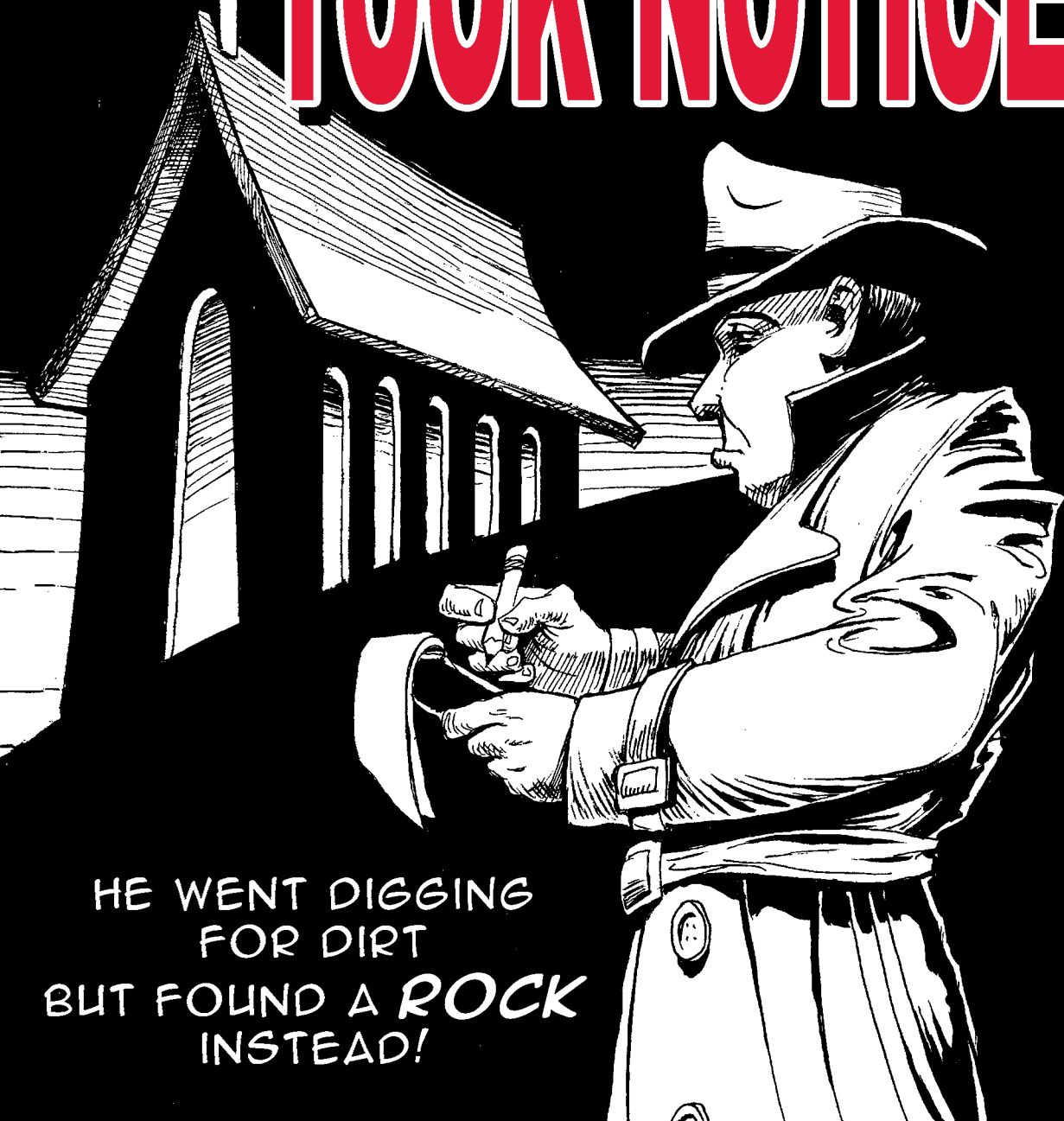


2005 ANNUAL REPORT
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

AND THE WORLD TOOK NOTICE



HE WENT DIGGING
FOR DIRT
BUT FOUND A **ROCK**
INSTEAD!

AND THE WORLD TOOK NOTICE

AND THE WORLD TOOK NOTICE

The 2005 Annual Report of the United Church of Christ

**UNITED CHURCH
OF CHRIST**



AN EXTRAVAGANT WELCOME?

Or A Reporter's Worst Nightmare?



**A REPORTER'S
WORST NIGHTMARE...
TWO THOUSAND WORDS ON
THE UNITED
CHURCH OF CHRIST!**

**I MIGHT AS WELL
WRITE ABOUT
DRYING PAINT.**

CHAPTER 1

WHAT DID I GET MYSELF INTO?

It was not the most prestigious assignment. For an aspiring young journalist with visions of reporting on the world's most dynamic stories — stories with lasting impact — this one didn't exactly cut the mustard.

Go and cover the United Church of Christ, my editor instructed me. Go to Cleveland and spend six months inside the denomination, get to know its leaders and some of its congregants and tell the church's story.

I WANTED
SOMETHING
MORE.

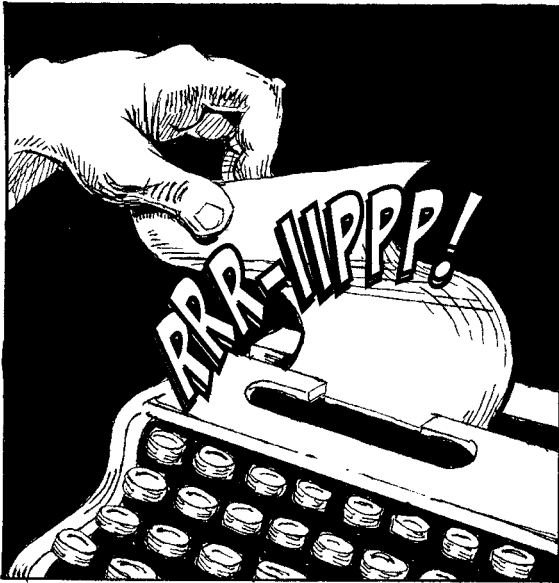
Apparently, my editor informed me, the church had garnered itself some publicity during the past year or so, something about a new marketing campaign, a controversial television commercial, some bouncers prohibiting certain people from entering church and a message of “extravagant welcome.”

But churches are always coming up with new ways of casting themselves to the masses.

I wanted something more.

This wasn't an interesting story, I thought. There was nothing compelling about this, there wasn't going to be anything new to tell my readers — if there even were any readers. After all, why would someone be interested in reading the same story that had been told again and again over the past half-century? From the moment the story was assigned, I figured I knew exactly how it would read: The United Church of Christ, just one of a myriad of struggling, mainline Protestant denominations desperate to reframe itself, its heyday of local congregations packed to the gills long since passed and with no sense of its own identity or mission. It would be the same old story.

But I did what I was told. I camped out in the church's Prospect Avenue headquarters and took a good, hard look at the operation from the inside out.

