

MINISTRY PERSONNEL AND EDUCATION COMMITTEE

The work of the Ministry, Personnel & Education Committee is done mostly through its sub-Committees and their reports follow this report.

The MP&E Committee meets three times per year (October, February & on the afternoon of the opening day of the Annual Meeting of Conference in May).

At our October meeting Rev. Lloyd Bruce shared with us a resource he has prepared on Conflict Resolution. The Committee found this to be an excellent resource and we are in the process of including additional material with it and then hopefully making it available to the presbyteries on a CD and also possibly having it available on the Conference web site as a downloadable resource. More information on this will be available shortly.

I mentioned in my report last year that we have reflected upon the 2007 annual meeting's request for committees to make their meetings as green as possible. To that end we continue to encourage car-pooling and we held our February 2009 meeting by conference call. It was very successful with almost all of our members able to be available to participate. The day was blustery in parts of the Conference so it meant members did not have to deal with winter roads and the safety factors they present. As well it was good stewardships of members' time as our work was completed by noon and they had the rest of the day free to do other work and of course no carbon emissions were produced by travel. To add to this we have just received information from the conference that the cost of the conference call was \$138.65 (or \$13.87 per person). A similar size meeting was held in Sackville in February with 10 people with lunch cost \$1,148.56 (or \$114.86 per person). With that said, by having a conference call we saved approximately \$1,009.91!

At our February meeting the issue of recruitment of people for ministry was again raised and Ellen Beirsto, Ron Vincent & Barbara Wagner have agreed to meet (probably by Conference call & e-mail) prior to our May meeting to put together some ideas for the committee to reflect upon. As well, they will be checking with the General Council Office to see what work on Vocations they are considering.

As the church seeks to move towards the new category of Designate Lay Minister there are many questions that arise and issues that need clarification. This is happening little by little and with the help of our Personnel Minister, Kendall Harrison, this transition is gradually happening. Kendall has spent a great deal of time working with these changes and we appreciate his efforts on our behalf.

Also at the February meeting the MP&E Committee received two proposals from Diakonia of the United Church of Canada (DUCC) which we feel merit the attention and action of the Conference. They are printed in the pre-conference book for your information and consideration.

The tasks assigned to the sub-Committees of our committee require long hours of faithful work by many volunteers and I want to take this space to formally thank all of our sub-committee chairs and members for the faithful ministry they offer to our Conference and the wider church. As well I wish to express our thanks to our Personnel Minister, Kendall Harrison for the caring and faithful ministry he offers to the MP&E Committee and all its sub-committees and to Lorraine Horyl, our staff support person, who provides dedicated administrative support to the work of MP&E.

Respectfully submitted, Jack Spencer - Chair

Education & Students Committee

The Maritime Conference Education and Students Committee's membership consists of the convenors (or representatives) of the Presbytery Education and Students committees from around our Conference. This committee holds two meetings a year, one in November and one in February.

In November, the committee carries out interviews for 2nd year candidates for ordination who are anticipating their internship year the following September. Interviews are also held for Designated Lay Ministry personnel who have completed their 2nd summer training event. Diaconal candidates who are within 18 months of commissioning are also interviewed along with persons seeking admission to The United Church of Canada within the following 18 months. The purpose of these interviews is essentially to assist the individual in assessing their growth to date and to give some direction in regards to areas needing further work. The interviews also enable the individuals to experience a Conference level interview. We have often received feedback from persons interviewed that they find the Conference level interview to be more intensive than they were accustomed, and they appreciated the opportunity to engage in an interview at this level.

In February, the Conference Education and Students also meets as a body and this is essentially a report of that meeting.

The Maritime Conference Education and Students committee met at Tatamagouche Centre on February 2, 3, 4, 2009.

Part of our meeting is to provide a venue for the various Presbytery Education and Students convenors to share and discuss the various issues/concerns they may be facing in their individual work. It is also a time when care and support can be offered by many facing similar challenges. Finally, there is time provided for our Personnel Minister to share information which is relevant to the work which we are engaged.

The primary purpose of the Conference Education and Students Committee is to fulfil its mandate to "examine" the readiness for ordination/commissioning of Candidates who have completed the requirements and have been recommended by their Presbyteries; and for recognition as Designated Lay Ministers those individuals who, likewise, have completed their preparation and have been recommended by their Presbyteries.

This year, there were four candidates for ordination, four candidates for recognition, and one candidate for admission into The United Church of Canada to be interviewed.

As a result of our interviews and deliberations, I wish to report to you and through you to the Maritime Conference Executive for information, and I will report to the Annual Meeting of the Maritime Conference for action, that the Maritime Conference Education and Students committee recommends:

Rosemary Godin (Halifax Presbytery)

Christine Johnson (Halifax Presbytery)

Wendy Kean (Halifax Presbytery)

and Tara Ann Wilson (Halifax Presbytery)

to be ordained at the 2009 Annual General Meeting of the Maritime Conference.

The Maritime Conference Education and Students committee also recommends:

Annika Sangster (Inverness-Guysborough Presbytery)

be commissioned as a Diaconal Minister in The United Church of Canada at the 2009 Annual General Meeting of the Maritime Conference.

And that the Maritime Conference Education and Students Committee recommends:

Sim Rushton (South Shore Presbytery)

Dale Crawford (Truro Presbytery)

Norma Mills (Sydney Presbytery)

and Bill Drysdale (Chignecto Presbytery)

be recognized as Designated Lay Ministers at the 2009 Annual General Meeting of the Maritime Conference.

The Maritime Conference Education and Students committee also recommends:

Rev. Wayne Smith (Presbyterian)

be admitted into ordered ministry of the United Church of Canada at the 2009 Annual General Meeting of the Maritime Conference.

As the convenor of the Maritime Conference Education and Students Committee, I would like to thank and express my profound admiration for the members of this committee. I am impressed with the dedication to the work at both the Presbytery and Conference level, and by their deep compassion for those individuals who come before the committee. As a person who can observe them hard at work, I know that the work is not always easy but they are more than willing to do their best for the individual and the wider church.

Finally, I want to thank Rev. Beth Brehaut and Rev. Kendall Harrison. Beth is our chaplain to our group and the individuals we interview. She brings a quiet presence with her which is a blessing to the process. Kendall is always there willing to give guidance when needed but also more than willing to let me learn the ropes on my own. I appreciate knowing he is there and we as a committee are truly blessed by his presence.

Scott Hillier

Maritime Conference Education and Students Committee

Biographies

ORDINANDS

Rosemary Godin

And a little child shall lead them....Rosemary Godin not only has her oldest child to thank for making her a mother, but it was baby Marc who helped her find the United Church 32 years ago. She wasn't raised with any faith denomination and so God's hand was truly at work with love when she felt compelled and driven to "get the baby done" at a church.

Despite not having been raised with a church, she had been baptised and so she knew that was what you did when those little people come on the scene! She and her husband got into their lime green Beetle one day in 1977 and drove around Val d'Or, Quebec looking at each Protestant church where she knew English would be spoken. And there it was! Tiny and gleaming white with a steeple that reached to the sky! The Golden Valley United Church ... and with it came a Minister on settlement and his wonderful family who welcomed her and her wandering tribe of Godins as if they deserved to be there! But this newly-minted Minister refused to baptize Marc until Rosemary could tell him why she wanted it done! Patiently, he led her through eight months of questioning and answering ... and then Hallelulah! The deed was done! Who would have thought! She found a home in that little church. And she found God and all the blessings that having a relationship with God bring with it. One of those blessings was a second son, Philip, who "got done" with much less trouble and was young enough to actually wear a Christening dress!

Born in Barrie, Ontario into a military family, Rosemary came to Nova Scotia about 25 years ago. She and her husband separated shortly afterwards (it had nothing to do with Nova Scotia - she swears!) and Rosemary and her ex-husband co-parent their two sons who have grown into wonderful men. A trained journalist, she worked on both of Halifax's daily papers and edited several trade magazines. A brief sojourn in politics as an MLA in 1998-99 interrupted her plans to enter AST when she wanted to (and should have! Voters felt the same way.).

With the encouragement of friends and family, with the ever-present love and companionship of God, she has reached this day. A new beginning in a lifetime of new beginnings as we are all promised. Joy and gratitude does not begin to express how she feels towards the Creator and each and every person who helped her move towards this place in time and space. There is work to be done, she says. The work of Christ. "Let me at 'em!"

Christine Johnson

Christine Johnson was born and raised in the town of Pictou on the North shore of Nova Scotia. The eldest of two daughters of Alf and Monica Johnson, Christine has a lifelong connection with the United Church and traces the roots of her love for art, music, and community back to her early years growing up as "part of the family" of Pictou United Church. It was through the fellowship and community of Pictou United Church that seeds of her faith and creative spirit were sown and nurtured. It was also through this connection that she became involved in United Church camping, first as a camper and later as a camp leader. These camp experiences helped her to first form and shape her understanding of her own call toward leadership and ministry.

Upon graduating from Pictou Academy, she attended the Nova Scotia College of Art and Design in Halifax, NS where she trained as a visual artist and received a Bachelor of Fine Arts in 2001. It was during this time that she became connected with St. Matthew's United Church in the heart of downtown Halifax, where her love of Christian education/development and worship leadership were affirmed and encouraged. She is immensely blessed to have been able to take her first "formal" steps toward ministry with

and within this community whose presence and support were gifts along the sometimes undefined and bumpy path walked by those journeying toward ministry.

In the fall of 2004, she began her studies at the Atlantic School of Theology and graduated this spring with an M.Div Honours, with a concentration in Pastoral Theology. Over the course of her studies she was blessed by the opportunity to work, learn and grow with the faith communities of Waverly Pastoral Charge in Fall River and Wellington, NS as a student minister, and Fenelon Fall United Church, in Fenelon Falls, ON as a ministry intern. These communities welcomed her into their lives and their faith journeys and blessed her with experiences that she will carry throughout her life and ministry.

Wendy Louise Kean

Wendy was born in 1961, the first of five children of Everett and Janet (Glassey) Patterson. She grew up in Halifax and graduated from Dalhousie University in 1983. Although active in The United Church throughout her childhood and youth, she was hungry for a spirituality that engaged both heart and mind, so while at university she became Roman Catholic. A few years later, she met Jerry Kean, a military photographer. They married in 1987. Over the years, as their family grew, Jerry and Wendy were posted to bases around eastern Canada: Greenwood, NS; Borden, ON, and Gagetown, NB. On each base, they found a home-away-from-home in the military chapels, where Wendy became involved in a number of lay ministries. While posted to CFB Borden, the chaplains encouraged Wendy to study theology. In 1999, Wendy graduated with a Master's of Divinity and a Bachelor of Sacred Theology from Regis College, Toronto School of Theology. That same year, Jerry was posted to CFB Gagetown, where Wendy worked as Director of Catholic Formation at St. Dunstan's Parish, Fredericton. During this time, Wendy was invited to consider becoming a military chaplain, and in 2001, she accepted. She and Jerry were posted to Halifax, where she became a navy chaplain, deploying to the Persian Gulf in 2004 on HMCS Toronto. The practice of ministry raised a number of questions for her, however, and following her return from deployment, Wendy finally confronted the question of ordained ministry. In 2005, she left the Roman Catholic Church and the Canadian Forces to begin discernment for ordained ministry in the United Church. With the support and encouragement of her family and colleagues, she has travelled back to her church roots and found a community that nourishes and engages her spiritually and theologically. Happy to be back home, and eager to enter into new ministry, Wendy thanks everyone who helped show her the way, especially Jerry, Michael, Rosalie and Kathryn.

Tara-Ann Wilson

Tara-Ann Wilson hails from Halifax, Nova Scotia, where she's made her home for the past fifteen years. She was raised in the United Church, as an only child, by her parents-Rev. John Wilson of Alberton, PEI and Sheila Wilson of Halifax, who she thanks for the love and encouragement they have provided every day. Throughout her growing up years and as she ventured into adulthood, church has been an integral part of her life. After finishing high school, she attended Mount Saint Vincent University in Halifax, where she

received a Bachelor of Applied Arts degree in Child and Youth Studies. It was during her time there, that she began to realize that God was calling her onto a different path. After spending many years being involved in the church as a lay person, she knew that God wanted more from her. In her second year she began to respond to the call, and began the process of Discernment, becoming a candidate in 2004. In 2005, she began her studies at the Atlantic School of Theology, which she has finished this Spring, 2009. She feels blessed to have been apart of her home congregation, Edgewood-Oxford United Church in Halifax. She has found herself nurtured by her church family as she has travelled the road towards Ordained ministry. This is a support that she is grateful for and will hold dear to her heart as she ventures out into ministry. She also feels honoured to have been a part of Oxford Street United Church, which was her home community before they amalgamated with Edgewood United Church. She feels blessed to have the wisdom of this community and all that she learned from them, as she journeyed with them towards new life found in Edgewood-Oxford United church. She also gives thanks for the communities of Alberton-Elmsdale Pastoral Charge and Berwick United Church Camp, as well as all of her friends and family who have supported her throughout her life, including her father's wife, Elaine Burrows and her family. She spent her internship with Callander-Laurier Pastoral Charge in North Bay and Callander, Ontario. Her time there provided great learning and has helped to create the minister she is today. As this portion of her journey comes to an end, she looks forward to going wherever God leads, for as our church creed reminds us: "We are not alone, Thanks be to God!"

COMMISSIONAND

Annika Sangster

Annika Sangster, graduate of the Centre for Christian Studies, grew up in Guysborough County, Nova Scotia. She is the daughter of Clayton and Grail Sangster and sister to Mindy and Jolene Sangster. She left her beloved home for further education at Mount Allison University, and graduated with her Bachelor of Arts in 2002. By the end of 2003 she completed the Leadership Development Module at CCS, and knew that diaconal ministry was her calling. She met her partner, Bobby Pace, in 2004 and they married in 2007. Throughout her six years in post graduate studies, Annika has worked at the YMCA, St. Mary's Pastoral Charge and most recently Rockingham United Church. Although currently Annika and Bobby live in Halifax, Annika is a country girl at heart who enjoys spending time cycling, geocaching, knitting and cooking.

