

The Rev. William (Bill) A. Main says he was always on the liberal side of the family, “which resulted in a lot of lively discussion.” Although there may have been disagreements on many issues, Bill knew that his mother was proud that her son was a minister.

Bill grew up with his parents and three siblings in Crystal, Maine. When he was in high school, they moved to Pittsfield, Massachusetts where his father worked for General Electric and his mother for Sears, Roebuck and Co. On Sundays, his mother would take Bill and his siblings to an American Baptist church.

After receiving his undergraduate degree from Eastern Baptist College (now Eastern University) near Philadelphia, he attended Andover Newton Theological School in Newton Centre, Massachusetts. Between degrees, he married his fiancée, Christine.

Bill was ordained as an American Baptist minister in 1962, after which he served as an associate minister at the historic First Baptist Old Stone Church in Tiverton, Rhode Island. “It was a wonderful place to begin ministry,” he recalls. “The old building is set in a beautiful area near the sea.”

From Rhode Island, Bill went to Steubenville, Ohio, to help two congregations merge. From there, he would go on to serve in Brentwood, Missouri and eventually at Faith United Church of Christ in Bayard, Nebraska.

Although Bill had retained his American Baptist standing, increasingly he found the United Church of Christ to be a good fit with his progressive outlook. From Nebraska, he went on to serve Faith Congregational Church in Oskaloosa, Iowa and First Congregational UCC in Henderson, North Carolina before retiring in the early 1990s.

Bill and his wife retired to Florida, and Christine maintained the small crafts business she had established earlier in their marriage. Bill served two interim pastorates in Florida while occasionally working part-time at Office Depot and Walmart to supplement the couple's retirement income. In 2007, after a long illness, Bill's wife of 48 years passed away.

That year, Bill began to receive assistance from the Christmas Fund. Now, he can pay his bills, eat out once in a while, and occasionally take a small trip. This year, he is looking forward to attending his 60th high school reunion. A longtime supporter of the Christmas Fund, he has known others who have been helped by the Offering in the past, and is now a grateful recipient himself.

“The Christmas Fund,” says Bill, “is one of the best things the UCC does.”

The First Sunday of Advent
December 2, 2012

Christmas Fund Gifts Provided...

The generous gifts of UCC congregations and individuals to the Christmas Fund enabled the Pension Boards' Ministerial Assistance program to provide some form of assistance to approximately 1,600 persons during the past year.

- Christmas “Thank You” Gift Checks were sent to approximately 900 persons in 2011. Of those who received checks, 20 are over 100 years of age. The oldest person is 107. One person has received Christmas checks continuously since 1976. The 900 gifts total \$270,000.
- Monthly Pension Supplementation is being provided to 373 persons. These gifts total \$102,899.50 per month. A significant part of the annual total of \$1,255,885.20 comes from the Christmas Fund (2012 data).
- Quarterly Health Premium Supplementation is being provided to 250 families, totaling \$146,840.30 per quarter. All of the funding for Health Premium Supplementation is derived from the Christmas Fund (2012 data).
- Emergency Grants totaling \$27,177.62 were provided to 22 individuals and families from January 1 through June 30, 2012.

These statistics reflect annualized projections as of June 30, 2012. The numbers of persons receiving assistance and the totals of assistance payments fluctuate on a monthly basis.