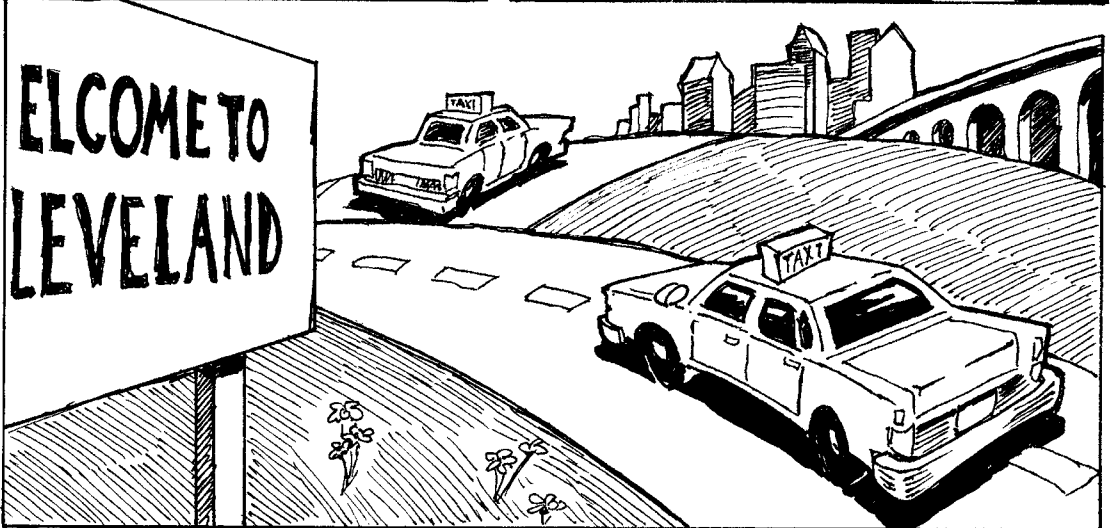
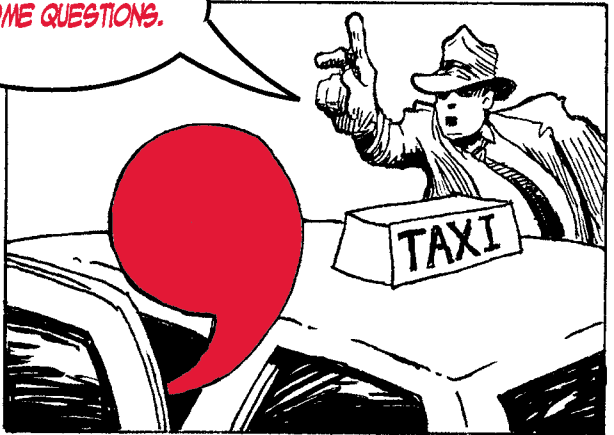




HEY YOU!
COME BACK HERE.



I WANNA ASK
YOU SOME QUESTIONS.





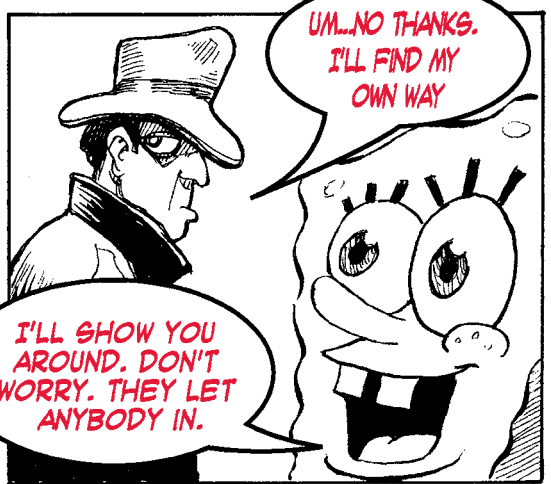
AH HA! HQ.
NOW WE'RE
GETTING SOMEWHERE.

HEY MISTER ...



GASP!

ARE YOU
LOST?



UM...NO THANKS.
I'LL FIND MY
OWN WAY

I'LL SHOW YOU
AROUND. DON'T
WORRY. THEY LET
ANYBODY IN.



THERE'S GOT
TO BE A STORY
AROUND HERE
SOMEWHERE.



HMM.
WHAT'S IN HERE?

WHO IS MY NEIGHBOUR

CHAPTER 2

I KEPT POUNDING THE PAVEMENT, LOOKING FOR A LEAD.

My first experience at the UCC Church House in downtown Cleveland didn't do much to change my impressions of the church or my expectations of the year to come. In what I could only surmise was a serendipitous coincidence, my arrival came on the same day that the Rev. John H. Thomas, General Minister and President of the UCC, held a high-profile meeting with SpongeBob Squarepants.

"Perfect, just perfect," I remember laughing to myself. "What better way could there be to cement the idea that the church has become laughable than to have its leader have a faux conversation with a stuffed replica of a cartoon character?"

I could feel my dreams of a storied journalistic career already slipping away.

Of course, the publicity stunt did have a context, coming in the wake of accusations by James C. Dobson, founder of Focus on the Family, that the popular SpongeBob and other well-known cartoon characters crossed "a moral line" by stressing tolerance of gay and lesbian people in a video that was distributed nationally to schools.

Now, don't get me wrong: I am in no way, shape or form a fan of James Dobson. But to stage a fake dialogue with a cartoon character? That seemed ridiculous, but to the UCC's leadership, it made perfect sense.

"While Dobson's silly accusation makes headlines, it is also one more concrete example of how religion is misused over and over to promote intolerance over inclusion," Thomas told the media. "This is why we believe it is so important that the UCC speak the Gospel in an accent not often heard in our culture, because far too many experience the cross only as judgment, never as embrace."

For Thomas, the point of the stunt extended way beyond simply standing up for a cartoon unfairly disgraced.

"Resistance to our message is formidable," Thomas said, casting what I took to be an accusatory glance in my direction, "because we are cutting against the prevailing grain of a society that is afraid of the stranger, suspicious of difference and easily seduced by narrowly-defined, theological boundaries."

Say what you will and, like I said, to me it wouldn't be much of a stretch to make some pretty condescending remarks about the whole affair. But it is not very often that you hear the leader of a major Protestant denomination say such things. And he must have struck a chord; visits to ucc.org hit an all-time high.

CHAPTER 3

I WAS PICKING UP THE TRAIL — TO A STORY.

I decided to poke my nose into the internal workings of the national setting. What better place to start than the Office of General Ministries (OGM), one of the four national settings of the UCC, where Edith Guffey oversees departments like Meeting Services, Information Systems, Financial Development, and Common Services.

Not very glamorous, I admit, but I saw people working hard behind the scenes — setting up meetings, cleaning out computer viruses, delivering mail and paying the bills. I also found out that in 2005, Financial Development collected more than 2,800 gifts online, worth close to \$500,000 — almost four times more than in 2004.

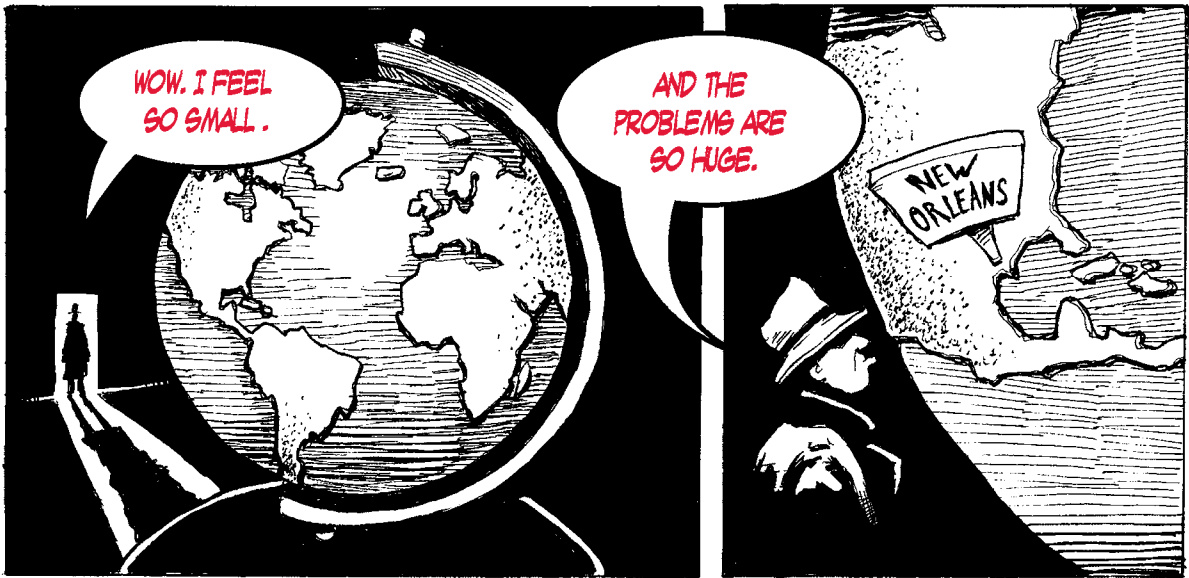
I soon discovered that OGM (everything in the national setting has an acronym) also is the communication hub of the denomination. PIC (that's Proclamation, Identity and Communication) produces videos, creates and updates the UCC web sites, designs print materials and, to my delight, covers the news through a web news portal (the newfangled way) and through its hold-it-in-your-hands newspaper, United Church News. Came to find out that the circulation has gone up from 50,000 a few years ago to 190,000 last year, with a readership of more than 352,000 — and it's all free. Go figure.

Then I learned that this is where TSI (yeah, another one — The Stillspeaking Initiative) was born. It's now its own ministry team and is responsible for developing “comma” advertising.