DESIGNATED LAY MINISTERS

Marilyn {Dale} Crawford

Marilyn {Dale} Crawford is from Margaree, Nova Scotia. "Margaree is a beautiful valley in the Highlands of Cape Breton. The beauty of the valley, the warmth, and encouragement of its people directly influenced my whole lifeincluding the courage to reach out and grasp a dream I wasn't even aware of. My dreams were for my children and each has been instrumental in realizing mine. Sixteen years in Toronto brought many

changes...I became an Ocular Therapist, married, and had three children. In 1974, we moved back to Cape Breton, the ultimate goal being to give our children the blessing of extended family and a 'safer' environment. We opened our own business. The church was always an integral part of my life and I was extremely thankful that The United Church of Canada had a program which permitted someone who loved God, the church, and felt called to ministry....to serve. The DLM program was designed for people like me. Blessed with a great Supervisor, Rev. Helen Waddell and the ultimate Supervision Team, a great Pastoral Charge, (Shubenacadie)....it was a match made in heaven. Ministry is so much more than I ever dreamed it could be! I thank God, and all those who volunteer their time and energy in evaluating and supporting all ministries. Thank you."

William {Bill} Drysdale

William {Bill} Drysdale came to ministry and to the church late in life. He may have sensed a call to ministry but it was on the encouragement of wife Pat that they chose The United Church of Canada. While making plans to exchange marriage vows in 1992, Pat suggested they might check out the United Church. This was the beginning of their journey together and the beginning of a journey with the church for Bill as well.

Bill became eager to learn and willing to do whatever was needed to serve the church and others. Bill began talking with Rev. David Bruce the associate minister at Trinity St. Stephen's in Amherst and discovered the need for more knowledge about these things that had not been part of his life. He enjoyed listening to the thoughts of others and was encouraged to attend AST in the Diploma Program in Theology and Ministry graduating in 1995. After the discernment process Bill spent a number of years filling in as pulpit supply with many pastoral charges. His experience may have been limited but his enthusiasm exciting. It is amazing when you begin realizing you just can't seem to get enough information to quench the desire to learn.

Much has happened over the years, and much is yet to be discovered. What has blossomed is a passion and love of ministry and people. Such as the wonderful people in Bayfield Little-Shemogue Pastoral Charge. With the special gift of being part of a community's journeying in the faith of Christ and church. Also the opportunity to truly see the blessings and gifts that present themselves through the love of God and family. With the love of Pat, and step-children Alison, and Darren comes the precious gift of grand-children. Dylan Edward Lewis and Felicity Grace who keep Gumpy focused on those special moments when innocent wisdom and honesty touch the heart of who we are to them and to God.

Norma Manship Mills

Norma Manship Mills was born and raised in Sydney, NS, the eldest of five children. She earned a Bachelor of Applied Arts (Radio-Television) from Ryerson Polytechnical Institute in Toronto, and worked in broadcasting for a number of years. She met and married newspaper reporter Stephen R. Mills of Dartmouth, who went on to study at the Atlantic School of Theology and was ordained by Maritime Conference in 1984.

Norma and Stephen have three children who are now young adults: Karen, Gordon and Alice. The family has lived on five pastoral charges in New Brunswick and Nova Scotia where Norma was involved actively. Along the way, she earned a Bachelor of Arts from Saint Mary's University in Halifax, and a Diploma in Electronic Publishing in Saint John.

While working as a software trainer in 2002, Norma felt the prompting of the Holy Spirit to explore the Designated Lay Ministry program. The Florence-Little Bras d'Or Pastoral Charge agreed to become a learning site, and Norma has been privileged for five years to serve, learn and grow among wonderful people in a supportive atmosphere.

With particular thanks to Sydney Presbytery and gratitude for many blessings, she holds to the words of Psalm Five, "Lead me Lord in Your righteousness, make Your way plain before my face" as she endeavours to follow the path that is set before her.

Simpson {Sim} Archibald Rushton

Sim grew up in the mining town of Springhill, NS where he attended the Anglican Church regularly as a child, served at the alter and sang in the choir as a teen, but drifted away from the institutional church, religion and its rituals as a young man. During his early twenties, Sim married Carolyn, his wife now of 41 years. They moved to the small town of Oxford, NS in 1973 where they remained for 23 years to bring up 3 wonderful children - two boys and a girl. When the children were small the feelings of returning to a church became part of their conversations. It was after the baptism of their first born son that brought Sim back to church regularly where he was encouraged to join in the choir by the minister. He did not recognize this back then as a personal call from God, but now sees this as one of the many nudgings that would lead him towards full time ministry.

Sim acquired a thirst for scripture and attended many bible studies in several denominations over the next several years. He became interested in many of the learning on the way programs at Tatamagouche Center and eventually took an active part in the Center as a member of the program committee. He taught Sunday school, led a youth group, junior choir, and began a singing ministry with two other gentlemen from the Oxford area. Sim also worked as a volunteer with the Youth Forum committee at conference, helping out with the music for a number of years. The opportunities and a call to ministry kept getting stronger and so he began the three year "Diploma Program of Theology and Ministry" at AST in 1992 and graduated in April of 1995. From there, he was given the opportunity to lead many Sunday morning worship services as pulpit supply. Within the next few years Sim entered the discernment process aspiring to respond to a call of part time pastoral ministry, only to find out that God had other plans. In June of 2006 Sim was accepted into the "Designated Lay Ministers" training program of The United Church of Canada. He is now serving full time in a three point pastoral charge in Barrington, NS which is part of the South Shore Presbytery.

ADMISSION

Wayne Glenwood Smith

I received my covenant baptism in the Huff's Methodist Church congregation in the 1950s and Confirmation in the 1960s (United Church of Canada, London Conference). Subsequently armed with a Communication Arts diploma, after a 14 year journalism career (with lots of nights as a church and un-churched musician), and degrees in Religious Studies, Philosophy and Sacred Theology, I was Ordained to Word and Sacrament in the 1990s, serving and learning from the Presbyterians of Pictou Co., NS. In the latter part of the 1900s and into the 2000s, I served as a military chaplain and staff officer in NS, QC and ON.

During five years as a transitional specialist within the Toronto, Montreal-Ottawa and Maritime Conferences of The United Church of Canada, I re-discovered the spiritual optimism of my Methodist roots.

I am indebted today to the patience of my wife, Carol; the trust of our four children (Abby, Syd, Alison, Matt) and grateful for The Presbyterian College and United Theological College, Montreal; the generosity and faith of the Harrisville-Steeves Pastoral Charge, the support of the Chignecto Presbytery – and the guidance of the Holy Spirit. Hobbies: jazz/blues, pondering the still-current effects of the Basis of Union, Process philosophy and naps. Deo gratia.

Conference Interview Board

The Conference Interview Board is appointed by Maritime Conference.

Its membership includes at least one active Diaconal Minister, an Ordained Minister, a Designated Lay Minister, a person qualified in supervision, an appropriate Conference staff person (non-voting), at least four (4) lay persons who have significant experience of life and work in the Church, a Chairperson and Secretary both appointed by Conference (the Manual).

The purpose of the Interview Board is to assist Inquirers and others referred to it, in assessing goals and suitability for membership in ministry and to help Presbyteries in determining the suitability of those referred to it as ministry personnel in The United Church. Being interviewed by the Board gives these individuals another opportunity to test their Call.

The Board interviews each individual referred to it by a team of at least three (3) persons or by the Board itself.

At present, the Board is made up of seventeen (17) members plus a Chairperson, a Secretary, the Personnel Minister of Conference and a Chaplain.

The Board met twice in 2008. At our May meeting four (4) people were interviewed and at our fall meeting six (6) individuals were interviewed. All were seeking confirmation of their call to ministry.

On behalf of the Board and Conference, we take this opportunity to congratulate those whom we have interviewed and wish them God's blessing as they journey along the road to ministry.

As chair, I take this opportunity to thank the Board members for their work and support over this past year. A special thanks to Rev. Pam Reidpath (Secretary) for the many hours she spent preparing for our meetings. I regret that we will be losing Pam as her term ends with the rise of Conference.

Another special thanks to Rev. Kendall Harrison (Personal Minister) for his welcomed advice and help.

A thank you goes to Beth Johnston who so willingly filled the role as Chaplain.

Regretfully, along with Pam Reidpath, the board will lose Susan Estabrooks, Sue King Darby, Linda Yates and Wally Ellis as they will have completed their four years (three years with an option of one more) on the Interview Board. A special thanks to all of them and prayerfully hope that they find other opportunities on other committees to serve our Conference.

In God's work.
Respectfully submitted,
John Peach, Chairperson
Conference Interview Board

Settlement Committee Report

The Settlement Committee, comprised of representatives from each Presbytery and the Bermuda Synod, meets once a year, this year it meets on May 12th and 13th and I look forward to the process as we match candidates with congregations. At that meeting we attempt to match up the needs of Pastoral Charges seeking settlement with the skills and wishes of candidates who have been assigned to us through the Transfer process.

In April, I attend the meeting of the National Transfer committee that determines, from the total pool of candidates from across the country, who will go to which of the 13 Conferences of The United Church. The people involved in the Transfer process, as well those in the Settlement process, take very seriously the needs and wishes of the candidates. Sharon Moyse, secretary of Settlement, was unable to be present for the interviews with the candidates that happened directly after their interviews with the Conference Education and Students committee in February, so, Kendall accompanied me, and we listened to the concerns, hopes, and wishes of the candidates in preparation for the Transfer Committee meeting in April.

Last fall, Sharon, Kendall, and I met those that had been settled (in May) at the 82nd meeting of Conference. It was a great opportunity to hear how life was going in their new Pastoral Charges. At that time, the idea was presented that a similar meeting be held the next fall with the same group. By that time, they would have had another year in their places of ministry. There was enthusiasm for the idea, so there is a possibility that we might have two meetings this fall: one for those recently ordained, and another for those ordained the previous year.

Last May six Pastoral Charges asked to be settled and there were six candidates available. All went well. Last year's meeting of the Settlement Committee was a good experience, and I want to thank all who represented their presbyteries with such enthusiasm and good will.

Ron Vincent,
Chairperson

Maritime Conference Pension & Group Insurance Convenor's Report

Last year's report ended with a note about a projected retirement workshop to be held on April 23. "Retirement: a gift worth planning" was indeed held at Sackville on that date, drawing the interest and attendance of some fifty persons: prospective retirees, some spouses, and several Presbytery Pensions Convenors. With us were: Susan M. Jones, Disability Management Analyst, and Ministry & Employment Policies & Services portfolios, General Council Office; Alan C. MacLean, lawyer with Patterson Law, Truro, a UC member, provided insightful guidance on tenancy/residency, investments/trusts/insurance, joint ownership, wills/living wills, etc.; and the Rev. Kendall Harrison, our Conference Personnel Minister, to whom we express again our thanks for also co-ordinating the day and its advertising. The information provided and the questions answered made it a profitable day, as the verbal evaluations indicated. A few Pre-Retirement Seminar packets are on hand for any who may require them before another such event.

Of our 14 Synod/Presbyteries within the bounds of Maritime Conference, most make contact with pension recipients in some manner other than the annual visit. These vary: providing minutes of meetings to retired order of ministry persons, sending greetings on birthdays and/or Christmas, sympathy cards/notes/visits, preparing a "United Church Pensioners' Newsletter", having an annual/monthly meal for pensioners. In some areas, pensioners take it upon themselves to foster monthly or weekly 'retiree & spouses' gatherings/brunches. Depending upon the number of pension recipients on their roll, the Synod/Presbytery Pensions Committees consist of one, one with helper, or five persons. The Manual provides a section on the make-up and scope of a Pensions Committee.

As of September 30, 2008, there were 377 pensioners living within our Conference's bounds: 257 order of ministry retirees, 88 surviving spouses, 12 former spouses, 6 child pension recipients, and 14 on Long Term Disability. This is a decrease of 25 (17 retirees, 7 surviving spouses and 1 former spouse) from the previous year, comprising a loss of 6.2%. Of interest to some may be where our pensioners reside; a survey of 1 Presbytery (with 48 recipients) whose geography I know well shows 12 living in rural settings, 16 in town areas, and 20 urban dwellers. This may have an impact on the way visitation is handled, and may raise the question of rural/urban isolationism as a factor in the frequency needed of Presbytery contact.

As the Annual Visitation approached, 5 Presbyteries were without identified Pensions Convenors; one was an omission. Secretaries of the other Presbyteries were contacted to see if vacancies had been filled and if Visitation materials had been received. Two replied that persons were found to handle the Visitation. As of this report, 3 Convenors have forwarded copies of their visitation results as sent to the General Council Pension Office. Contact information for pensioners was updated, some questions/concerns dealt with during visits or answers sought, satisfaction was often registered with the pension received, the contacts were appreciated, sometimes a visit was requested. One Conventor called with a question which was not covered in the "Information for Pension and Group Insurance Conventor" booklet but this will hopefully be added in the next printing. In light of the national/world economic situation, some pensioners expressed concern as to the longevity of pension levels, health coverage, how pension investments were being affected, and the seeming costliness of the glossy format of the annual pension report. Fortunately the reports go to 'national office' and only a copy to my desk! A sincere "Thank you!" to all Synod/Presbytery Pension Convenors.

Some thoughts to Committees (and congregations). In this 170th Anniversary year of the 'longest continually published magazine of any type in North America' -- our United Church Observer -- those of our pensioners not receiving it could be given a gift subscription. The article in the Dec. 2008 issue, pp. 27-28 on UC pension funds would be a good one to copy for them. Those who have some bilingual capacity could also be provided with a subscription to our other magazine, Aujourd'hui Credo, the only French magazine published by any Protestant church in North America. Great ways to help keep our pensioners' minds alert, informed and feeling a part of their church.

Respectfully submitted,
Roland Hutchinson, Conference Pension & Group Ins. Conventor

Committee on Internships and Educational Supervision

The education and formation of members of the order of ministry is an important task of the church. One component of education and formation is the supervised ministry education experience which takes place in an internship. An internship is an opportunity for a candidate to engage in the practice of ministry and to reflect on this experience with others. The task of providing supervised ministry education experiences has many partners: congregations, lay supervision teams, supervisors, and the people of God.

