**

► **The Spring Board Meeting** March 13-15, 2014 will incorporate suggestions from the Fall meeting to include theological reflection and generative thinking, with a focus on fiscal sustainability. Updates from the General Synod Program and Planning Committee chaired by Judge Brian Holeman will also be significant for the work ahead along with a full agenda slated in every area of the work tasked to us.