The first television commercial — featuring bouncers stopping people on their way into church — ran on national broadcast and cable stations in December 2004, then again on cable and in blogs in March of '05 to a lot of fanfare and controversy. How can a church commercial be controversial? This one was, enough so that the Association of National Advertisers awarded the UCC with its 2005 Multicultural Excellence Award for the 30-second commercial that touted the denomination's insistence that “Jesus didn't turn people away. Neither do we.”

In fact, they bested advertisements by award finalists MasterCard and Microsoft. The word I heard is that 42 percent of UCC churches, and more than 58 percent of UCC members, are involved in the Stillspeaking effort.

First SpongeBob, then bouncers. What would I find next? It was time to move on to another department to see what else I could learn.



WOW. I FEEL SO SMALL.

AND THE PROBLEMS ARE SO HUGE.



IT'D BE EASY TO LOOK THE OTHER WAY...



...BUT THAT WOULDN'T BE "NEIGHBORLY" WOULD IT?



CHAPTER 4

MY REPORTER INSTINCTS STARTED TO KICK IN.

I could only imagine what church officials meant by “justice” and “witness” when they talked to me about the United Church of Christ’s Justice and Witness Ministries. “Justice for whom?” I snorted to myself on the eve of my first day with the JWM (another acronym) staff.

The sooner I get started, I distinctly remember thinking, the sooner this assignment will be over.

I was informed almost immediately that Justice and Witness Ministries was in the midst of a year of transition. Linda Jaramillo, a Latina woman whom church talking heads called a “seasoned lay leader and longtime justice advocate,” had been tapped to be the new executive minister, replacing the Rev. Bernice Powell Jackson, who had had a “storied” career with the church.

**CHURCHES
DON'T DO
THIS KIND
OF WORK.**

I began by perusing Jaramillo’s resume. Interestingly, the picture that emerged to me was of a woman who didn’t exactly seem like the kind of person that I would expect to find within the confines of a church. She had done too many things; she had enjoyed too

much success working on behalf of dislocated and marginalized persons to be working for a church.

I was confused.

During ensuing weeks, I watched the Justice and Witness Ministries staff carry out its work in an effort to, in their words, “create a multi-issue peace with justice movement throughout the denomination and increase its impact on social change.”

FACT: At an event entitled “The Black Church in Crisis,” Justice and Witness Ministries gathered 150 Black ordained UCC ministers to engage in conversation about homophobia, sex and sexuality in the Bible, HIV/AIDS, and economic conditions that affect the health and well-being of the Black church in America.

FACT: Priority was given to assisting churches and Conferences in rural America who face the challenges of the negative effects of globalization on small family farmers in the Midwest, adverse environmental conditions in the South and extreme poverty in Appalachia.

Rural America? “Who cares about them anymore?” I thought. Apparently, the UCC does. Once again ... not what I expected.

FACT: Justice and Witness Ministries’ Justice and Peace Action Network, which oversees an electronic advocacy tool (takeaction.org) that provides up-to-the-minute alerts on national and state issues, increased its membership to over 20,000.

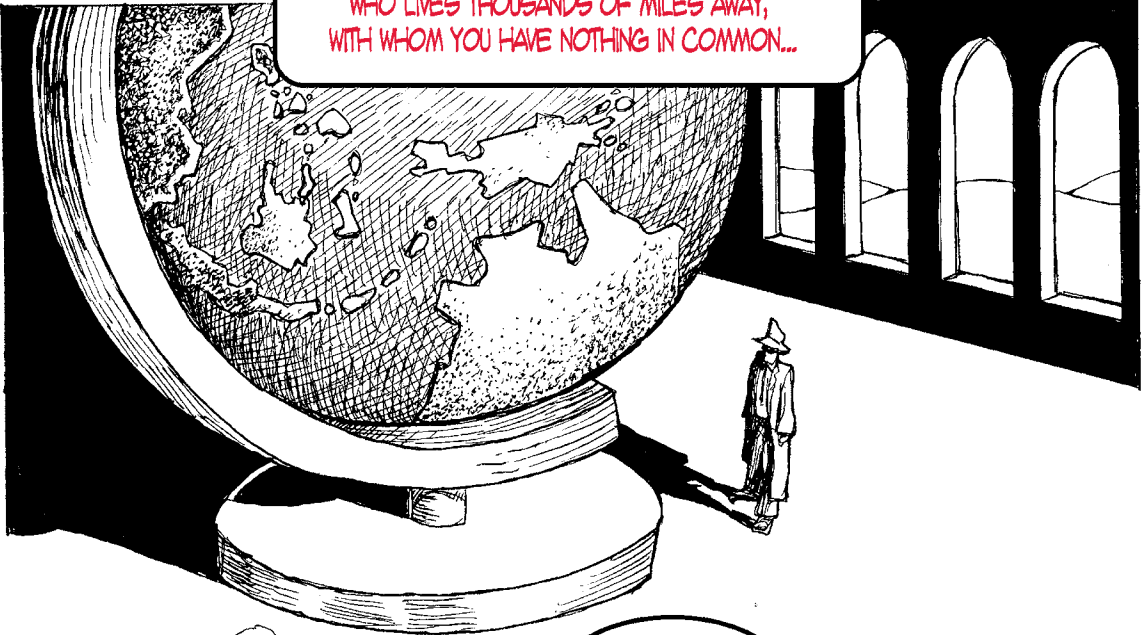
It seemed pretty good to me. I was actually impressed with the people that I was meeting, with their ability to see beyond themselves and into the world in which they lived, with their commitment to work on behalf of others, to address issues of great societal import and to boldly imagine that “Another World is Possible.” But there had to be a catch. My experience in journalism had taught me to be wary: Churches just don’t do this kind of work. Do they?



WAIT A SEC.
THEY'RE HELPING
HERE TOO?



HOW CAN SOMEONE YOU'VE NEVER MET,
WHO LIVES THOUSANDS OF MILES AWAY,
WITH WHOM YOU HAVE NOTHING IN COMMON...



... STILL BE YOUR
NEIGHBOR?



CHAPTER 5

I THOUGHT I WAS ON TO SOMETHING. BUT MAYBE NOT.

Back in the newsroom, we get press releases faxed to us all the time from church groups hoping that we will write a story about their latest efforts abroad at converting the masses.

Frankly, we don't give these press releases much attention. It is not our job as journalists to promote church programs, no matter how much good *they* think they are doing.

Suffice to say, I wasn't very excited about the time I was to spend with the UCC's Wider Church Ministries.

And in a year that saw parts of Southeast Asia and the U.S. Gulf Coast felled by natural disasters, my guard was up for all kinds of do-gooder platitudes. It was results I wanted to see.

**IT WAS
RESULTS I
WANTED TO
SEE.**

But in the time that I spent with the staff of Wider Church Ministries, under the leadership of new executive minister the Rev. Cally Rogers-Witte, I learned stories of what the UCC was doing, not only in response to natural disasters, but in response to all kinds of tragic realities all over the world.

In the wake of the tsunami that pummeled parts of Southeast Asia, the United Church of Christ's Wider Church Ministries helped rebuild homes and public buildings, including churches. The UCC is in the process of building more than 150 homes in Emperon, Indonesia, a village that was completely destroyed.

I traveled with members of the Wider Church Ministries staff and saw up close the devastation along the U.S. Gulf Coast due to Hurricane Katrina. I also witnessed a sense of emerging hope, thanks — in part — to more than \$4 million raised across the UCC through a special Hope Shall Bloom donation appeal.

I witnessed the rebuilding of lives and homes and full-time Partners in Service volunteers facilitating disaster recovery work groups. I saw large numbers of people give their service and skills to help UCC congregations, members and the wider community clean up and rebuild.

I watched UCC Refugee Ministries personnel work with Church World Service to train UCC congregations to assist families evacuated from the Gulf Coast and scattered across the United States.

I also learned that new schools and orphanages are being built in a rural village in China — a town with a 50 percent rate of HIV/AIDS infection. The adults there, I was told, are being trained to develop businesses benefiting the community and, for the first time, medications are reaching the villagers infected with AIDS.

And I was informed about efforts to convey mission stories to local churches through Global Ministries, a partnership between the UCC and the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ). One hundred forty Ministries and Mission Interpreters present stories and share mission resources with congregations, increasing mission exposure in local churches by 200 percent.