Last September 4 students began their 8 month internships in Maritime Conference. These are Stephen Barber, Jennifer Elizabeth Canning, James Malcolm Graham and Aaron Miller. These interns with their supervisors and members of the lay supervision team met for an orientation event at Tatamagouche.

A one day workshop for those in the summer distance program (S/D) and those in the designated lay ministry program (DLM) took place in mid November. There are 5 students in the S/D program placed in pastoral charges. There are 2 students presently seeking sites for the S/D program. There are 2 students seeking DLM sites.

The committee met February 15/16 in the library at AST. We reviewed the evaluations received from interns, S/D students and DLM students. We interviewed 7 students who are seeking an 8 month internship beginning in September. They are - Lori Beth Sheffield-Bowles, Lynda MacCulloch, Bonnie Fraser, Carol Gillard, Mary White, Allison Louise Etter and Sarah Chapman. These students will be matched hopefully at the matching meeting in Toronto on April 24/25. We have received and approved several site applications from within Maritime Conference (York-Covehead, P.E.I. Presbytery; Grace, Halifax Presbytery; Windsor, Valley Presbytery; and Kingston, Valley Presbytery).

The members of this committee are dedicated to ensuring the most positive learning experience for all involved in the internship process. I thank them for their encouragement and hard work. Because of the number of necessary site visits and the very difficult winter, we found ourselves somewhat stretched. Needless to say, Maritime Conference is a very large geographic area to cover. We are grateful to those experienced people who volunteered to share the workload. Our deep appreciation goes to Rev. Kendall Harrison, a wise and faithful resource person who is both teacher and friend.

One of our convictions is that learning involves grace and forgiveness. We learn and grow together in our failures, pain, and disappointments, as well as in our successes, joys, and dreams. The church community offers us the opportunity to risk and grow in faith.

Rev. Sandrabelle Rogers MacEwen

STAFF COMMITTEE

The Staff Committee terms of reference adopted by the Executive in November 2000 outlines the following purpose: “The Staff Committee fulfills three primary roles within the Conference. First, it provides a confidential consultative and supportive forum for the Conference Staff in which staff members and their ministries and work are affirmed and also challenged in constructive ways. Second, it works in conjunction with the Executive Secretary to ensure those United Church personnel policies and procedures are followed for Conference Staff.... Third, it provides a communication link between the Conference Staff and other parts of the Conference...”

The Rev. Aaron Billard served as chairperson of the Staff Committee until the rise of Conference when the Rev. Charlotte Youland assumed that role.

In 2008 an annual staff review was conducted for Laura Hunter and Janice MacLean; support staff, Jennifer Whittemore, Marlene Trenholm and Lorraine Horyl; and archivist, Judith Colwell. While Kendall Harrison was scheduled for a review in 2008, it was conducted in early 2009 after he had recovered from a broken ankle. We are blessed to have dedicated staff who work well together creating a pleasant atmosphere for those who spend time in their midst.

We have revised Liaison Person guidelines that will be presented to Conference Executive in April 2009.

The Executive Secretary experienced an Extended Study Leave from June to October. Two Conference Staff ministers, Janice MacLean and Kendall Harrison, are due for extended study leave immediately and are considering how that time might best be spent.

A workshop for Conference Staff chairpersons will be held in Toronto on May 6-8, 2009. This will be a time to learn and exchange ideas with other Conference Staff chairpersons.

It is a pleasure to work with the staff of Maritime Conference and with the members of the Conference Staff Committee.

Charlotte Youland
Chairperson

EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE REPORTS**Maritime Conference Review Committee**
2008-2009

The Conference Executive established the Conference Review Committee (CRC) to develop recommendations on how the Conference committee structure can best support our mission and ministries for the next three to five years.

CRC has five members: Steve Berube, Catherine Gaw, David Hewitt, Ivan Gregan and Judy MacInnis.

Presently, Maritime Conference has over 30 committees, subcommittees, task groups, etc. This requires close to 400 people to fill the various committee roles in our Conference.

As the CRC listens to comments from various sources, it is apparent that several Conference committees are fulfilling their mandate. It is also obvious, to the CRC, that some committees are struggling while others are thriving.

Some of the issues that the CRC is wrestling with are:

- What important issues are we **not** addressing as a Conference?
- How will we build on the work of the Ministry in Changing Times and Emerging Spirit programs?
- How can we better respond to emerging issues?
- How will we manage diminishing resources?
- Is there work that we cannot sustain in the future?
- How can we generate enthusiasm and energy for our mission and ministry within our structure?

Currently, the CRC is gathering input from various Conference committee chairs, program staff and from other Conferences.

We will be reporting to the Conference Executive and the Conference as a whole on a regular basis as our work progresses.

The good news is - the committees of Maritime Conference are blessed with capable, competent, committed and passionate followers of the Christ who care deeply about God's work in and through Maritime Conference.

Respectfully submitted,
Steve Berube

Hospital Chaplaincy

2008-2009 has been a challenging year for the Maritime Conference Chaplaincy Committee. There have been growing needs for chaplaincy within the Conference and increased personnel demands at a time of financial restraint, the financial challenges experienced recently within Canada and internationally have heightened this concern.

We provide chaplaincy services in Saint John and Halifax, where people are often referred or transferred from all over the Maritimes: with Rev. Dr. Linda Marcotte in Saint John, Rev. Linda Kuschnik at the Halifax Infirmary and Rev. Curtis McDonald at the Victoria General and IWK-Grace hospitals in Halifax. Again, needs and situations are changing. The Committee has received and recognized the needs implicit in a written request for chaplaincy services in Sydney for the Cape Breton area. This prompted discussion of the increased demands and levels of care in other parts of the Conference, and a conclusion, that we are facing a significant challenge to explore expanding the scope of the Chaplaincy at a time of tight fiscal restraint.

The committee's customary request for funds for the current year was favourably received by the Financial Support Unit, but with the warning that, with reduced M&S resources, continued funding at the present level cannot be guaranteed. It was recommended that the Chaplaincy Committee consider additional alternate sources of funding. The Committee is working closely with Pam Harrison, Special Gifts Consultant to explore options. The Chaplaincy Committee is also working in consultation with the Conference Executive, the Finance and Property Unit, and the Financial Support Unit on this important initiative.

At the Conference budget meeting of February 27, 2009 it was decided to call for a gathering of conveners (and perhaps one other member) from each of the Finance and Property Unit, the Financial Support Unit and the Hospital Chaplaincy Committee aimed at making a long term recommendation to the annual meeting of Conference regarding funding for the hospital chaplaincy program.

It was the decision of the Finance and Property Unit to recommend, on a one time basis for 2010, that the figure of \$41,000 be added to the assessment to the Presbyteries in order to ease the pressure on the Mission Support requests and to engage the Conference, through the annual meeting, in a process of naming whether the hospital chaplaincy is the priority for the Conference portion of Mission Support grants. We are working within the Chaplaincy Committee and in collaboration with the Conference Executive and the Finance and Property Unit to develop a creative vision for chaplaincy and for the provision of appropriate funding.

There is also the recognition of UCC policy of Sabbatical leave, and the fairness of applying the principle to hospital chaplains, as it applies to clergy in pastoral charges. A policy was developed by the committee to have one chaplain to be on Sabbatical in a given year, and provision for supply to follow the policy of half-time supply. Rev. Curtis McDonald completed his Sabbatical in the fall of 2008 and he submitted a report to the Chaplaincy Committee outlining the significant benefits of the program. Rev. Dr. Linda

Marcotte will be going on Sabbatical in the spring of 2009 and the Chaplaincy Committee has been working with her during the planning phase.

There is ongoing dialogue between the Committee and the hospital department managers where our Chaplains are placed. Linkages have also been established with the chair persons of the RC and ACC Committees. Discussions with them remind us that other faith communities face similar financial challenges.

With the changing demographics and church attendance, chaplaincy is increasingly becoming an outreach ministry for the church. Different approaches in response to the multicultural dynamics are challenging us to develop creative and cooperative strategies to provide supportive spiritual care in the area covered by the Maritime Conference. Increasingly, languages other than English and French are heard in hospital halls, and other spiritual approaches are shared in the Spiritual and Pastoral Care offices. The Committee and the chaplains are aware of the change. In May 2008, with the leadership of Mohamed Yaffa, Coordinator of Cultural Diversity for Capital Health, the Chaplaincy Committee developed an educational workshop for the chaplains, the committee members and the members of the support committee. This educational training empowered us to share the good news of our faith tradition in the broader cultural community.

We have also recognized and shown our appreciation of the ministry of support committees for the chaplains. Their availability and regular meetings provide a forum within which to consider chaplains' concerns locally, and to listen and minister to the chaplains as the chaplains do for patients, their families and the hospital staff. The Chaplaincy Committee in Consultation with the Nominating Committee is actively searching for new members to serve on the Support Sub Committee.

The Chaplaincy Committee and the Support Sub Committee are open for new membership, many of our valued members are completing their terms and we need interested persons to fill the vacancies!

At the close of this report we express appreciation to our dedicated Chaplains Rev. Dr. Linda Marcotte, Saint John, Rev. Linda Kuschnik, Halifax and Rev. Curtis McDonald, Halifax. Your calling, dedication and commitment to Spiritual Care are valued. May God's blessing empower you in your ongoing ministry.

With the challenges come the rewards of a ministry of presence and representing the Good News in times of crisis and often isolation.

Respectfully,
Rev. Blair Lewis, Secretary

Incorporated Ministries Advisory Committee

“...So let us not grow weary in doing what is right, for we will reap at harvest time, if we do not give up. So then, whenever we have an opportunity, let us work for the good of all, and especially for those of the family of faith.” Galatians 6:9-10

The 39th General Council, Thunder Bay, authorized a major shift in the supervision of incorporated ministries as outlined in Section 429 of the Manual. In 2008 Guidelines were approved and the Conferences are to become the Supervising Court for all incorporated ministries by the end of 2011. This is an administrative change intended to relieve the Presbyteries of that piece of work and to increase a standard of supervision across the Conference.

Our Conference has established a timeline for the transition: 2009 for the Camps which are incorporated, 2010 for the community and outreach ministries and 2011 for the seniors facilities. All incorporated ministries will be required to review and revise, where necessary, their bylaws. Several new incorporated ministries have been established within the framework of the new guidelines. These include newly incorporated ministries at Abby St. Andrew's in Saint John, Ossekeag Place in Hampton, and an expansion at Newport Village also in Saint John. Other by-law approvals have been addressed through the Executive.

The Conference has been working with the Windsor Elms to facilitate their transition to a Legacy category and this is presently in the hands of legal counsel.

In March 2009 representatives from camp boards and presbyteries were gathered for information sharing. It was agreed that camps would be moved to the Conference supervision following the rise of the annual meeting 2009. This will require a new relationship with the presbyteries and especially with the faith formation within the Presbytery.

All of this has required some changes in how we think about Incorporated Ministries. The Executive will be asked to the receipt of membership of the Boards with the intent to have the list ready for inclusion at next year's annual meeting.

The Advisory Committee is small in number and experiencing growing pains. We anticipate keeping the membership small and meeting primarily by telephone conference call. At least one face to face meeting will be held annually. The nominating committee continues to seek a chair for this committee.

This is a ministry of administration, geared at ensuring good order and attention to process: caring for the family of faith.

Members: J.D Kennedy, Ewen Moase, Brian Prowse, Catherine Gaw

United Church Men

Our Vision Statement: *“To lead men to an understanding of the work and witness of the church, that through commitment to Christ, they may fulfill the ministry to which they are called, in the home, in daily work, in the community and in the world.”*

Just prior to last year’s Maritime Conference, we hosted our fourth successful biennial rally at Trinity-St. Stephen United Church, Amherst, NS with the Moderator, the Rev. Dr. David Giuliano as our Theme Speaker. Our theme was ‘*Jesus Calls Us*’. Over 160 men from around the Maritimes joined us for a wonderful day of music, laughter, discussion, fellowship, and wonderful presentations by our Moderator.

Since then the Executive has been busy in the planning of our fifth rally for May 2010, again planned for the same location. Look for more information to follow over the coming months. One way we plan to get the information out to the men is with a newsletter, which is presently being prepared for this spring. If you attended one of our last two rallies, expect a letter or, if we have your e-mail address, via this medium.

We continue to keep in communication with the AOTS organization to see how we can, in some way, work together in a relationship that assists men in the church.

We also look for the names of men who have been, and still are, actively involved in men’s work around the Maritimes. We know that men are involved in all aspects of church life, but we want to recognize those who are, or have been, involved directly in working with men through their involvement in the church and community. This includes those who are deceased.

In the past, we have attempted to discover who and where men’s groups exist, and requested they let us know what is happening in their churches so that we may be able to share ideas with each other. We now know about some groups, but if you have not, please, let us know, and tell us what you are doing.

May God bless you.

Bob Bartlett, President
Maritime Conference UCM
ucmpres@gmail.com

United Church Women*MISSION STATEMENT*

Our mission is to love God, to foster Christian faithfulness, spirituality, commitment, and devotion, and to promote love and respect by living generously and giving joyfully to all God's people, and to affirm and strengthen ourselves creatively.

Another year has passed and the Maritime Conference United Church Women have been very active using their strong leadership, and sharing their gifts in so many different ways. Our churches are truly blessed to have the sincere dedication and faithfulness of so many of these determined women who continue to meet the challenge of an aging and declining membership head-on.

In the Maritimes, at the present time, we have nine active Presbyterials - Bermuda, Chignecto, Halifax, Miramichi, Prince Edward Island, South Shore, St. Croix, Sydney and Truro. Saint John, Pictou, and Valley Presbyterials have folded, but remain in touch through a contact person who attends Executive meetings when possible.

According to the 2007 statistic received at the National Gathering, there are 250 groups of women, with approximately 4,345 members. We definitely remain a very strong organization within our churches.

As I visit the Presbyterials, I sense some frustration fulfilling leadership roles in some areas, but on the whole the prayerful worships, enthusiastic programming, sincerity in business and the ever joyful fellowship far outweigh those uncertainties.

