

December 11, 2009

Dear Sisters and Brothers in the Southern Conference,

I bring you greetings from the Board of Directors of the Southern Conference. Through the Executive Committee and the Interim Search Committee, we are continuing to provide faithful leadership for the Southern Conference during this period of transition, and I thank you for your prayers for us in this time.

Since my last letter to you, the Conference met on Friday, November 13, 2009 at Pilgrim United Church of Christ in Durham to say thank you and to bid farewell to our Conference Minister, Stephen Camp. It was a night to remember. I am grateful to Pilgrim UCC for hosting this event, and to the many who participated in planning it and in carrying it out. We are moving forward as we prepare for the leadership of the Reverend Emmett Floyd as our Transitional Conference Interim, who officially begins his work with us on December 16, 2009.

The Interim Search Committee met for the second time on November 23, 2009, and is working on developing a job description for the Interim Conference Minister and a time-table for this search. The Reverend Susan Towner-Larsen, Minister for Conference Relations, met with us, and is continuing to offer valuable counsel to us. Our goal is to present for approval a job description to the Board of Directors at its January 30, 2010 meeting. Once the Board of Directors has approved a job description, we will be ready to officially advertise for this position. If you know of someone who may be a good candidate for this position, please direct them to contact me, as I am serving as Chair and contact person for the Search Committee. As I have mentioned before, I am always open to hearing from you with your thoughts and suggestions. Don't hesitate to contact me.

As we continue through the Advent season and anticipate the Christmas season, I am reminded of the story found in Luke's gospel, chapter two. In this birth narrative of Jesus, there are many characters that cross the stage in this powerful redemption drama. The same is true in our beloved Southern Conference. There are many players who are active in the unfolding drama of life and ministry in our Conference. The cast is many and varied: churches, lay persons, clergy, board members, Conference staff,

outdoor ministry sites, colleges, universities, children's homes and retirement facilities. Each and every one is a major player. There are no minor roles in the Southern Conference. On behalf of myself and the other members of the Board of Directors, I thank you for your partnership in the life and ministry of the Southern Conference. We are well blessed, and I have every confidence that we have what it takes to embrace God's future for us.

My prayer for you is that you, your family and your church will experience the fullness of God's blessings in this holy season. Our faith reminds us to always have hope and joy as the still-speaking and still-working God is among us. May God bless you and all of us in the Southern Conference!

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