What I didn't hear was even a single word disparaging other cultures, or how many more people are now able to recite the Lord's Prayer by memory, or the implicit arrogance in a "we-know-Jesus-better-than-you" attitude. What I did hear was humility, gratitude to God for the world's diversity, and affirmation that God is at work around the world, not just in the UCC.

Maybe the United Church of Christ has just become media-savvy. Maybe church leaders are just keeping the proselytizing that is at the real heart of their global work under their sleeve.

Maybe I was getting manipulated. Yet somehow, I was beginning to get the sinking suspicion that this church, this United Church of Christ, just might be of a very different breed than I had expected.

**HUMILITY, GRATITUDE
AND AFFIRMATION THAT
GOD IS AT WORK.
THIS IS WHAT I SAW.
THIS IS WHAT I HEARD.**

CHAPTER 6

I WASN'T GOING TO LET THEM OFF THE HOOK.

It doesn't take a rocket scientist or a fortune teller to figure there's something a little fishy about religion today. If there was one place I could probably count on to find a distinct lack of energy and vision, it was Local Church Ministries (that's LCM), charged with ministering to the UCC's own local congregations.

Rooted in traditional conceptions of what it means to be "church" and felled by a distinct lack of dynamic new programming, mainline churches have increasingly lost ground to those church institutions that, if light on theology, at least are committed to meeting the needs of its congregants.

And in a church like the United Church of Christ — which, since 1960, has lost almost a million members and close to 2,300 congregations — that is exactly what I expected to find.

In fact, I had pretty much decided that a way of making this assignment somewhat interesting would be to highlight the United Church of Christ as being emblematic of everything that ails Protestantism generally.

I could be as critical as I wanted to be, no holds barred. That would be fun. But, once again, I was surprised.

ITEM: The Evangelism Ministries team spent the year working with new and renewed congregations, highlighted by the introduction of more than 100 new church starts at General Synod in Atlanta. The Congregational Vitality Initiative, envisioned by executive minister the Rev. José Malayang, was introduced to increase congregational welcome and witness. A new "e.word" disc of evangelism resources and the first new church planting guidebook since 1987 was produced and a new web site of resources aimed at fostering faith and UCC identity formation will debut in 2006.

ITEM: The Worship and Education Ministry team sponsored several national gatherings, including the Family Ministry Network, the UCC Musicians national network, and the UCC Resource Centers network. Also, curricula created by "Worship and Ed" are now being used by more than 57 percent of the UCC's local congregations, the highest percentage ever.

ITEM: The Parish Life and Leadership Ministry created a plan for enabling more trained, knowledgeable and committed UCC leaders for small, rural and urban churches, as well as for new and emerging racial/ethnic congregations. An

historic pronouncement, introduced by the team and passed overwhelmingly by the General Synod in Atlanta, now allows excellent pastoral leaders who took a path to ministry other than the traditional four years of college followed by three years of seminary to be recognized as authorized ministers. In conjunction with the pronouncements, the team is creating guidelines for ministerial preparation and a toolkit that will help local Committees on Ministry discern and assess leadership needs in the church and appropriate paths of preparation for authorized ministers.

ITEM: Working with the staff of The Stillspeaking Initiative, the Stewardship Team of Local Church Ministries launched in 2005 a major new effort to inspire greater support for Our Church’s Wider Mission (OCWM), which funds most of the work of the denomination. Local congregations are challenged to become “Covenant Keepers” by giving at least 10 percent of current expenses to OCWM. Churches already at 10 percent of their current budget giving are encouraged to increase their support by 1 percent per year to meet the General Synod challenge of 25 percent giving to Our Church’s Wider Mission.

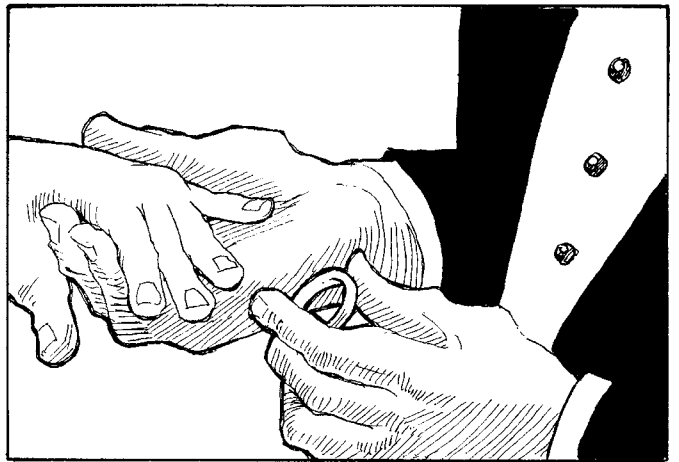
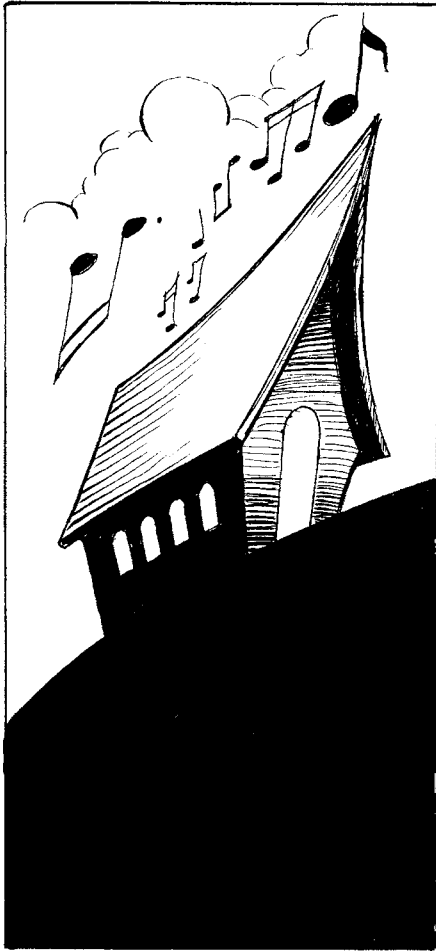
ITEM: The Publications, Resources and Distribution Ministry team saw an increase over 2004 of more than 15 percent in new titles, and shipped almost 2 million items to complete some 34,000 orders. Pilgrim Press had the third-highest number of titles listed in Cokesbury’s *Good Books* catalog in 2005.

ITEM: The Cornerstone Fund has been able to provide loans to 156 churches in 32 Conferences. As of December 31, 2005, the Cornerstone Fund had 2,523 investment accounts and more than \$43.7 million in deposits. This represents a 3.6 percent increase in the number of accounts and an 8.7 percent increase in the dollars invested in the Cornerstone Fund since December 31, 2004.

ITEM: The Office of the Executive Minister was busy overseeing Board relations, coordinating the production and the distribution of the Calendar of Prayer, and arranging Leaders in Koinonia (LINK) events. This past year 45 Hispanic and 60 Asian American church leaders were part of LINK, a program that invites people from around the whole church to meet and converse with national staff.

**EVERYTHING SEEMED
ON THE UP AND UP.
AND YET ... I NEEDED
MORE. I DECIDED TO
DIG DEEPER.**

Okay, I admit that the four national covenanted ministries (as they’re called) seemed to be doing more than just sitting on their hands. But something still didn’t seem to add up. I decided to dig deeper.



CHAPTER 7

THINGS SEEMED TO BE COMING TOGETHER.

There had been rumors all spring that the biennial meeting of the UCC's 25th General Synod in Atlanta over the Fourth of July weekend might be action packed and ripe with the kind of controversy that keeps journalists like me in business.

The representative General Synod, made up of about 800 delegates from all geographic regions of the denomination, were set to take up issues as fiery as the conflict in the Middle East and, even more contentious, same-gender marriage. The possibility existed, church talking heads squawked to me excitedly, that the denomination might become the nation's first to formally endorse the right of gay people to marry.

But that was too much for me to buy.

I'll admit, the church, to that point, had managed to raise my eyebrows a bit. The work at the UCC's national settings on issues of domestic and international justice and relief was different from the kind of work that I had typically come to associate with a church. And the UCC certainly was trying to make itself more relevant to its members.