We are even conscious that our gifts to the Mission and Service Fund have dropped, for whatever reasons, but the United Church and Nations around the world can count on us for continued support. We continue to be concerned with the lack of support for the "United for Peace Campaign" but we are hopeful the coming year will be more successful.

Berwick Campers should be ever thankful for all the ladies who supply cookies, each year, at the "Cookie Cottage." Baking, transporting and serving 450 dozen cookies is an awesome service. We should be so fortunate to have their continued support. This summer is Halifax Presbyterials' turn, and WE WILL SHOW OUR BERWICK GRATITUDE!

The planning has begun for our 50th Anniversary in 2012 and we are excited. It will be held at Redeemer College, situated in Ancaster, on the outskirts of Hamilton, Ontario. Be alert for further news.

So remember, "Our Mission" is "God's Mission", let us all serve faithfully.

Respectfully submitted,
Letha Mowatt
Conference U.C.W. President

OTHER REPORTS**Tatamagouche Centre/Atlantic Christian Training Centre**

Tatamagouche Centre continues to be inspired by the gospel vision of engaged faith. The Centre is also inspired by the diversity of faith perspectives. Together, along with a passion for transformation, spirit, justice and environment we endeavour to be a place of coming in and sending out. We are a place of connection: connection of spirit and body and mind, connection of person and place, connection to self to our historical calling, and connection of “me” to “we”, of individual community - overall, a place of connection to Spirit. As a centre of retreat and residential education, we see our ministry as a contribution to building the larger church, the larger gathering of all people yearning for a transformed world, a world in which the Spirit moves to manifest relations of love, peace, environmental balance and justice.

We are delighted to report that 2008 was a good year for programming and are proud of the opportunities offered in our three program streams. Many upgrades to building and grounds have been accomplished with thanks to the vision and dedication of the staff. We are pleased to report that we ended the financial year looking healthy. For details of our audited statements you are pleased to be part of our annual meeting to be held at the Centre June 19-20, 2009.

It was our delight at last years Maritime Conference, to introduce you to David Pollock, our Executive Director. In this report I am pleased to introduce David to those who were not able to be at Maritime Conference. David comes with tremendous experience in NGO's and has made the transition to the Centre. His style expertise is to our benefit. It is also good to confirm to you that Stevens House is completed and provides a wonderful space for meetings, retreats and just spending a few nights.

As is our custom, we are pleased to extend to you opportunities to be part of the Tatamagouche Centre experience. There are many ways to accomplish this: attend one or several of our excellent programs, arrange for a personal retreat, attend our annual meeting and be part of the “A Thousand Friends Sustainability Campaign”. It's really quite easy - just call or visit us on the web at: www.tatacentre.ca

May we each encounter our transformations as we intentionally live with peace and justice.

John Roy
Chair of the Board

Atlantic School of Theology

Due to pastoral duties, I have been able to attend only two of the four AST senate meetings that have happened since my appointment.

The School's challenges are essentially those of its three founding denominations. As denominational numbers decline, this negatively impacts the number of students preparing for ministry. Nonetheless, the commitment to serve the church community in Atlantic Canada and beyond remains strong. The faculty is making efforts to reach beyond the denominational base and to effectively interact with a wider circle of people.

The input that I would like to be able to bring to the table has to do with the perceived needs of the United Church in the Maritime Conference and how AST might respond to those needs in what is a time of rapid change and considerable difficulty. I would appreciate hearing from any members of the United Church community in this regard. My email address is mosestrinity@eastlink.ca.

Respectfully submitted

John Moses

Camp Wegesegum

Summer 2008 yielded a marginal increase in campers than in recent previous years but the Board continued to struggle with the lack of quality leadership. Our Adult Camp (50+) in September most reflects Camp Wegesegum's mission even though the youth of the Maritimes are slightly older than was originally envisioned.

As was mandated at the Corporation's annual meeting, the Board has been working on transitioning to a rental facility. The United Church of Canada has provided suggestions, policies and regulations and we are in the process of trying to incorporate this information with the Alumni's vision.

An exciting partnership proposal between the Board and the Chipman United Church, which may include marketing, alumni liaison work, and a Day Camp program, is in the works. After a visit last summer by the Duty of Care Accreditation Committee, the Camp was awarded a conditional accreditation.

Some interested Alumni made proposals to the Board, which were approved, so a week-long Junior Camp (July 5-11), Day Camp (August 24-28) and Adult Camp (September 6-11) will be offered again this summer with trained leadership, quality programming and ample resources. The tentative rental schedule, allows for weekend and off-season rentals only at this time. Peak season is filled.

The Camp Wegesegum Board, with great care and diligence, prioritizes and makes difficult decisions throughout the year in an effort to provide programming that is Spirit-filled and faith aligned; preparing budget and expense statements that aim for a break even/small gain balance; maintains and upgrades the physical facilities so that they are esthetically pleasing as well as safe and serviceable. A sense of humour, deep love and respect for the camp and its history, and an abiding faith in God keep this ministry viable.

Sincerely,

Wendy Cornfield, Chair
Camp Wegesegum Inc.

Financial Services of Maritime Conference

As the incorporated body of Maritime Conference, this company administers bequest and trust funds for the Conference and for other Church bodies on request. It also holds Conference real estate in trust, and lends money to qualifying congregations for capital purposes as the need arises.

Each Presbytery appoints one lay person and one order of ministry person to the board of directors, for a term of three years. In 2008 there were five additional members at large. The directors meet twice annually, in April and in October.

Deposits and trust funds of almost three million dollars are held by the company for several hundred individuals and church groups. In 2008, as a result of astute and fortunate investment in long term government bonds in the 1990's when rates were considerably higher, Financial Services has been able to provide a better than average return of 6% interest to depositors, and 6.5% on trust funds. This has been the case for the past several years.

Several new Loans were granted to congregations in 2008. Such loans now represent about 18% of the company assets. This year the rate applicable to new loans is 5.5%. Because of the attractive return on long term investments, the company is in the unique situation of assessing a lower rate on loans than the rate of interest being paid on deposits.

Grateful appreciation is extended to all of the directors, and especially to W. Grant Thompson, who has been the dedicated and highly competent treasurer of the company since its inception in 1987.

David MacLean, Chairperson

General Council Executive

General Council 39 called The United Church of Canada to become an Intercultural Church and several initiatives have been undertaken throughout this triennium to move us in that direction. As part of this process, the 2008 fall meeting of the General Council Executive was held in Quebec City, simultaneous translation (French/English) was provided, and the Executive worshipped with the combined congregations of Chalmers-Wesley United and Église Unie Saint Pierre. At this meeting, the Executive spent considerable time discerning how to implement a vision proposed by the Aboriginal Ministries Steering Committee which included an Aboriginal Ministries Council (with representation from across the land), an Aboriginal Ministries Circle (a staff unit) and a triennial National Aboriginal Spiritual Gathering. GC 40 will continue to discern the relationship between the UCC and our First Nations brothers and sisters. The Executive also endorsed the United Nations' Responsibility to Protect Framework and approved the Statement on Global Partnership, both of which address our relationship and responsibilities with respect to the wider world.

General Council Executive met at the end of March for its final meeting of this triennium. The majority of our discussions and decisions were centered on the preparations for, and the reports and decisions that will be placed before the 40th General Council meeting in Kelowna, BC (August 9-15th, 2009). The reports of the various task groups and Permanent Committees reflect, in part, the work undertaken by the General Council Office and the elected members at the direction of the 39th General Council.

In preparation for GC 40 two significant reports have been prepared by the GCE. The first, **Called to be Church**, which has already been circulated, offers background information about the issues facing our Church. This document is intended to serve as a catalyst for the thinking and discussion we need to have as a Church as we continue to seek to be faithful to God's call. Indeed the conversations have begun across the Church and feedback has been flowing to the General Secretary. We encourage ongoing study and conversation, and urge groups and individuals to forward any responses or reflections to the General Secretary. This feedback will be passed on to the GC 40 Agenda and Planning Committee for input as they prepare for General Council when Commissioners will continue discerning the purpose and future directions for the Triennium and struggle with difficult decisions that are facing the Church.

The second document is the **State of the Church**. This report provides background facts and figures (e.g., people and financial resources) in order to give a clear picture of the current context in which we find ourselves. In response to the concerns raised about "*Plans Toward 2010*" and the subsequent decisions of June 2007, when many said they did not know that our Church was facing a financial crisis, the GCE deemed it essential for all, Commissioners and the wider church membership, to be more aware of the state of our Church.

In addition to these two reports, the Commissioners will address a number of other reports and issues including:

Covenanting to Live Faithfully in the Midst of Empire
A Vision for French Ministries in The United Church of Canada
Relations with First Nations
Duties and Powers of the General Council Executive
Mandates of Committees of General Council
Number of Commissioners to General Council

And several reports related to Ministry

Meaning of Ministry
Designated Lay Ministry and Congregational Designated Ministry
Candidacy Process
Admissions Policy

At our March GCE meeting, we received a report from the General Secretary concerning a review of the management structure of the General Council Office. This review was a result of the commitment made in “*Plans Towards 2010*” to review the balance between management and non-management positions in the General Council Office, and in response to observations included in the report of the Redesign Evaluation Task Group. The recommendation to make changes to the General Council Office management structure was then presented to the voting members of the Executive of the General Council, who endorsed the plan which is to become effective as of May 1st. *Further details and information can be found at www.united-church.ca*



So with these reports in hand, our church and our Commissioners are on their way “**Down to the Potter’s House**” and to GC 40 in Kelowna, BC in August 2009.

This is my final report to you as your Ordered Ministry Representative to the General Council Executive. I have been blessed by this opportunity to serve the wider church and, though there have been many challenges and struggles, I am deeply grateful for all that I have received. Thank you.

Mary- Beth Moriarity, Ordered Ministry Representative to GCE
Shirley Cleave, Lay Representative to GCE

Hunter Church Building Fund

The Trustees of the Hunter Church Building Fund continue to carry out the mandate for assisting smaller congregations within Nova Scotia in maintaining their church buildings and assisting them when emergency repairs are necessary.

We were able to increase the maximum amount of grants from \$2,000 to \$3,000 for qualifying applicants.

One noticeable change was the number of applications received during 2008 from larger churches, indicative of the increasing struggle of survival in many pastoral charges. In

dealing with these applications we approved some grants that normally would not meet the criteria. We will have to review this current trend.

There were 10 grants totaling \$25,000 paid out in 2008.

The trustees look forward to continuing on with our important work in 2009.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Blake Caldwell
Secretary, Hunter Church Building Fund

Mount Allison Board of Regents

On behalf of Reid Harrison and myself as representatives of The United Church of Canada on the Board at Mount Allison we submit the following report.

This has been another great year at Mt A!

The university has great leadership in all areas! Led by Dr Robert Campbell as President and Vice-chancellor, with the addition of Dr. Ron Byrne and the leadership of all members of the executive Mt A is #1. With John Bragg as Chancellor and Bruce McCubbin as Chair of the Board of Regents the future is bright.

JUMP Mt Allison – capital campaign – \$60 million has been raised.

On September 26, 2008 the official opening was held of the Wallace McCain Student Centre! This is a magnificent and practical building on the campus!

Plans for the Ron Joyce Business Centre for Mt A were unveiled this year. Plans are also being made for Colville House to be a destination place for tourists. The Gemini Observatory facility opened in 2008.

The caliber of students at Mt A is outstanding. We had meetings which included members of the student council and have met other students while on campus. Terrific people!

The results of the Globe and Mail Report Card for 2008 showed that of the 19 categories reviewed Mt A had 5 A+ and 4 A (9) ratings.

Reid and myself have each been very involved with 2 University Committees which report to the Board and have had very good attendance and participation on these committees and the Board of Regents. Reid was re-appointed to the Board and I have completed my 4 years on the Board on December 31, 2008. It has been a very rewarding experience and I wish to thank you for the opportunity!

Sincerely,
Ron Naugler

The United Church Home for Senior Citizens, Inc.
Drew Nursing Home

The United Church Home For Senior Citizens, Inc. continually strives to meet our Mission by providing “quality of life” to our residents. Spirituality continues to be a very important part of the resident’s life.

Every Sunday during the year, though perhaps less frequently during the summer months, a nondenominational church service is held. These services are well attended by residents, their families and friends and are greatly appreciated by all. Several local churches (ministers/pastors/lay people) provide these meaningful services each Sunday. Over the years, as resident needs change, the format of these services has changed. Some are still conducted in a more formal way, while others being more informal having lots of singing. It is always very moving to see residents who can no longer communicate as well, start singing the hymns learned in childhood and long remembered.

The activity department also provides various forms of spirituality to the residents. A popular resident activity is the bible study group which meets on a weekly basis. A Memorial Service is also held annually to remember those residents who passed away during the year.

The creation of a Snoezelen Garden was completed in the summer of 2008. Snoezelen is a name of a philosophy that makes use of a specially designed area that provides a relaxing environment for persons with a variety of special needs. The garden includes a pondless waterfall, an aquabasin water feature, walkways, patio area, a planter for residents and a huge variety of plants. Very special thanks are extended to the Watkins Fund for the generous donation towards this project.

With the need for additional nursing home beds in the region, Beausejour unit was re-opened early in September after being closed for almost nine years. The beds were closed in 2000, as the need for nursing home beds in the region had decreased. A major retrofit was necessary prior to re-opening the unit. There are now 28 residents living on Beausejour unit in 11 semi-private and 6 private rooms. This brings the total number of beds in the home to 118.

In recent years there has been an increasing demand for two bedroom apartments. Therefore, the board of directors approved construction of a new four-unit, two-bedroom cottage. In July 2008 the official opening of “Fawcett Cottage” was held. The cottage is situated on the back property overlooking the waterfowl park. This brings the total number of apartments to forty.

In closing, The United Church Home For Senior Citizens, Inc. continues to make every effort to fulfill our mandate by providing quality care to our residents.

