

UCC Update

While we were at the Holiday Bazaar, delegates from congregations across the state were meeting in Worcester, MA for the Annual Meeting of the merged Connecticut, Massachusetts and Rhode Island Conference, now officially the ***Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ***. The vote on the name was overwhelmingly approved. Also significant, was the commitment of the conference to justice.

In a summary of the meeting on the CT UCC website, you can read the following:

“At the heart of our Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ is a call to live out the love and justice of Jesus,” said Conference President Rev. Corey Sanderson. “And as Christ’s disciples, we are tasked with embodying and incarnating God’s love and justice to help co-create God’s dominion here on earth.”

“Drawing on the compassion and the wisdom and the prophetic actions of our three historic state conferences, the Southern New England Conference seeks to carry forward and state the public witness and calls to action that have brought us to this place today,” he said. “These are both the established commitments of our three state Conferences and the aspirational goals to which we are always striving.”

Delegates took their time on the statement, which had been recommended by the new Conference Board, strengthening the language around climate work, and adding language on immigrants, sexism and violence against women, and on being a multi-cultural, multi-racial church.

The final statement as voted reads:

We believe that it is our call to “live the love and justice of Jesus.” Based on both the established commitments of our three historic Conferences and our aspirational priorities as a new Conference, the Southern New England Conference of the United Church of Christ, at its first Annual Meeting on November 2, 2019, pledges in covenant:

- *To be an Open and Affirming Conference;*
- *To be a Just Peace Conference;*
- *To be an Accessible to All Conference;*
- *To be an Immigrant Welcoming Conference;*
- *To work for climate justice and the restoration of God’s creation on which all life depends;*
- *To advocate for economic and restorative justice;*
- *To be a multi-cultural multi-racial church working to eradicate racism in all of its forms, both within the church and in the structures of our society and world;*
- *To advance immigrant justice and human rights for all people;*
- *To oppose all forms of sexism and violence against women, especially women of color.*

We recognize that these are expressions of both identity and intention, and we commit to align our resources and our efforts with these priorities. We encourage our local churches and other covenant partners to do the same.