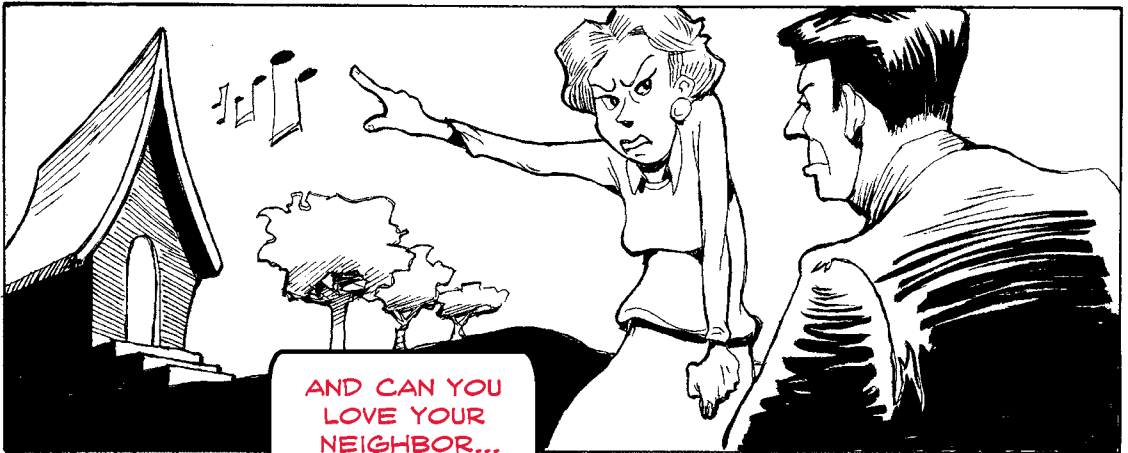
**ENDORSE GAY
MARRIAGE?
NO WAY WAS A
CHURCH GOING
TO DO THAT.**

But endorse gay marriage? No way was a church going to do that. That would be pushing the envelope too far.

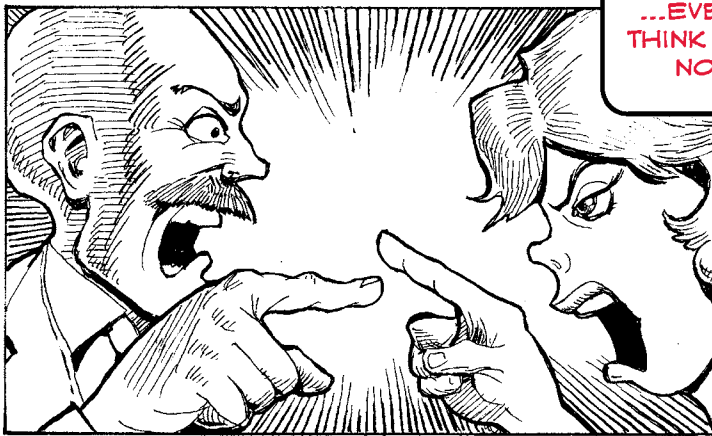
Church officials at least had managed to capture my attention and convinced me that, before I officially ended this assignment, I needed to make the trek to Atlanta.

The experience did not leave me wanting.

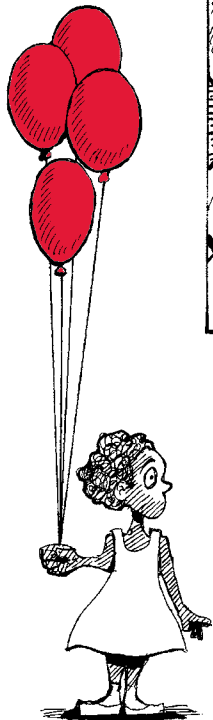
At a time when the Middle East conflict is perhaps the most pressing international issue, and when violence surrounding the conflict makes almost daily headlines, the UCC's General Synod delegates made their voices heard loud and



AND CAN YOU
LOVE YOUR
NEIGHBOR...



...EVEN IF YOU
THINK YOU HAVE
NOTHING...



...IN COMMON?



clear by passing a resolution decrying the building by Israelis of a wall separating Israel from Palestinian territories, and another encouraging the church to use its economic resources to press for an end to the Israeli occupation of Palestine. The UCC forcefully denounced Israeli occupation, while affirming the right of both Israel and Palestine to have independent states and the increasingly urgent need for peace.

It was a move that was controversial, one that alienated some, buoyed the spirits of others, and captured the attention of the national press corps.

But equally impressive was the discussion of, and vote on, the resolution endorsing same-gender marriage equality. The resolution that was voted on was the result of work by Synod delegates in their assigned committee to merge two similar resolutions introduced by the Southern California-Nevada Conference and the Central Atlantic Conference.

As a journalist, I have been trained to never, ever let my emotions get the best of me, and to keep myself from ever emotionally entering into a story. Yet, after listening to dozens of personal testimonies from people who had been marginalized by both church and society, the overwhelming vote approving the resolution left me welling up with tears.

What was particularly extraordinary about that moment was, as I looked around the cavernous hall in Atlanta's World Congress Center that played host to the hundreds of delegates and thousands of church members in attendance, everyone — almost to a person — was crying as well.

It was a moment of liberation unlike any I had ever witnessed.

The vote by more than 80 percent of the General Synod's delegates in favor of a resolution affirming the right of same-gender couples to marry was a bold statement of faith by those present, consistent with the denomination's call to extravagant welcome and its legacy of "firsts." Critics both within and outside of the church argued the move was unnecessary, and worried that the vote would cause conflict within the church, which would only be exacerbated by the widespread national media attention it received.

And it was true. For some within the denomination, the vote on the General Synod resolution proved too much to bear. From July until year's end, about 49 churches — less than one percent of the UCC's 5,725 churches — voted to disaffiliate, according to the denomination's research office. Most, but not all, of the

**FOR SOME, THE
VOTE ON THE
GENERAL SYNOD
RESOLUTION
PROVED TOO MUCH
TO BEAR.**

departures appear related to disagreement with the marriage-equality resolution.

But perhaps even more impressive than the vote itself was the national church's heartfelt and time-consuming pastoral response to the action. One needs to speak only briefly with any of the denomination's national leaders to understand just how painful the departures have been.

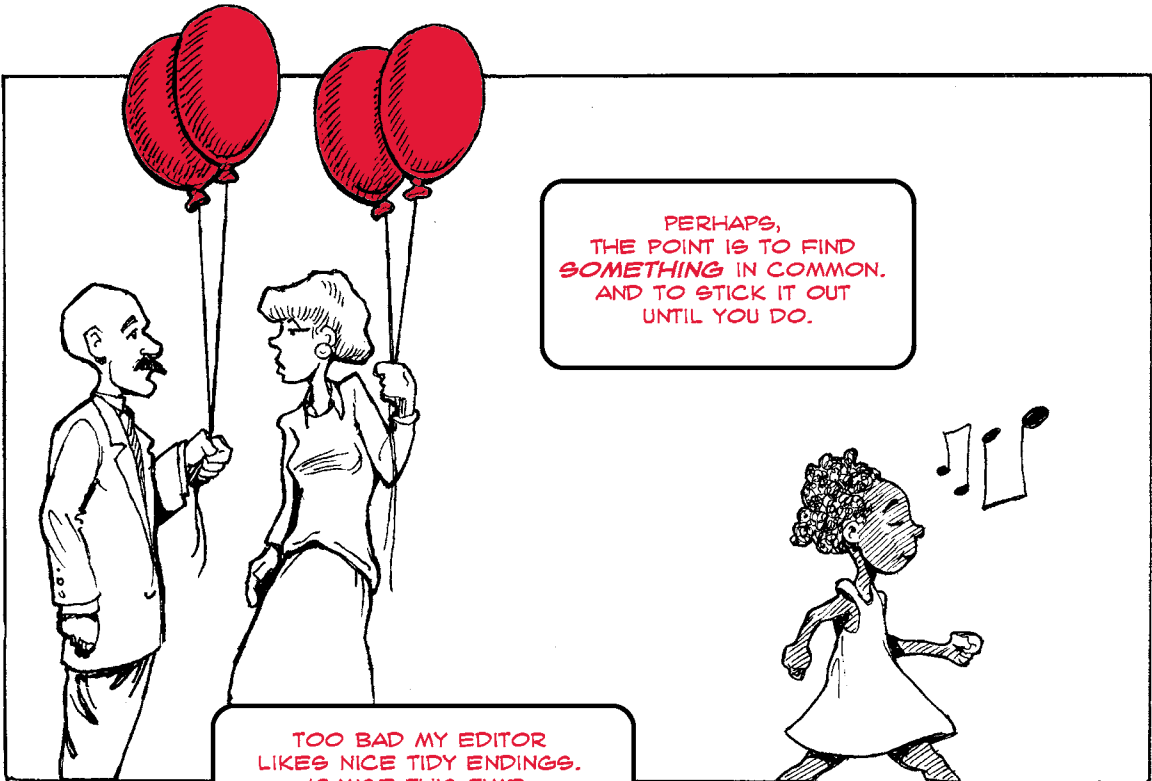
"We grieve the loss of any and every congregation that decides to leave," the UCC President Thomas told *United Church News*, "not only because of the loss of members but also for the loss of shared history, ministry and fellowship."