Linda Leroux
Executive Director

The Windsor Elms Village for Continuing Care Society

Two years ago the Windsor Elms elected the option of a 'Legacy Ministry' with the United Church of Canada. At the 2008 Spring meeting of the United Church of Canada the final terms and conditions for adopting the 'Legacy Ministry' were approved and since that time the Windsor Elms lawyer and a lawyer appointed by Maritime Conference have been finalizing the agreement. When completed the by-laws of the Elms will be changed and registered with Joint Stocks.

Maritime Conference had earlier approved a name change to 'Windsor Elms Village for Continuing Care Society' so that all new property and contracts would reflect the new name of the Elms. The Elms also received approval to sign contracts with the Nova Scotia Department of Health and to acquire mortgage financing under the new name.

In 2008, property was acquired at a site in Falmouth and building permits approved by the municipality; architectural designs were approved; a Project Manager and Site Manager were hired; and construction was begun. Site preparation was completed in 2008 and the foundation contract was let. Currently the next groups of contracts have been advertised and the building is scheduled to be completed in the fall of 2010.

The Elms will have no further need of the existing facility when the new building is completed. The preference would be to sell the existing facility and apply any proceeds to the current mortgage and to the new mortgage. As a last resort, the building would be demolished and the remaining property sold. Over the next 6 months the Elms will invite applications for 'expression of interest' in the current property. Based on the response received the direction for disposition will be clear.

Sincerely,
Dr. Les Haley
Board of Directors for
Windsor Elms Village for Continuing Care Society

PASTORAL OVERSIGHT REPORTS**The Synod of The Wesleyan Methodist Church of Bermuda**

We are called to be the Church
To celebrate God's presence
To live with respect in creation,
To love and serve others,
To seek justice and resist evil,
To proclaim Jesus, crucified and risen
Our judge and our hope.

To this end, we in Bermuda have become a complete church. We now have a full complement of ministers on call and although one is not on the island at present, as of July 1st, the Bermuda Synod will be complete.

For the past year we have been holding on to the hem of Jesus with the help of Rev. Margaret Sagar, Rev. Joe Manchester and Rev. Gary Clark, who all were retired supply. We have amongst us Rev. Kirby Breithaupt and Rev. Judith Bowman who are now filling positions at Ebenezer and Emmanuel respectively. Rev. Gary is still at Wesley but will be leaving us at the end of June. May God bless him for his fortitude.

We continued to offer bible classes, Sunday Schools and our UCW have performed quite well in every way. They have aided many who have needed our help and in some cases even helped with the shortfall in church finances. God has truly blessed their calling.

There was another Walk for Freedom, I understand that some church members did walk with the organizing group.

Advent, Christmas and Easter continue to be the major Spirit filled events for the congregations. With the Cantatas, Candlelight Services, Seder Meals and other special services to mark the celebratory occasions our church continues to thrive. God is amongst us, and with us as we worship. Some congregations are growing quite well although slowly. We are blessed. God's work continues.

God is alive and present in the Bermuda Synod.

Rita Smith, Synod Chair

Chignecto Presbytery

The 30 pastoral charges of Chignecto Presbytery have kept our committee very busy and challenged during the past year. The workload has been much lighter than in past years, giving us time to catch up on our backlog of Oversight Visits.

Our committee members have teamed together by two's and three's and we have accomplished many of our goals for the year through the commitment of each and every member. We have lost some members due to retirement, and have gained many new ones, bringing the total number to fifteen.

With the new people that we have gained in our committee, along with a great deal of enthusiasm and energy, we have been able to complete seven triennial visits this year. The balance of the year will gain us another five visits to local Pastoral Charges in the Moncton area. The balance of the Pastoral Charges is in a state of transition and we will schedule these visits later on in the fall of 2009 and the early part of 2010.

We continue to find similar issues with each congregation, lack of new members, lack of young families and lack of young people are all common themes, but as we continue on our journey we are finding more and more people who are willing to commit to the service of our church.

We also know that the work of the Pastoral Oversight/Pastoral Relations Committee is a very important and demanding part of our church work.

It is with this faith that we commit and continue on our journey in Christ's name.

Douglas E. Hoyt
Chair Pastoral Oversight

Halifax Presbytery

Each year seems to be busier than the last! Monthly meetings were held from January to June and September to December with representation at all Executive and Full Court meetings of Halifax Presbytery, reporting as necessary. Co-chairs the Rev. David Hann and Helen Sweett appreciated the support of committee members Don Ambler, Rev. Allen Darby, Rev. Sandra Cox, Rev. Ivan Gregan, Rev. Donna Lovelace, Bob McArel, Rev. Carolyn Palmer and Elizabeth Salton. We were sorry to lose longtime secretary, the Rev. Allen Darby, in June when he and his wife Betty transferred to Truro Presbytery. The Rev. Sandra Cox has assumed the secretarial responsibilities with assistance when needed from Elizabeth Salton. The Rev. Donna Lovelace resigned in the fall and was thanked for the input she gave to our work with the Brunswick Street Mission Board.

On April 26, 2008 we hosted a half day Workshop on Governance at Bedford United Church with facilitators, the Rev. Dr. Ross Bartlett and the Rev. Bob Mills, our New Governance Team. It was a great success attended by forty from Halifax and Valley Presbyteries. A handout was prepared to clarify the process for creating a new governance proposal within Halifax Presbytery. Our Governance Team has also reviewed proposals from Knox and St. John's, Fall River pastoral charges this year. Their recommendations were incorporated into the governance proposals prior to Oversight referral to Presbytery for final approval.

Eight Triennial Visits were conducted this year by teams of two, one lay and one ministerial member. A new letter of introduction has been formulated to be sent to the pastoral charge prior to the visit. It was decided to revise the question format to allow more time for fruitful discussion and one question added concerning the review of the minister's housing allowance. If recommendations are contained in the visit report a follow-up letter is sent after one year.

The Peninsula Churches Group meetings have concluded, but served their purpose by identifying mutual concerns and communication continues through some shared aspects of ministry. Bob McArel is continuing to pave the way for a similar initiative in Dartmouth, but it will probably cater to the downtown and suburban churches separately, as their ministerial needs differ.

The Outreach Ministries that we support are Brunswick Street Mission, Camp Kidston and Dalhousie Campus Ministry. The Revs. David Hann and Donna Lovelace were involved with the hiring of a new Executive Director for the Brunswick Street Mission, Sandra Nicholas. The Rev. David Hann has continued to work closely with Sandra Nicholas towards completion of a Bench Mark Report following a three year trial of the separation of Brunswick Street United Church, Brunswick Street Mission and Camp Brunswick. He is also our representative on a Presbytery Working Group with the Mission Executive Director, Pastoral Relations, Finance and Planning and a Presbytery liaison position. A strategic planning meeting for Camp Kidston was attended by two members of our committee on November 29, 2008. We continue to receive reports from Dalhousie Campus Ministry Committee and communicate regularly with the new chair, Rev. Catherine MacDonald and the chaplain, Rev. Kim MacAulay.

Our second joint meeting with Pastoral Relations planned for October has been postponed until the spring of 2009. We definitely have matters of mutual concern to discuss and identify our specific committee roles. We have in place team partners to visit pastoral charges if there is need for both committees input.

We have discussed "Categories of Ministry" within The United Church of Canada. A plan has been prepared for a workshop on transitional and transformational ministries to identify what is happening in Halifax Presbytery pastoral charges and examine our resources for support of churches during their transformational process.

In conclusion, we thank the members for the dedication and expertise they give to our committee.

Submitted by
The Rev. David Hann and Helen Sweett

Inverness-Guysborough Presbytery

The annual reports of the congregations and pastoral charges of Inverness-Guysborough Presbytery reveal the widely held intent of the people “to make our congregations warm and welcoming places for worship and to expand our ministry to the communities nearby and at a distance” (adapted from the words of Rev. Karen Lynch).

With eleven pastoral charges from Canso to Margaree Harbour, from Baddeck to Black River, from Port Hood Island to Afton, from East Lake Ainslie to Guysborough, the seven full-time and two part-time members of ordered ministry conduct services in twenty-seven churches year-round and in two others as occasional preaching points in the summer.

These twenty-nine church buildings and eight manses as well as several halls require much time and energy to maintain and to heat. As well, it is evident that to engage in the various ministries of preaching and teaching and pastoral caring, many thousands of dollars are required to support the necessary extensive travel.

Many of the buildings are of historical significance and cherished by both the church-goers and the people of the wider community. And yet, it is apparent from the statistics in the reports that several of them will soon no longer be able to be heated and painted and used for the gatherings of increasingly smaller congregations – in several as few as half a dozen members and adherents.

The dedication to providing welcoming places of worship is well documented in the work of people in the undertakings of the UCW groups, found in most congregations, and the AOTS organization of Whycomomagh-East Lake Ainslie Pastoral Charge.

Regardless of the fund-raising efforts of the people, several of the congregations are starting to draw upon their GICs and other investments in order to meet their budgets. Thus, the words are being said, “we know there are major changes coming.” Long and short-term planning groups are starting to be the order of the day.

The importance of their ministers being a part of the community is well noted in both written and oral reports. As well, increasingly there is a more broadly based ecumenical cooperation. But, the requirements of “ministry in changing times” are bringing increased weariness to many of the faithful.

In the congregations of Inverness-Guysborough Presbytery, a continued pride in their being able to contribute very generously to the Mission and Service Fund is evident. But slowly many congregations are exhibiting a growth towards “congregationalism”. The lack of periodical written material from the other Presbyteries and the work of the Maritime Conference is having an effect. As well, the minimal presence in the media of information and opinions from the General Council contribute to a slowly increasing disinterest in the national church.

The Presbytery takes great pride in the quality of the careful attention of pastoral charges and the many volunteers to the keeping of accurate records, to the providing of leadership to groups of young people and to other organizations. With one exception, each minister has the support of a properly functioning Ministry and Personnel Committee. The “work” of The United Church of Canada in this area is well carried out.

As well, the Presbytery is pleased with the welcoming of a new minister to the West Bay Pastoral Charge and the sense of accomplishment that each pastoral charge has a member of the Order of Ministry at the end of the calendar year. In addition, members of Presbytery are pleased with the forthcoming commissioning of Annika Sangster as a Diaconal Minister. Representatives from Presbytery have participated in discernment activities as well.

It is still regretted that it is no longer possible for rural pastoral charges to provide insightful opportunities for interns in training for various kinds of ministries. The Presbytery believes that it has very suitable locations for such internships, but lack of finances prevents the continuation of these valuable experiences. There are several people within the members of the Presbytery who can provide proper supervision.

Increasingly, the members of the Presbytery of Inverness-Guysborough are appreciative of the gifts of Spirit which the First Nations bring to their lives. The visit of the Moderator, Rt. Rev. David Giuliano, provided for the presentation of plaques which express in both Mi'kmaq and English the official apology of The United Church of Canada. In addition, several congregations and individual people are participants in the L'Arche community.

With strong individual differences among the many parts of the wholeness, the widely scattered congregations, nevertheless, come together as members of the body of Christ. As faithful people, they continue with courage and increased realism to provide supportive worship and communal activities and to reach out with concern and love to the wider world.

Miramichi Presbytery

(Not received at time of printing.)

Pictou Presbytery

(Not received at time of printing.)

Prince Edward Island Presbytery

This has been a mixed year for PEI Presbytery Oversight Committee. Whereas we have been busy with our regular triennial visits to a number of our pastoral charges with more in the planning stage, we have also been busy trying to work with a number of charges as they seek to find their way in our ever changing and growing secular society. The various

Sunday activities outside of church seem to be a growing concern with all our charges. It is forcing the pastoral charges to be creative and forward thinking.

Like most Presbyteries, we do have a number of charges who are presently struggling, due mainly to changing demographics. While some churches may prosper with changes to worship and welcoming initiatives, others do not have that option, people are no longer in the area. The challenge has become how do we meet the spiritual needs of those remaining and at the same time do due diligence to good stewardship?

Many people understandably, are committed to their buildings, tracing their origins back to grand or great-grandparents, and to leave them or have them sold is quite a heart breaking time for them. But sometimes the only way forward is to be able to let go.

We have been busy on a number of fronts trying to work with charges helping them through what is really a grieving period and into new life, whether that be in the form of amalgamation or simply a closure. Not easy decisions for anyone involved.

All is not gloom for PEI though. There are some exciting prospects of amalgamation on the horizon for some of our charges that will ensure a promising ministry in a number of areas. We have seen the building of a new church in Hunter River, called "Central Queens." We are getting ready to open the doors on a new building for the Murray River, Murray Harbour charge. Trinity Summerside completed a \$620,000 building project that included: a new narthex, sound system, lift, accessible washroom, cloakroom, lighting etc. Amidst all of the concerns around membership and attendance, we do have churches whom are experiencing life and growth.

Members of the Pastoral Oversight Committee are very proud of their relationship with the congregations in our Presbytery, due to its hard work and commitment; they continue to be a valuable asset to the church.

Arthur Davies (Chair)

Saint John Presbytery

In Saint John Presbytery there is a great interest in outreach to seniors and to people on fixed income. There are no less than three housing projects. Called Abbey St. Andrew, the largest is at the Church of St. Andrew and St. David and focuses directly on low income housing. Although there have been significant delays, owing primarily to headaches related to funding, there is a hope to have the project break ground this spring. The buildings will be located in and around the present church parking lot.

St. David's United Church in Rothesay, the Quispamsis United Church, and the Andrew Donald Pastoral Charge are cooperating to build Kenval Suites which will be located next door to the Quispamsis United Church. The latest report is that, as of the time of this writing, the mortgage documents are ready for signing and the project will start construction this spring.

The project that has advanced the farthest is Ossekeag Place of Hampton United Church. Ground was broken in the late fall of 2008 and construction has carried forth over the winter. The completion date is scheduled for the end of June 2009, with full occupancy of the 32 apartments (16 affordable income assisted and 16 market) being achieved before the summer is over.

To report in other activities in the presbytery, the pastoral relations committee and the pastoral oversight committee have been working cooperatively, to deal with a significant number of changes. Many of these changes reflect the realities of transition across the United Church. As in many presbyteries, a number of our congregations have been struggling. Many congregations report declines in attendance and participation, significant stress related to these declines and uncertainty for the future.