But as long-time UCC minister and renowned civil rights activist the Rev. Andrew Young prophesied in Atlanta, there can be no resurrection without the crucifixion. And if the UCC in 2005 experienced a crucifixion in the defection of churches, it also experienced the resurrection.

During 2005, 23 congregations voted to affiliate with the UCC, and an additional 42 churches expressed a "firm interest" in joining. Church officials also reported a sharp increase in inquiries about UCC affiliation. The Rev. David Schoen of the UCC's Evangelism Ministry said that, in addition to discussions with 42 existing non-UCC churches, his office has had conversations with more than 20 pastors or lay persons interested in starting new congregations where none currently exist.

Through it all, the UCC remained resolute in its commitment to congregational autonomy, maintaining that the General Synod action on same-gender marriage equality was meant to speak to, and not for, its local churches. It also developed resources aimed at helping congregations engage in dialogue about marriage.

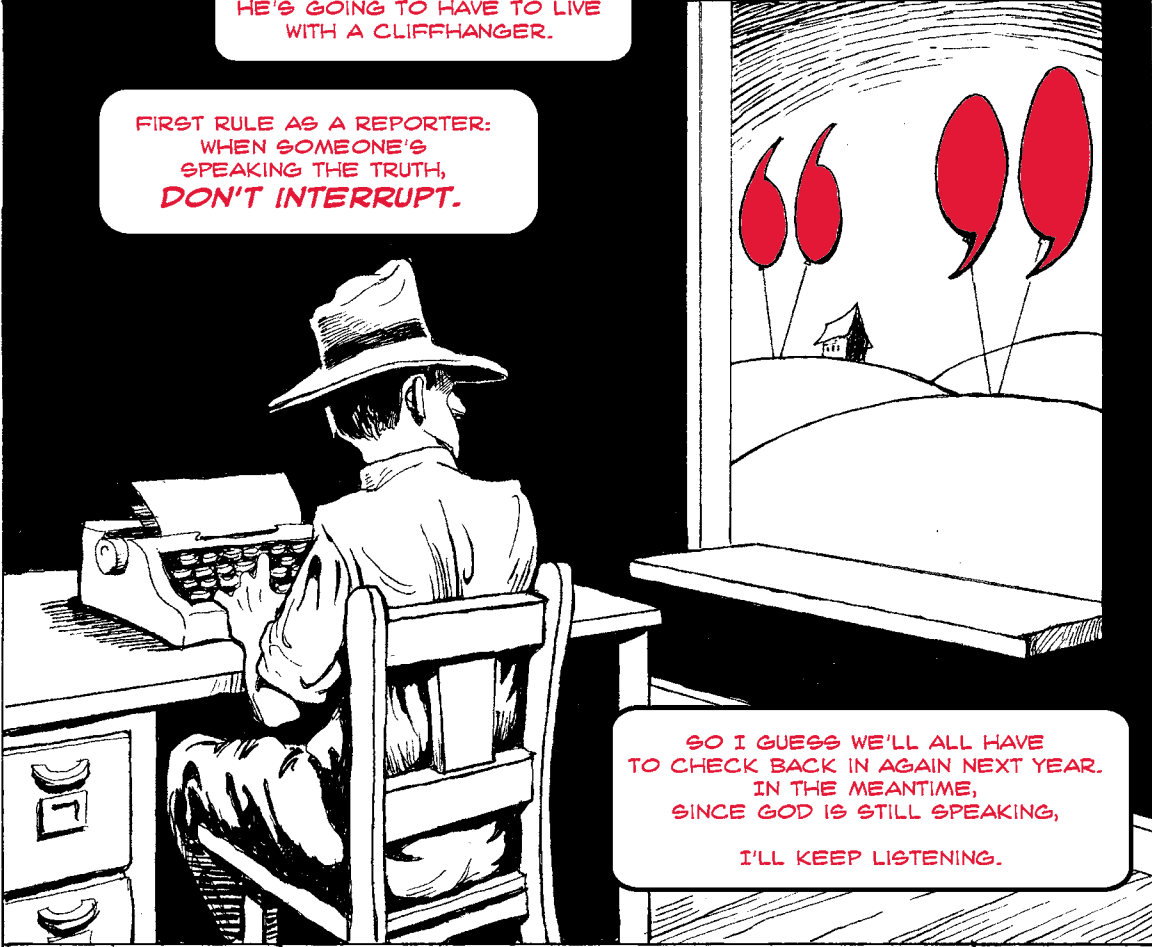
The Proclamation, Identity and Communication team, for example, produced a General Synod video containing the floor debate of the resolution in its entirety, and the UCC's Wider Church Ministries produced a soon-to-be-released video that is designed to stimulate respectful dialogue in churches among persons who find themselves on different sides of the issue.



PERHAPS,
THE POINT IS TO FIND
SOMETHING IN COMMON.
AND TO STICK IT OUT
UNTIL YOU DO.

TOO BAD MY EDITOR
LIKES NICE TIDY ENDINGS.
'CAUSE THIS TIME,
HE'S GOING TO HAVE TO LIVE
WITH A CLIFFHANGER.

FIRST RULE AS A REPORTER:
WHEN SOMEONE'S
SPEAKING THE TRUTH,
DON'T INTERRUPT.



SO I GUESS WE'LL ALL HAVE
TO CHECK BACK IN AGAIN NEXT YEAR.
IN THE MEANTIME,
SINCE GOD IS STILL SPEAKING,
I'LL KEEP LISTENING.

CHAPTER 8

WELL, WHADDYA KNOW — A STORY IS FOUND.

Today, my assignment over, I can reflect back on the six months I spent covering the United Church of Christ and analyze what it all means. After following the church from Cleveland to Atlanta and back again, I have only to report that I have a lot to learn. Because where I went looking for a church that was struggling simply to keep the status quo, a church fighting an uphill battle against stagnation and complacency, instead I found a United Church of Christ that is, as its General Minister and President John H. Thomas claims, “seeking a daring faith, engaging in risk and following the path of the Evangel from safe centers to exciting edges.”

It was a whirlwind year.

I found a church that often invokes its storied history — a history that includes being the first mainline church to take a public stand against slavery, to ordain an African American into Christian ministry, to initiate the defense of the Amistad captives, to ordain a woman into ministry, to stand on the front lines in the fight for racial desegregation and to ordain an openly gay person into ministry.

But this is not a church that is content to rest on the laurels of its past. Indeed, it is a church that is poignantly and profoundly responding to the challenge to relate its faith through time and across space to new demands unimagined even a generation ago.

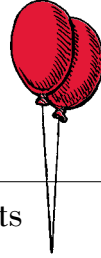
In the face of the increasing irrelevance of the mainline church in America, the United Church of Christ is relevant ... and faithful.

I discovered that the story of the United Church of Christ is, in fact, the kind of story that I dreamed one day of being able to cover, a story that has fundamentally altered society and people’s perceptions of it. By virtue of its General Synod voting overwhelmingly in Atlanta on July 4 to affirm same-gender marriage equality, along with the church’s outreach to its own members and the wider national and global communities, the United Church of Christ claims its Gospel vocation, welcoming of the stranger to a community of grace and discipleship.

And the world took notice. The past year garnered for the United Church of Christ unprecedented national attention and interest, lending the church a new-found sense of responsibility. It is a calling with demands upon all settings of the church, as the UCC seeks to be good stewards of the recognition it has received by working to realign the moral debate in the United States with the gospel mandates of justice, peace and hospitality.