St. Paul's United Church in Sussex has a United Supply Minister along with an Appointed Trained Interim Minister. An active joint search committee is in place looking to fill one of the two positions and a second joint search committee has yet to be established.

Carleton Kirk United Church had a change of pastoral relations during the year and is in a Manual Section 333 formal review at the request of the local church board. The presbytery affirms the congregation's courage in being pro-active in the review of the state of their pastoral charge. The presbytery is working closely with them. They are presently being served by an Appointed United Supply Minister.

Two of our pastoral charges, The Two Rivers pastoral charge and Glen View United Church have experienced sabbatical leaves for their Ministers.

The Apohaqui/Norton/King's Kirk pastoral charge, after their triennial oversight visit, amicably dissolved their pastoral relationship with an Ordained Minister and went from full time to 80% of full time service with a Retired Supply Minister.

The Lorneville, St. Giles pastoral charge is in a visioning process, assisted by presbytery while being served by an appointed Retired Supply Minister half time.

The Andrew Donald pastoral charge has an active joint search committee while being served by an Appointed Retired Supply Minister.

The Quispamsis United Church has an active joint search committee and is being served 75% of full time by an appointed Retired Supply Minister.

Rothsay (St. David's) over this past year has covenanted a new pastoral relationship with a Called Ordained Minister and an Appointed Designated Lay Minister.

Portland United Church, after doing some work on a joint needs assessment for one of two positions, have decided to be more comprehensive in their consideration of pastoral needs and asked the presbytery to dissolve the joint needs assessment committee and establish a new joint needs assessment committee to look at their complete ministry

needs. They continue to be served by their Called Ordained Minister, and an Appointed Designated Lay Minister.

Over the past year, the Millstream pastoral charge reappointed their Designated Lay Minister for a three year term.

In 2008 the Designated Lay Minister in Training at the Park Avenue pastoral charge, was recognized by conference as a Designated Lay Minister. He was subsequently appointed as a Designated Lay Minister in the pastoral charge for a three year term.

Centenary Queen Square United Church has adopted a new governance model.

On the St. Martins pastoral charge, the Black River congregation amalgamated with the Bain's Corner congregation, thus moving from a three point pastoral charge to a two point pastoral charge.

Our presbytery has struggled with a shortage or unavailability of trained intentional interim ministers and as convener of pastoral oversight, I could wish for more thorough long term planning and a better allocation of resources to assist congregations in finding leadership who possess the skills to more effectively meet their needs.

In conclusion it seems that slowly the presbytery is coming to terms with needed readjustments. The possibilities continue to exist for significant change through congregation closures, amalgamations, and pastoral boundary realignments.

Keith L Lyons
Convener of the Pastoral Oversight Committee
Saint John Presbytery

St. Croix Presbytery

As of Maritime Conference 2008, we are now known as the St. Croix Presbytery! For hundreds of years, the people of our region have depended upon and gathered around the waters of the St. Croix River. Our new name reflects this geographical and spiritual heritage, as well as the unity we feel as a small presbytery. You may not believe it, but our meetings are more like family dinners than meetings! And to our family, we have happily welcomed a minister settled to the St. James Pastoral Charge, rounding out our number of full-time ministers to six.

We continue to discern the direction of ministry in our presbytery, by regularly referring to the report of the Boundary and Ministry Implementation Committee. This committee made six recommendations to presbytery, which were formulated over a considered period of reflection and in consultation with all of our pastoral charges. This year, our activities have been focused on two of these recommendations:

1. committing ourselves to building community while raising morale and elevating the Spirit, by co-operating in joint worship services, pulpit exchanges, shared Bible and group studies, and other gatherings;
2. actively seeking opportunities for co-operation among and encouragement of the smaller and more isolated charges in our Presbytery.

This year, we enjoyed a true *week* of services in Holy Week, with each church hosting one service. We continue to cooperate on book and study groups, and have even started engaging in the practice of Common Life. We hosted a weekend workshop on Godly Play, and had Lloyd McLean lead a day-long workshop on the More Voices music resource. With events like these, we continue to bolster a sense of community among the vibrant and creative congregations in our pastoral charges.

Our people have traveled far and wide this year! The McAdam Pastoral Charge youth group participated in its third “Reaching Across Canada” youth project. Organized by Rev. Ellen Beairsto, a small group traveled to Iqaluit to meet other youth in the region and help in a community-building project. In their presentation to presbytery, we saw enthusiasm and the encouragement that travel and service in God’s name can foster.

This was also clear in Wayne Spires’ trip to China with the Amity foundation, where he was part of a group that spent ten days in Beijing and Inner Mongolia. He also returned with great excitement about the new and quickly growing churches in China, and a passion for the support that churches at home commit overseas.

Closer to home, our very own “Project Haiti” continues. Featured this year in The Observer, this project is a response to an amalgam of needs arising from our encounters with the people of Haiti. For a long time, volunteers have helped Haitians migrate through our border town on the way to points further West to join family and find work. But last year, a special individual – Sister Wildanie Cupidon of Gaillard, Haiti – came to visit us and speak about her school for the children of her home village.

The people of the Oak Bay and Milltown-Upper Mills Pastoral Charges continue to help people across the border, which often involves sharing a meal and even hosting them overnight. They have also, together, continued to support Sister ‘Dani and her work with fundraising dinners, school supply drives, and regular donations. The Holy Spirit continues to call us forward, even in thin financial times, and the response has been extraordinary.

Our presbytery conducted three triennial visits this year. As a group, we face many of the same challenges that other churches face. However, at each visit, this was mentioned as a mere footnote to otherwise long lists of joys, celebrations and achievements. The sense of family that we feel, as churches and as a presbytery, is what helps us to continue in the way of Christ. As a small presbytery, we are happily aware that, while we are many, we are one.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Dr. Andrew O’Neill
Oak Bay Pastoral Charge

South Shore Presbytery

During the past year Triennial Visitation teams visited four of our Pastoral Charges, including Liverpool, Lunenburg, Bridgewater and Caledonia. While many common challenges such as declining attendance, financial constraints and aging congregations are being dealt with by the charges, there were many observations giving cause for hope, joy and celebration.

The problems related to aging congregations and the resulting overloading which that causes on remaining volunteers, as well as staff, are not new and most congregations remain open to exploring solutions such as shared ministries, revised boundaries, and use of new technology such as websites.

The provision of adequate ministry personnel to minister to the charges remains a significant challenge. At one point last year, South Shore Presbytery was providing assistance to 9 of our 16 pastoral charges, as education supervisors, assisting with JNACs, search committees, sabbaticals, medical leaves and other vacancies.

We were pleased during the year to welcome the Rev. Ronald David Frampton to the Riverport Pastoral Charge effective August 1, 2008. A Service to Celebrate a New Ministry of Thomas (Tom) Watson, Designated Lay Minister, Caledonia Pastoral Charge was conducted on Thursday, October 9, 2008. In November, the South Shore Presbytery recommended that Sim Rushton be recognized by Maritime Conference as a Designated Lay Minister. In June, the Session of LaHave-New Dublin Pastoral Charge and South Shore Presbytery established a Discernment Committee for Bethe Benjamin Cameron and Alison Etter continues in her status as Candidate for Ordained Ministry for the year 2008-2009. In October, The Rev. Vivian Moores was appointed to the Petite Riviere Pastoral Charge on a part-time temporary basis.

In the Pastoral Charges we visited there was much to celebrate despite declining attendance at some locations. Most charges are maintaining active Sunday Schools and at Caledonia, a letter campaign achieved positive results with growth in Sunday School registration.

Sense of community is strong, both within the Church and within the communities at large and there is much outreach activity. The mission statement of LaHave-New Dublin, as published on their website, "*Through the Spirit of God, we will find ways to be a light to those in need.*" could represent all the Charges equally. For example, Bridgewater is a major supporter of the Bridgewater Inter-church Food Bank and sponsors a Scouting group which attracts over 60 youth weekly. Lunenburg is a strong supporter of their local food bank, their Sunday School supports a foster child, and the Minister there does one service a month at Harbourview Haven Home for Special Care. Caledonia Pastoral Charge is active in outreach in the community through Food Bank, Mitten Tree, White Gifts, nursing home gifts, school breakfast program, and meals on wheels. The Liverpool Pastoral Charge provides comfort packs for the elderly at Christmas and outreach includes visits to Queens Manor & Hillsvie Manor, Meals on Wheels and assistance to needy individuals. Visited congregations support the M&S fund and the United for Peace

initiative among others. The UCW's are all active in support of various organizations including Grandmothers to Grandmothers, local operations and M&S.

We face some uncertainties around which buildings may house our future activities and from which communities we will draw our congregations, but we draw comfort from the deep sense of commitment, faith, love of God and the true sense of fellowship expressed throughout the Presbytery.

Sydney Presbytery

“We are called to be the Church . . .” but in the economic and social climate during which we are “called to be”, those of us who work within the church structure are finding the workload to be a heavy burden. There is a large volume of work to be done and seldom enough willing and capable bodies to participate. Without a doubt, Sydney Presbytery is not alone in this statement, nor is the United Church of Canada. What we do have to our credit is a love for Christ and for Christ's vision of a “united” church that is carrying us through these very challenging times.

Sydney Presbytery covers a large geographical area and includes 20 pastoral charges. These are served by a variety of ministries: ordained, designated lay ministers, candidate supply, retired supply and congregational accountable designated ministers. It is a credit to our Presbytery that we are willing to engage the gifts available to us in these varied types of ministry. In 2008 the Presbytery held covenanting services at several churches including: Chalmers-Warden and Knox in Glace Bay, Donkin-Morien-Birch Grove; Westmount-Leitches Creek; St. Ann's Bay in Barrachois; Louisbourg-Catalone; and St. Peter's-Grand River-Loch Lomond. Joint Needs Assessments were ongoing at Carman United, North Highlands, and Trinity United in Whitney Pier. We continue to make our Triennial Visits, hearing many of the same concerns from each congregation.

There is much to celebrate within Sydney Presbytery as the Spirit continues to flourish within the religious life and work of its people. Through the perseverance, faith, and hard work of the Zion Wesley congregation, as well as with the help and support of their brothers and sisters in the faith, this congregation is now worshipping in a new building, the former church having been destroyed by fire in 2007.

The Future Directions Committee of Sydney Presbytery continues to be actively involved with congregations, lending support during amalgamations, closures, and encouraging opportunities for sharing. Some of our Pastoral Charges are taking the initiative to share ministry experiences. St. Matthew Wesley, Carman, and the Florence-Bras d'Or congregations have been sharing Sunday services during the past two summers. Each congregation takes its turn hosting worship and enjoying the music of their combined choirs. The pews are filled, and those attending are excited about the opportunity for fellowship within the United Churches in the Northside Cluster. These combined services have been so successful that the congregations have decided to also share some other special services such as Remembrance Day and the Lenten services. Two congregations in the Sydney cluster, First United and St. Andrew's, have also been

sharing ministry during the summer as well as part of the winter. It appears that the Sunday Schools in particular are benefiting from this shared ministry.

Although we no longer have our camp at Mira Pines, the Presbytery Camping Program remains a vital part of our ministry with youth. Last summer, thanks to the kindness of our Baptist friends, we were able to share the Holmestead Memorial Camp facilities at Homeville, and the Camping Committee has been busy over the winter setting up a website, preparing new, colourful brochures, and contacting former campers to build excitement for this summer's program.

Music continues to provide opportunities for celebrating as Waterview and Louisbourg Pastoral Charges shared their musical talents for a special combined service at Christmas. Calvin United in New Waterford, celebrating their Centennial Anniversary, also prepared musical services with the help of many local musicians and performers.

Our Church in Society Committee has kept us abreast of justice and environmental issues within the Presbytery as well as the greater community by making presentations on Peace for Palestine, CBC job losses, and "Drafts in the Belfry and Dafts on the Floor" – encouraging us to greater energy efficiency in our church buildings.

And last but by no means least we welcomed our Moderator, Rev. David Guiliano to our Presbytery this past September and enjoyed a town-hall style meeting to wrap up the visit. We were pleased and honoured to meet this gentle, soft-spoken man who has served our United Church with humility and grace. Other ministers from this Presbytery who have faithfully served the church will be recognized at the Jubilarian Banquet at the Annual meeting of Maritime Conference this year. They include – Rev. Ray Purchase, Rev. Louis Ihasz, and Rev. Ralph Johnston. We are grateful for their service in Christ's name.

Where is God calling Sydney Presbytery? That is a question that we will wrestle with at our April meeting as we focus on the document, "Called to Be Church: Toward a Unifying Vision." We are keenly aware that the Church of Jesus Christ is being challenged in our Presbytery by dwindling and aging congregations, financial concerns, aging buildings, and minds that are not yet open to change. We may emerge from these challenges with a slight limp but with renewed commitment to continue celebrating the Spirit's presence among us, to trying our best to live with respect for creation, to love and serve the people of Sydney Presbytery, and most assuredly to proclaim the hope of the Living Christ.

Submitted in humble service by,

Dianne Kempt, Chair
Pastoral Care and Support Committee

Truro Presbytery

It has been an eventful year for the oldest presbytery in Canada. Truro Presbytery has 28 pastoral charges served by 17 full-time ministry personnel, six part-time ministry personnel, one full-time retired minister, and one DLM due to be recognized at this Conference. We are very grateful to our retired ministry personnel for their dedicated service to this Presbytery.

Four pastoral charges are within the Town limits of Truro and the rest are more rural ministries.

The Presbytery witnessed the Amalgamation of Maitland and Noel Pastoral Charges into the Maitland-Noel Pastoral Charge beginning July 1/08 and welcomed Rev. Joan Conrad as the new ministry personnel. Two other Covenanting Services were held. Sue King-Darby DM was welcomed to Harmony-Camden Pastoral Charge and Three Harbours Pastoral Charge welcomed Rev. Connie MacNamara and her family to the manse.

The church building at Kempton/Riversdale was closed on June 30/08.

The Pastoral Relationships Committee has diligently carried out its work with all 28 pastoral charges on a three year cycle for Triennial Visits and JNA's. It is now working with three Joint Search Committees due to resignations and retirements. There has been some visitation to ministry personnel and communication with those who are ill or shut-in.

The Future Directions Committee is meeting with four pastoral charges to discuss their futures and help make some recommendations for future ministry in those areas.

Truro Presbytery shared with Pictou, a visit from the Moderator of the United Church of Canada this past fall. The event was held at our outdoor ministry, McLennan Memorial Camp, which is shared between Pictou and Truro Presbyteries. We were pleased with the groups held there this summer and thank the staff and volunteers for a job well done.

Truro Presbytery was pleased to welcome the president of Maritime Conference, Rev. Valerie Kingsbury to our November meeting. Following her ordination, she was settled in Truro Presbytery.

We were very fortunate this year also to have the presence of Cole Harbour Woodside Book Room at three of our meetings. This gave the members an opportunity to purchase books.

Two of our members attended the Camping event "Connections 2008" in Fingal, Ontario, and on their return shared their experiences with Presbytery.

Truro Presbytery was saddened by the sudden death of Rev. Gordon MacLean, ministry personnel at First United Church in Truro. Our sincere sympathy goes to his family and many friends. Among many things, Rev. Gordie will be sadly missed for his great gift of music and his dedication to the youth of the church at Conference and First United

Church. On a positive note we are very grateful to the retirees, Rev. Allen and Rev. Betty Darby who are now serving at First United Church as a team until June 30/09. Soon after this sad event in the life of the church, First United received the resignation of the "Minister of Visitation", Rev. David MacNaughton, due to ill health. We certainly thank Rev. David for his ministry at First United Church, especially during this time of loss within the church. However, once again the Spirit of God was evident as Leland MacLean, retired DLM accepted the position until June 30/09.

On another sad note we have lost the Rev. Lloyd Burrows, a faithful backbone of Truro Presbytery who passed away having fought a courageous battle this past year with ALS. Our sincere sympathy is extended to his family and many friends. Lloyd will be sadly missed for his wisdom, his wit and his constant concern and care for Truro Presbytery, and the United Church of Canada.

Truro Presbytery, through its ministries, plays a significant role in the lives of many people. We are blessed with enthusiastic lay people and dedicated ministry personnel who work diligently to fill their roles within the Presbytery. Although there are more challenges ahead, there are good times as well.

Respectfully submitted,
Betty Miller, Chair, Pastoral Relationships

Valley Presbytery

Here in Valley Presbytery we have been blessed with much to celebrate. We have also been greatly challenged as we seek to address the needs of our congregations in the light of the requirements of the greater Church.

We would lift up the success of our various Cluster groupings within our Presbytery. The Western Cluster held a second hymn fest, this time complete with homemade sundaes which went over very well. They have also spent one meeting talking about General Council's new structure. The Central Cluster has really taken hold and has embarked on two annual joint services, one centering on the June 10th anniversary of the United Church. These joint services have been grand occasions and well received by those who attended. The Cluster is also addressing questions of pastoral charge boundaries and visioning for the future of the United Church in their geographic region. We as a Presbytery commend them for their efforts and wait prayerfully to see what may come. The Eastern Cluster has been stalled due to vacancies in a number of their pulpits but we hope they too will be able to find some direction for their cluster in the coming year.

As is often the case, we have a variety of circumstances among our Pastoral Charges. Several of our Pastoral Charges are ticking along nicely, even daring to stretch and dream. We have several Pastoral Charges in the midst of JNACs and at least one about to begin their JSearch. We also have three discernment committees on the go and two students under our care. We were able to carry out five Triennial Visits during the year, which is three less than we had hoped to do. A few of our Pastoral Charges are facing

some hard decisions and are looking to Presbytery for guidance. All this activity has made clear to us that the Presbytery does not have enough willing and able bodies to tend to these important aspects of our life. Our Nominations Committee have undertaken to write to each Pastoral Charge asking them to check their statistics and ensure that they are sending all the representatives they are entitled to send.

It is always difficult to articulate where God is calling us. Valley Presbytery has recently discerned a call to struggle with questions of our immediate future, a future which seeks to respond faithfully to the spiritual needs of the people in our communities and the cultural changes that have led to a decline in church attendance as well as a de-population of our rural communities. We have many places within our boundaries where a few (20 – 40 good United Church folk) seek to gather faithfully week after week, to live together in Christian community and communion, yet are unable to support the level of ministry and/or structure required by our denomination. We have struck a task force to look into these matters but these are not easy questions. Nor are they unique to our Presbytery. As God has called us, so may God lead us.

Woolastook Presbytery

The Pastoral Care and Support (Oversight) Committee of Woolastook Presbytery met on five occasions since the 2008 Report. The committee lost two of its four Ministers at the rise of Conference, but gained three during the fall, so now has five. There are five active Lay members. This make-up helps to spread the considerable workload, and enables teams of one clergy and one lay to conduct the required triennial visits.

Amalgamation in the former Glassville-Juniper Pastoral Charge was completed during May and June. In turn, the three congregations of Juniper, Glassville and Argyle were amalgamated. At the services of closure of the first two, the church buildings were declared no longer parts of the United Church of Canada. At the service at Argyle, amalgamation of the three congregations was completed with the new name changed to Lake View, which also became the name of the Pastoral Charge. The church building and associated church hall became the base for the new entity. Student minister, Rosemarie Sheppard, served the charge during this process, but she was ordained in time to take part in the completion of the amalgamation and formation of Lake View Pastoral Charge. She was settled in the Gaspé in Miramichi Presbytery. The charge is now served by student supply, Mary Taylor.

Triennial visits were conducted in ten pastoral charges, and another with the Board of Camp Woolastook. By this means we are up-to-date with triennial visits to the Presbytery's 30 pastoral charges and one camp. Charges visited were: Canterbury-Richmond; Chipman-Gaspereau; Faith Memorial; Forest Hill; Hartland-Jacksonville; Keswick Ridge; Nashwaaksis; Plaster Rock-Grand Falls-Riley Brook; Prince William; and St. Paul's, Edmundston. A requested visit was also made to Kingsley-Birdton. We have continued to use the guidelines for visits recommended by the Maritime Conference Consultation of Oversight Committees in 1999 – but find increasingly that they need updating. As I said in last year's report, again I say: is it not time for Oversight

Committees of Maritime Conference to have another consultation, part of which could include revisions to the guidelines in light of Ministry in Changing Times and new requirements?

Reports from triennial visits, and five-minute accounts of focus and activities given by two pastoral charges at most of our Presbytery meetings provide us with some feeling for how the charges are doing. It is, however, the Manual's admonition that "oversight" committees review annual reports that provides the most insights. How much we learn from the collected wisdom that is apparent in the Manual! Again this year our extended March meeting was our "Festival of Annual Reports."

We ask that two annual reports be turned in (via the Presbytery Secretary) to our committee by the February Presbytery meeting, at the latest. At that time this year, we had reports from 24 charges. Reports from one more came in by our March meeting. The reports are divided among committee members so that two people review each report. At our meeting we hear in turn by pastoral charge about gleanings from the reports. It is a festival of rejoicing at Spirit-led accomplishments and evidence of the Spirit of Jesus working in many ways. True, there are concerns in some cases that evidence is lacking of financial statements having been audited, or that matters known to us are not covered in any way in what is presented. There has to be a proper record of all that goes on in a pastoral charge. Each report is an historic document – it should be as complete as possible.

A year ago the committee produced a one-page guide to annual reports and these were provided to each pastoral charge. We tried to indicate that we look for evidence of the Spirit of Jesus in many aspects of annual reports – we tried to make it clear that the reports should reflect that our churches are Christ-centred endeavours, not social or business clubs. The main reason for our being as congregations is communal worship of God. Still, many reports do not mention worship services each Sunday – surely that is our core function! But more are stressing the joys experienced in special worship services, and in the many outreach projects.

I present a few comments made during our Festival of Annual Reports. I think they serve to show the variety of hope, appreciation, celebration, promotion, and consternation engendered by portions of the annual reports. Maybe, for readers, some may provide food for thought, even action!

Energy and hope – bright and exciting;
 Amazing financial detail for a small church;
 Some discouragement evident – do they know how to have fun?
 A green committee report – wonderful!
 No evidence of dialogue relating to future direction;
 A deep sense of compassion and love;
 This one has a Ministry in Changing Times Committee!
 Can that small salary increase be correct?
 They are congregations concerned for survival in a community that needs them to itself survive;

A truly functional pastoral charge;
 The language used related to the role of the minister varies in the reports –
 do we understand the clergy's role?
 Intentional focus on youth;
 Choirs are strong relational groups;
 A family group, not looking beyond itself;
 Outreach here includes bringing the neighbours in;
 Noticeable love, cooperation, fun, music, mutual respect;
 Celebrate “all the hard work that kept our churches going through hard times”;
 Excited about this pastoral charge and its committees;
 A sense of faithfulness, but fatalistic;
 Astounding what UCWs do!
 Why are there no liability insurances indicated for the cemeteries?
 The spiritual parts are mostly in the ministers' messages!
 Started the financial statement with a Biblical story!
 People pitching in to do whatever needs to be done, whether or not assigned;
 Is there really a need to keep our committees fully stocked?
 Some of our pastoral charges are starting to realize that they are small!
 They certainly celebrate God's presence!
 Several new initiatives were directed towards young families;
 Ministers need to read the scriptures out of the same contextual rhythm in
 which they were written;
 An interesting mix of worship experiences;
 Reports from groups mostly “thanks” – not much forward-looking except in
 relation to the property;
 Congregations can be geographically close but a million miles away on other
 fronts;
 A lot of male language through it, not much on justice;
 We do need a way for small rural charges to reinvent themselves before they
 collapse under the weight of governance and due diligence.

An aspect the Committee has tried to focus on is evidence of outreach beyond the
 pastoral charges, to the community and the world. All pastoral charges show this
 compassion for others in many ways, but the levels vary tremendously. In our sample,
 that does not include three of the numerically largest pastoral charges in the presbytery,
 givings to the Mission and Service fund range from 2% to 24% of other income, with six
 pastoral charges exceeding the tithing level. That 10% level might be considered a
 minimum objective.

The Pastoral Care and Support Committee find this exercise with the Annual Reports
 invigorating and useful. Some elements of our discussions will be conveyed back to the
 pastoral charges to which they relate – by letter, up-coming triennial visits, or in
 conversation. It is a privilege to have these glimpses into how our pastoral charges are
 doing. It is a pleasure to report that they are by-and-large holding their own and
 celebrating God's presence in many and varied ways. We give thanks for that, as we try
 to do our part in providing Spirit-filled care and support to our pastoral charges.

Graham R. Powell, Chairperson,
 Pastoral Care and Support Committee

DECISIONS AND ACTIONS OF EXECUTIVE AND SUB-EXECUTIVE

Executive Meeting, June 1, 2008

1. SACRAMENTAL PRIVILEGES: Approved sacramental privileges and permission to perform marriages be approved for Mr. Wayne Yorke for the duration of his appointment in Inverness-Guysborough Presbytery, effective immediately; and sacramental privileges be approved for Mr. Tom Watson for the duration of his appointment to the Caledonia Pastoral Charge, South Shore Presbytery, effective immediately.
2. FINANCIAL SUPPORT UNIT: The mission support grant to Maritime Conference for 2009 will be 20% less than that received for 2008. The Unit was requesting the Executive's reconsideration of designating 10% of the grant received for "transformational ministry" grants. The Conference Executive empowered the Financial Support Unit to act with discretion in the allocation of transformational grants for 2009.
3. SIGNING AUTHORITY: Janice MacLean was made a signing officer for the Maritime Conference Fund from June 15th to October 1st, 2008 during the extended study leave of the Executive Secretary.
4. ELECTION OF SUB-EXECUTIVE: Elected the following as the Sub-Executive of Maritime Conference for the 2008-2009 year:

President	Rev. Valerie Kingsbury
President-Elect	Rev. Robert Johnson
Executive Secretary	Rev. Catherine Gaw
Treasurer	Mr. Stewart Hudson
General Council Executive Representative	Dr. Shirley Cleave
Members-at-large	Rev. Dr. Elizabeth Stevenson
	Rev. Steven Longmoore
	Rev. Dr. Ross Bartlett
	Mr. Michael Ball

Sub-Executive Conference Call, June 13, 2008

5. SYDNEY PRESBYTERY PROPERTY MATTER: Granted approval to the sale of the Trout Brook Property as requested by the Board of Trustees of Knox United Church, Glace Bay to Earl and Ann Morgan, and as recommended by the Commission established by the Sydney Presbytery and whose report has been received by the Sub-Executive of the Maritime Conference on June 11, 2008.
6. NEWPORT VILLAGE: Concurred with the request of the Board of Directors of the Newport Village of the United Church of Canada to increase its level of indebtedness to not more than \$2,500,000.00 for the purposes of securing a mortgage in order to proceed with the construction of new affordable housing in Newport Village, an Incorporated Ministry of The United Church of Canada.

Sub-Executive Conference Call, September 18, 2008

7. ATLANTIC CHRISTIAN TRAINING CENTRE (ACTC) – TATAMAGOUCHE CENTRE: Approved the following:
- a. That Maritime Conference concur with the request of the Atlantic Christian Training Centre – Tatamagouche Centre (the Centre) to sell the small parcel of land on Highway #6, Pugwash, NS, to *Howard Forbes by Deed recorded at the Land Registration Office for Cumberland County in Book 281 at Page 770.*) and that the proceeds be applied to debt reduction for the Centre.
 - b. That Maritime Conference concur with the request of the Atlantic Christian Training Centre – Tatamagouche Centre (the Centre) to sell the small parcel of land located adjacent to the Centre’s main property in Tatamagouche that formerly held the Centre’s well but is no longer of use, and that the proceeds be applied to debt reduction for the Centre.
 - c. That Maritime Conference concur with the request of the Atlantic Christian Training Centre – Tatamagouche Centre (the Centre) to use the “Steven’s House” property as collateral to secure an existing line of credit.
 - d. That Maritime Conference concur with the request of the Atlantic Christian Training Centre – Tatamagouche Centre (the Centre) to acquire, for the administrative cost, the parcel of land declared surplus by the municipality available from the municipality and located between the main Centre property and the Steven’s House property, extending to the river.
8. OSSEKEAG PLACE: Approved the following:
- a. The request of Ossekeag Place of Hampton United Church Inc. to receive and hold land transferred from Hampton United Church at a cost of \$1.00, for the purpose of building an affordable housing complex for seniors.
 - b. The request of Ossekeag Place of Hampton United Church Inc. to enter into a mortgage agreement, not to exceed \$2,500,000.00, for the purpose of building an affordable housing complex for seniors.
9. KENVAL UNITED CHURCH SUITES, INC.: Approved the request of KenVal United Church Suites, Inc. to enter into a mortgage agreement, not to exceed \$1.3 million, for the purpose of financing the building an affordable housing complex for seniors and disabled persons.