EPILOGUE

Turning In The Expense Reports



UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
2005 Mission Spending Statement of Activity
Unaudited Statement for the Year Ended December 31, 2005

(Note 3)

MISSION FUNDING *	EC	OGM	JWM
OCWM-National Basic Support (NBS)	0	2,354,417	1,821,955
OCWM-Special Support	0	0	946,373
Total Return Draw on Investments	0	945,176	966,723
Trusts & Gifts	2,246,065	422,692	269,187
Reimbursements (Note 2)	339,010	328,521	0
Resource Sales/Fees	806,668	656,954	4,411
Draw on Unrestricted Reserves	841,165	146,039	0
Other	107,961	27,907	14,792
TOTALS	4,340,869	4,881,706	4,023,441

MISSION SPENDING *	EC	OGM	JWM
Program Ministries	2,408,544	1,431,057	555,571
Staff Ministries	441,923	2,089,300	1,991,866
Overseas Personnel	0	0	0
Retired Overseas Personnel	0	0	0
Shared Ministries (Common Services)	128,694	475,930	429,946
Operating & Support Ministries	517,823	620,200	676,008
Church House and Other Facilities	9,420	237,444	141,588
Ministry of Governance (Includes General Synod)	675,673	27,775	133,275
Grants & Subsidies	158,792	0	95,187
TOTALS	4,340,869	4,881,706	4,023,441

EC	Executive Council
OGM	Office of General Ministries
JWM	Justice and Witness Ministries
LCM	Local Church Ministries
WCM	Wider Church Ministries
PB	Pension Boards
UCF	United Church Foundation

Note 1: Pension Boards is included to report their distributive allocation of NBS. United Church Foundation does not receive NBS.

Note 2: For EC this figure represents funds transferred from the Office of General Ministries to fund the Executive Council budget & General Synod.

Note 3: Figures include the operating activity of The Stillspeaking Initiative.

* Figures on this statement include interministry transfers. Interministry transfers are eliminated in the combined audited financial statements.

		(Note 1)	(Note 1)		
LCM	WCM	PB	UCF	TOTAL	% of TOTAL
2,860,838	2,300,325	708,225	0	10,045,760	26.7%
57,027	3,059,672	0	0	4,063,072	10.8%
4,453,041	3,403,659	0	0	9,768,599	25.9%
871,257	552,541	0	0	4,361,742	11.6%
1,979,941	1,532,721	0	0	4,180,193	11.1%
2,059,509	5,066	0	0	3,532,608	9.4%
147,610	339,961	0	0	1,474,775	3.9%
0	92,595	0	0	243,255	0.6%
12,429,223	11,286,540	708,225	0	37,670,004	100%

LCM	WCM	PB	UCF	TOTAL	% of TOTAL
3,281,051	4,001,083	708,225	N/A	12,385,531	32.9%
4,884,455	1,751,395	N/A	N/A	11,158,939	29.6%
0	3,108,932	N/A	N/A	3,108,932	8.3%
0	465,860	N/A	N/A	465,860	1.2%
1,352,455	547,868	N/A	N/A	2,934,893	7.8%
804,999	670,297	N/A	N/A	3,289,327	8.7%
586,312	162,573	N/A	N/A	1,137,337	3.0%
133,393	150,422	N/A	N/A	1,120,538	3.0%
1,386,558	428,110	N/A	N/A	2,068,647	5.5%
12,429,223	11,286,540	708,225	0	37,670,004	100%

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

2006 Mission Spending Plan

(Note 3)

MISSION FUNDING *	EC	OGM	JWM
OCWM - National Basic Support (Note 2)	802,680	2,136,246	1,551,485
OCWM - Special Support	0	0	885,035
Total Return Draw on Investments	0	705,832	1,267,086
Trusts & Gifts	0	281,500	137,500
Reimbursements	0	228,609	8,940
Resource Sales/Fees	0	725,000	0
Draw on Unrestricted Reserves	0	229,511	211,496
Other	0	0	160,000
TOTALS	\$802,680	\$4,306,698	\$4,221,542

MISSION SPENDING *	EC	OGM	JWM
Program Ministries	0	726,000	687,233
Staff Ministries (All Staff)	0	2,161,310	2,086,263
Investment Expenses	0	0	0
Overseas Personnel	0	0	0
Retired Overseas Personnel	0	0	0
Shared Ministries (Common Services)	0	559,763	481,683
Operating & Support Ministries	115,000	556,950	694,770
Church House and Other Facilities	0	257,175	141,593
Ministry of Governance (Includes General Synod)	200,000	45,500	100,000
Grants & Subsidies	487,680	0	30,000
TOTALS	\$802,680	\$4,306,698	\$4,221,542

EC	Executive Council
OGM	Office of General Ministries
JWM	Justice and Witness Ministries
LCM	Local Church Ministries
WCM	Wider Church Ministries
PB	Pension Boards
UCF	United Church Foundation

Note 1: Pension Boards is included to report their distributive allocation of NBS. United Church Foundation does not receive NBS.

Note 2: OCWM National Basic Support allocation % will not agree to the GS allocation because the Executive Council operating budget, General Synod and a 1% budget stabilization pool were voted by the Executive Council to be taken off the top of distributable National Basic Support. Covenanted Ministries at their discretion, for budgeting purposes, have used figures less than the voted and adjusted NBS allocation base.

Note 3: Figures only include the operating budget of the Executive Council.

Note 4: Figures on this schedule are provisional; they are revised from the original budget and will be presented at the April Board Meetings for ratification.

* Figures include interministry transactions.

(Note 1)

LCM	WCM	PB	UCF	TOTAL	% of TOTAL
2,557,012	1,839,416	613,161	0	9,500,000	25.7%
70,625	3,000,000	N/A	0	3,955,660	10.7%
4,255,799	3,198,616	N/A	0	9,427,333	25.5%
550,745	550,000	N/A	600	1,520,345	4.1%
1,874,871	1,355,514	N/A	41,700	3,509,634	9.5%
2,192,795	0	N/A	3,743,500	6,661,295	18.0%
845,504	915,035	N/A	0	2,201,546	6.0%
20,000	25,000	N/A	1,200	206,200	0.5%
\$12,367,351	\$10,883,581	\$613,161	\$3,787,000	\$36,982,013	100%

LCM	WCM	PB	UCF	TOTAL	% of TOTAL
3,505,127	3,895,949	613,161	63,400	9,490,870	25.7%
4,682,077	1,861,597	N/A	949,100	11,740,347	31.8%
0	0	N/A	2,119,000	2,119,000	5.7%
0	2,792,048	N/A	0	2,792,048	7.4%
0	440,000	N/A	0	440,000	1.2%
1,379,709	575,000	N/A	0	2,996,155	8.1%
789,781	611,243	N/A	489,000	3,256,744	8.8%
585,297	165,000	N/A	116,600	1,265,665	3.4%
125,000	160,000	N/A	49,900	660,400	1.8%
1,300,360	382,744	N/A	N/A	2,200,784	6.0%
\$12,367,351	\$10,883,581	\$613,161	\$3,787,000	\$36,982,013	100%

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST OCWM**Basic support 2005 / 2004 comparison by Conference**