Executive Meeting, October 17, 2008

10. FAIRVIEW PARENT ‘N TOT MEETING PLACE SOCIETY: Approved the request from the Fairview Parent ‘n Tot Meeting Place Society to change the bylaws as follows:
- Article V: “Powers of the Board of Directors of the current Bylaws which now reads in part: ‘1... In particular, the Directors shall have power to engage a Coordinator and to determine his/her duties and responsibilities and remuneration’ be amended to read, in part: ‘1... In particular, the Directors shall have power to engage an Executive Director and to determine his/her duties and responsibilities and remuneration.’” And that the title of Coordinator be changed throughout the bylaws to read Executive Director.”

11. MINISTRY PERSONNEL & EDUCATION (MP&E): Approved the following:

SACRAMENTAL PRIVILEGE REQUESTS:

- a. Approved the request of Sydney Presbytery to licence Dianne Kempt, Designated Lay Minister Recognized, to administer the Sacraments and officiate at marriages within the bounds of Sydney Presbytery while under appointment to the St. Ann's Bay United Church Pastoral Charge.
- b. Approved the request of Sydney Presbytery to licence Lynn McKinnon, Student Supply, to administer the Sacraments and officiate at marriages within the bounds of St. Peter's / Grand River / Loch Lomond Pastoral Charge while under appointment.
- c. Approved the request from Woolastook Presbytery to licence Helena Medeiros, Student Supply, to administer the Sacraments within the bounds of the Doaktown Pastoral Charge while under appointment.

DISCONTINUED SERVICE LIST (VOLUNTARY):

- a. Approved the recommendation of Halifax Presbytery to approve the request of Irene Gunn to have her name placed on the Discontinued Service List (Voluntary) of The United Church of Canada; and specific that Ms. Gunn not exercise any functions of an ordained minister.
- b. Approved the recommendation of Chignecto Presbytery to approve the request of Carol Gunn to have her name placed on the Discontinued Service List (Voluntary) of The United Church of Canada; and specified that Ms. Gunn not exercise any functions of an ordained minister.

MP&E COMMITTEE MEMBERS AT LARGE: Agreed that rather than having the Conference appoint 6 (six) members at large to the MP&E committee, the committee be empowered to appoint up to 4 (four) members at large for a 1 (one) year term with the possibility of extension if needed.

Agreed to refer the above motion to the Conference Review Committee moved by Johnson / Moriarty.

12. PROPOSALS:**Proposal 1**

Referred the proposal to the Proposal Committee for further consultation with Valley Presbytery.

Therefore, New Minas United Church Session propose through the Valley Presbytery of The United Church of Canada, through the Maritime Conference Executive to the General Council Executive that:

- a. The United Church of Canada encourage the Roman Catholic Church to be careful to use language in public statements that does not denigrate or call into question the practices of other Christian denominations.

- b. The United Church of Canada issue a public statement reiterating our long-standing, faithful, and scriptural practice of welcoming all people into membership, which includes eligibility to be considered for Candidacy for ordered ministry.

Proposal 2

Referred the proposal re: Recognition of Designated Lay Ministers from Valley Presbytery to the Gospel, Ecumenism and Theology Committee for consideration.

Therefore, the Valley Presbytery of The United Church of Canada proposes to the Maritime Conference Executive that:

The Maritime Conference recognition of Designated Lay Ministers during the annual service of Celebration of Ministry use symbolism and ritual that upholds the distinctive calling of Designated Lay Ministry and that do not confuse it with Ordered Ministry.

13. DELEGATE SUPPORT: Approved that up to \$750 of Delegate Support funds from 2008 be designated as support for the Rev. Matthew Fillier to attend the Can Lead Forum (Leading Practices in Youth Ministry) in London, Ontario.
14. ARCHIVES UNIT: Referred back to the Archives Unit their request to provide costing to upgrade 'the barn / shack' facility for storage of overflow archival material for short term use of up to five years. This would include securing windows and doors, creation of additional shelving to allow winter access.

Agreed that the Executive of Maritime Conference enter into a comprehensive dialogue with Sackville United Church (Vision-Building-Mission) regarding potential partnership that would not only include archival storage but Conference function, staff and facilities.

Referred to the sub executive the implication of the motion to enter into discussions with the Sackville United Church around visioning for future facilities with the suggestion that the following committees be represented, Property Unit, Staff, Finance Unit and Archives Unit.

15. APPOINTMENT OF APPEAL COMMITTEE:

- a. Approved that Patricia Elliott, be named the Chair of the Appeal Panel in the Appeal of Audrey Daley against the procedures 071(d) used by Miramichi Presbytery (as outlined in the paragraph ending Manual Section 071); And that Mac Campbell be named a member of the Appeal Committee and further that the President of Maritime Conference and the Executive Secretary be empowered to name up to two additional members by October 22, 2008 to serve as Secretary and member.

- b. Approved that the following terms of Reference be established:
 - i. That the Appeal Committee have at its disposal the resources of the Maritime Conference to cover all expenses of the Committee, the appellant's costs related to the Appeal Hearing (i.e. travel, meals and accommodations), and the Appeal Hearing costs for the respondent, up to \$3,000 in total and that any additional expenses relating to the Appeal Committee hearing be requested by the Chair of the Appeal Committee and subject to approval by the Sub-Executive.
 - ii. That the Appeal be heard on or before November 21, 2008.
 - iii. That the Committee report to the Maritime Conference Executive or Sub-Executive by December 15, 2008. Should an extension be required in order for the Committee to do its work, a request may be forwarded to the Executive Secretary.

Sub-Executive Conference Call, November 19, 2008

Property Issues:

- 16. SOUTH SHORE PRESBYTERY: Concurred with the request of the South Shore Presbytery to disperse the proceeds of the sale of St. Matthew's United Church in Broad Cove (Petite Riviere Pastoral Charge) as outlined in the letter received on October 10, 2008 from the Secretary of Presbytery, to the Central Treasurer of the Petite Riviere Pastoral Charge. (PID: 60364924, civic address 7096 Highway 331, Broad Cove).
- 17. ABBEY ST. ANDREW (SAINT JOHN PRESBYTERY): Approved the request of Saint John Presbytery, received November 3, 2008, to approve the transfer of property as requested by the Board of Trustees of the Church of Saint Andrew and Saint David to the Board of Directors of Abbey St. Andrew.

Sub-Executive Conference Call, December 4, 2008

- 18. APPEAL COMMITTEE: The Executive Secretary presented the report from the Appeal Committee established by the Conference Executive October 17, 2008.

Approved that the Maritime Conference receive the Decision of the Appeal Committee not to hear the appeal of Audrey Daley against the Decision of the Miramichi Presbytery to end her candidacy with the knowledge that the Decision of the Appeal Committee is not subject to Appeal (Section 076(m) The Manual of The United Church of Canada).

- 19. ABBEY ST. ANDREW'S (SAINT JOHN PRESBYTERY): Approved that the transfer of land from the Church of St. Andrew and St. David to the Board of Directors of the Abby St. Andrew Inc. with the understanding that this completes the land transfer authorized November 19, 2008.

20. CAMP ABEGWEIT (PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND PRESBYTERY): Approved the request of the Prince Edward Island Presbytery on behalf of the Board of Directors for Camp Abegweit to enter into an agreement with the Metro Credit Union, Charlottetown, PEI, to secure a Variable Rate Demand Promissory Note for \$175,000 with the Credit Union holding a fifteen-month mortgage on the Camp Abegweit property.

Sub-Executive Conference Call, February 2, 2009

21. ARCHIVES: The President asked the question “What do we, Maritime Conference, need?” After discussion the following three suggestions were brought forward:
- a. Enter into conversation with Sackville United in which they would build a building that would include adequate space and specifications for archives and Maritime Conference would lease the space from them.
 - b. Tear down 28/30 York Street, including barn, and build an archives building leaving 32 York as offices for Maritime Conference.
 - c. Buy land on the outer limits of Sackville and build a new ‘centre’ to house Maritime Conference, including archives and then sell currently owned property, 28/30 and 32 York Street.

It was agreed that Leslie Anthony would write a letter to Sackville United informing them that at this time we are not prepared to enter into a renovation process / agreement with them.

Sub-Executive Conference Call, February 13, 2009

22. BUSINESS ARISING: Approved the request from Chignecto Presbytery for Betty-Jean Friedman to be licensed to administer the sacraments while under appointment as Student Supply to the McKee’s Mills Pastoral Charge. It was noted this is confirmation of action taken by the Executive Secretary, in consultation with the Sub Executive in December 2008.

Executive Meeting, February 13-14, 2009

23. MINISTRY PERSONNEL AND EDUCATION: Received, for information the names of those who will be presented to the annual meeting for Ordination, Commissioning, Admission and Recognition.

SACRAMENTAL LICENSING:

- a. Approved the request of Woolastook Presbytery that Wally Ellis, DLM (Recognized), be licensed to administer the sacraments within the bounds of Woolastook Presbytery while under appointment to the Stanley Pastoral Charge, effective immediately.

INTERIM MINISTRY:

- b. Approved the Interim Ministry Committee’s recommendation that Rev. Blair Lewis be designated as an Interim Minister within the United Church of Canada.

- c. Approved the Interim Ministry Committee's recommendation that Linda Fuller DLM (Recognized) be designated as an Interim Minister within the United Church of Canada.
24. ANNUAL MEETING PLANNING COMMITTEE: It was reported that the theme title for the 2009 Annual Meeting will be: **Gospel and Empire: what about us?**
- a. Approved that the AMPC continue with the flown speakers and that they become standard equipment for future annual meetings.
 - b. Approved that the AMPC add an additional \$500 to bring the music leadership honoraria to \$1,000.
 - c. Approved that the AMPC recommend that the theme development committee be Christian Life and Growth for the 2010 Annual Meeting.
25. NOMINATING UNIT – MOUNT ALLISON UNIVERSITY: Approved that the Rev. Dr. John Moses be appointed to the Mount Allison University Board of Regents effective December 31, 2008.
26. CONFERENCE STRUCTURE REVIEW COMMITTEE: Approved that the Maritime Conference Executive broaden the mandate of the Review Committee to include a consultative process to determine what structure might best facilitate the work of Maritime Conference. That the Review Committee report regularly to the Conference Executive with an initial report to the Conference in 2009 and a final report in no later than 2011.
27. RURAL MINISTRIES: Approved that Maritime Executive recommend to the Annual Meeting that for the next three years the Gospel Ecumenism and Theology Committee focus on rural ministries including the following areas:
- Hosting an ecumenical forum with community partners from rural communities and representing Maritime diversity in rural concerns (fishing, logging, agriculture, mining) and through that, form a network of rural ministry leaders and interested persons
 - advocate on behalf of rural ministry throughout Conference Committees and structures so that the rural reality is addressed in areas of faith formation, justice, stewardship, ministry leadership and ministry in changing times.
 - ie: Gather committee chairs, etc, prior to an Executive meeting for sharing of concerns/issues
 - That additional funding for this work be \$4,000 per year for three years beginning in 2009, in addition to the regular GET budget line for an annual total of \$7,000.
 - That membership be supplemented, as needed, with those with rural expertise.
28. GENERAL COUNCIL COMMISSIONERS: Agreed to recommend to the annual meeting a Proposed Protocol for Electing Commissioners to the 39th General Council.

29. HOSPITAL CHAPLAINCY FUNDING:
- i. Approved that Maritime Conference support the Chaplaincy program fully funded for 2010 (\$44,000) and direct the finance and property to include in the budget a proportion out of the surplus and a portion be allocations to presbytery and we direct the finance committee to determine that portion.
 - ii. Approved that the Executive recommend to the Finance and Property Unit that allocations to Presbyteries not be increased more than 2% for 2010.
30. PROPOSALS FROM OCTOEBR 2008 - GOSPEL, ECUMENISM AND THEOLOGY COMMITTEE:
- i. Approved the recommendation of the Gospel, Ecumenism and Theology Committee in response to the Valley Presbytery proposal (October 17, 2008) that in the Service of Celebration of Ministries, that the various streams of ministry, such as Ordered and Recognition, be each distinctly acknowledged, identified, and set forth in word and in action.
 - ii. Approved the recommendation of the Gospel, Ecumenism and Theology Committee and recommend to the worship planning team that the recognition of each individual category of ministry be concluded with a printed prayer or chorus appropriate to that category being offered by the congregation.

Sub-Executive Conference Call, March 25, 2009

31. WINSLOE SOUTH SHORE UNITED (PRINCE EDWARD ISLAND PRESBYTERY): Approved the recommendation of the Prince Edward Presbytery that the property and building formally known as the Winsloe South United Church and the property be sold for \$1.00 to the South Winsloe Heritage Foundation Inc. with the understandings that access to the cemetery property remain and that the historical society would be responsible for all legal costs of the transfer of title.
And: The Executive Secretary inform the Mission through Finance, Congregational, Educational and Community Ministries (Erik Mathiesen) of this action.
32. WHITNEY PIER HOUSING COORPORATIVE (SYDNEY PRESBYTERY): Referred to the Executive that the Conference and General Council repay the outstanding portion of the grant from the Watkins Fund for the Poor.
33. NOMINATION UNIT – ARCHIVES PLANNING TASK GROUP: Agreed that Rev. Kevin Dingwell will chair the Archives Planning Task Group.