CONFERENCE	2005			2004		
	NATIONAL	% OF TOTAL	CONFERENCE	% OF TOTAL	TOTAL	NATIONAL
CAL NEV NORTH	154,679	25.0%	464,038	75.0%	618,717	159,400
CAL NEV SOUTH	202,694	40.0%	304,040	60.0%	506,734	190,581
CALVIN SYNOD	600	Note 3	Note 1	Note 3	600	326
CENTRAL ATLANTIC	411,691	35.2%	756,796	64.8%	1,168,487	424,788
CENTRAL PACIFIC	72,672	23.0%	239,897	76.8%	312,569	74,588
CONNECTICUT	1,377,472	63.1%	806,402	36.9%	2,183,874	1,519,392
FLORIDA	124,665	19.5%	516,126	80.5%	640,791	138,806
HAWAII	120,322	35.4%	219,759	64.6%	340,081	108,452
ILLINOIS	558,444	28.8%	1,382,044	71.2%	1,940,488	657,168
ILLINOIS SOUTH	214,297	34.5%	406,071	65.5%	620,368	226,910
INDIANA-KENTUCKY	360,054	34.1%	694,520	65.9%	1,054,574	393,318
IOWA	495,823	46.0%	582,053	54.0%	1,077,876	485,273
KANSAS-OKLAHOMA	59,421	20.5%	231,091	79.5%	290,512	73,782
MAINE	154,000	26.2%	434,140	73.8%	588,140	137,500
MASSACHUSETTS	1,254,737	60.2%	827,865	39.8%	2,082,602	1,298,966
MICHIGAN	260,817	30.8%	585,893	69.2%	846,710	264,136
MINNESOTA	301,512	34.7%	566,149	65.3%	867,661	308,188
MISSOURI MID S	205,956	24.4%	637,159	75.6%	843,115	218,549
MONT N WYOMING	36,349	20.0%	145,397	80.0%	181,746	33,420
NEBRASKA	142,163	30.1%	330,389	69.9%	472,552	140,745
NEW HAMPSHIRE	361,892	45.0%	442,312	55.0%	804,204	396,685
NEW YORK	100,000	11.4%	780,037	88.6%	880,037	107,018
NORTHERN PLAINS	12,404	11.5%	95,413	88.5%	107,817	13,435
OHIO	641,146	26.4%	1,791,028	73.6%	2,432,174	718,207
PACIFIC NW	171,486	29.1%	417,998	70.9%	589,484	139,904
PENN CENTRAL	457,429	39.6%	698,339	60.4%	1,155,768	526,088
PENN NE	64,882	10.0%	583,935	90.0%	648,817	69,702
PENN SE	300,137	24.0%	950,098	76.0%	1,250,235	406,096
PENN WEST	55,280	15.5%	300,980	84.5%	356,260	72,293
PUERTO RICO (Note 4)	1,875	.5%	360,000	99.5%	361,875	7,000
RHODE ISLAND	108,655	34.4%	206,884	65.6%	315,539	130,000
ROCKY MOUNTAIN	151,165	28.6%	376,598	71.4%	527,763	151,482
SOUTH CENTRAL	52,857	20.2%	209,043	79.8%	261,900	61,599
SOUTH DAKOTA	73,148	25.0%	219,444	75.0%	292,592	75,947
SOUTHEAST	21,951	10.0%	197,560	90.0%	219,511	31,200
SOUTHERN	50,129	9.4%	485,179	90.6%	535,308	49,691
SOUTHWEST	102,818	25.0%	308,452	75.0%	411,270	99,211
VERMONT	211,832	43.8%	271,843	56.2%	483,675	218,072
WISCONSIN	510,000	23.0%	1,705,058	77.0%	2,215,058	505,000
MISC.	88,306	100.0%	Note 2/Note 3	0.0%	88,306	99,639
TOTAL (Note 3)	10,045,760	32.7%	20,170,030	67.3%	30,215,790	10,732,557
Retention Ratio 1967		58.0%		42.0%		

Note 1: Information not provided by the Conference

Note 2: Support sent directly to National by churches or individuals

Note 3: Excluded from retention %, no conference data available.

Note 4: Conference total estimated

% OF TOTAL	CONFERENCE	% OF TOTAL	TOTAL	CHANGE	CHANGE	TOTAL
				GAIN/LOSS	GAIN/LOSS	
				NATIONAL	CONFERENCE	
25.0%	478,199	75.0%	637,599	-4,721	-14,161	-18,882
40.0%	285,872	60.0%	476,453	12,113	18,168	30,281
Note 3	Note 1	Note 3	326	274	N/A	274
35.0%	788,720	65.0%	1,213,508	-13,097	-31,924	-45,021
24.0%	235,792	76.0%	310,380	-1,916	4,105	2,189
63.1%	888,432	36.9%	2,407,824	-141,920	-82,030	-223,950
19.6%	569,269	80.4%	708,075	-14,141	-53,143	-67,284
33.3%	217,656	66.7%	326,108	11,870	2,103	13,973
31.5%	1,429,079	68.5%	2,086,247	-98,724	-47,035	-145,759
35.0%	422,200	65.0%	649,110	-12,613	-16,129	-28,742
35.0%	730,448	65.0%	1,123,766	-33,264	-35,928	-69,192
45.0%	593,478	55.0%	1,078,751	10,550	-11,425	-875
25.5%	215,560	74.5%	289,342	-14,361	15,531	1,170
22.4%	476,369	77.6%	613,869	16,500	-42,229	-25,729
60.0%	864,778	40.0%	2,163,744	-44,229	-36,913	-81,142
31.0%	588,416	69.0%	852,552	-3,319	-2,523	-5,842
34.8%	578,683	65.2%	886,871	-6,676	-12,534	-19,210
25.0%	655,114	75.0%	873,663	-12,593	-17,955	-30,548
20.0%	133,683	80.0%	167,103	2,929	11,714	14,643
30.4%	321,804	69.6%	462,549	1,418	8,585	10,003
45.0%	484,837	55.0%	881,522	-34,793	-42,525	-77,318
11.8%	799,648	88.2%	906,666	-7,018	-19,611	-26,629
14.0%	82,374	86.0%	95,809	-1,031	13,039	12,008
27.8%	1,866,939	72.2%	2,585,146	-77,061	-75,911	-152,972
24.1%	441,414	75.9%	581,318	31,582	-23,416	8,166
43.8%	673,864	56.2%	1,199,952	-68,659	24,475	-44,184
10.0%	627,323	90.0%	697,025	-4,820	-43,388	-48,208
31.4%	889,057	68.6%	1,295,153	-105,959	61,041	-44,918
17.0%	353,521	83.0%	425,814	-17,013	-52,541	-69,554
2.0%	349,692	98.0%	356,692	-5,125	10,308	5,183
40.8%	188,442	59.2%	318,442	-21,345	18,442	-2,903
30.0%	353,459	70.0%	504,941	-317	23,139	22,822
19.8%	249,218	80.2%	310,817	-8,742	-40,175	-48,917
25.0%	227,841	75.0%	303,788	-2,799	-8,397	-11,196
14.2%	187,822	85.8%	219,022	-9,249	9,738	489
8.4%	545,280	91.6%	594,971	438	-60,101	-59,663
24.0%	314,168	76.0%	413,379	3,607	-5,716	-2,109
44.6%	270,361	55.4%	488,433	-6,240	1,482	-4,758
23.0%	1,693,918	77.0%	2,198,918	5,000	11,140	16,140
100.0%	Note 2/Note 3	0.0%	99,639	-11,333	N/A	-11,333
33.5%	21,072,730	66.5%	31,805,287	-686,797	-542,700	-1,229,497

END CREDITS

What? You Thought It Was Finished?



PROFESSIONAL ILLUSTRATOR STEVE ROSS LIVES in New York City with his wife and two children. His work has appeared in magazines and newspapers around the world including *The New York Times*, *The Wall Street Journal*, *Savoy*, and *Foreign Policy*.

Ross began his professional illustration career as a teenager in San Antonio, Texas, selling pictures of angst-ridden, dark and disturbing surrealist art to his friends and teachers. After high school he quickly landed a job drawing dining room tables for a local furniture company, and was surprised when the owner became upset that dark and disturbing surrealist furniture had started showing up in their newspaper ads. They soon parted company.

His most recent graphic novel, “Marked,” based on the Gospel of Mark, was published by Seabury Press in December 2005.

While not a member of the UCC, Ross says he is proud to have his work associated with the denomination, a church whose mission in word and deed he supports. Says Ross, “Keep the faith y’all.”

<portfolios.com/steveross>



WRITER AND COMMUNICATOR WILL MATTHEWS is a lifelong member of the United Church of Christ who believes deeply in the UCC’s mission and the necessity of its theological commitment to radical inclusivity.

A 2001 graduate of Chapman University in Orange, Calif., with a B.A. in journalism, Matthews worked for three years as an award-winning investigative reporter for the Los Angeles Newspaper Group. Studying in both South Africa and Vietnam, he cultivated a commitment to the theological tenet of reconciliation which is foundational to his understanding of social justice.

The son of an ordained United Church of Christ minister, Matthews began work in 2004 toward his Master of Divinity degree at The Divinity School at Vanderbilt University in Nashville, Tenn., where he currently resides and is a full-time student working toward ordination. He is under the dual care of the UCC’s Southern California-Nevada Conference and the Pacific Southwest Region of the Christian Church (Disciples of Christ).

Matthews was able to obtain an insider’s view of the UCC’s work in 2005 while interning as a reporter for United Church News and covering General Synod 25 in Atlanta.

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