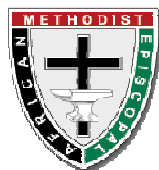


## 2010 ANNUAL REPORT





Dear Members and Friends of the Ohio Council of Churches:

Grace, mercy and peace to you from God our Creator and Christ Jesus our Lord.

My term as President of the Ohio Council of Churches concluded with the election of new officers at the October, 2011 meeting of the Governing Board. It has been my distinct honor to have served as your president the past two years. I look forward to continued service on the Executive Committee and to supporting Rev. Bill Schnell and the other officers as they lead the Council to ever more effectively fulfill our mission “to make visible the unity of Christ’s church” across Ohio.

This 91<sup>st</sup> year for the Ohio Council of Churches has been both challenging and productive. Like nearly every member judicatory, and many other organizations, we have struggled to address the financial realities of a lingering recession and what appears to be the “new normal” for funding mission and ministry within many of our member judicatories. There have been times when we, or at least I, have said: “Where is the hope when the economy sinks, fear floats and worry rains down?”

Thankfully, there are many islands of hope within the Council’s work – places where we have regained our footing, retained clear vision and moved forward.

- The OCC’s 90<sup>th</sup> anniversary celebration was a witness to the blessing and power of our unity in Christ – an island of hope.
- The successful 2010 Ohio Ministries Convocation helped participants better understand contemporary persons who self-identify as “spiritual but not religious” – an island of hope.
- The OCC called God’s People to work for comprehensive immigration reform and embrace the sojourners in our communities – an island of hope.
- The Council continued its tireless advocacy for economic justice on behalf of the poor and marginalized in Ohio – an island of hope.
- The Council fostered dialogue with the Islamic community in Ohio – an island of hope.
- The Ohio Council of Churches Foundation has developed a strategy to strengthen the Council’s financial future – an island of hope.

My more recent biblical studies have caused me to conclude that those of us who follow the Christ are, by definition, prisoners of expectation and hope. We expect the Christ to come. We expect God to show up. We expect the Holy Spirit to prompt us, to guide us. We expect the kingdom to come on earth as it is in heaven. We cannot escape, reject or tire of being a People of Hope and Expectation.

Joseph P. Lash tells a wonderful story about Eleanor Roosevelt in his biography of the great woman. She was advanced in years and not well. But she continued to fulfill a busy schedule of appointments. She had agreed to speak at a meeting in Harlem and it would have been understood if she failed to appear. When she arrived at the hall to speak, the hostess met her at the curbside with the words, "I didn't think you would come." Mrs. Roosevelt replied, "I had to come; I was expected."

The Ohio Council of Churches continues, in spite of limited financial resources, to bear witness to the unity of the Body of Christ, because Jesus expects us to. We continue to offer islands of hope "when fear floats and worry rains down" because it is expected of those who seek to make known the fullness of God's love.

And so, I pray that God's extravagant love and blessings continue to surround you, our dedicated Council staff and all those within our respective communions as we embrace and witness to our common faith and hope in Christ.

In peace, *Bruce Ough*

## Message from the Executive Director

The Rev. Rebecca Tollefson

Dear Friends of the Ohio Council of Churches,

It is a privilege to serve you, the 17 denominations (27 regions/judicatories) of the Ohio Council of Churches.

I am so grateful to be with many of you at your annual meetings where I am able to share briefly about the life of the Council, a year at a glance.

When you are at a distance from the internal work and ministry of the Council, it is hard to grasp all that we (you) are doing. There are always phone calls inquiring if we can resource, help get information, or refer people to organizations and people.

There is a myriad of people calling to find out if we'd be interested in joining this cause or that. There is the constant challenge of how to best serve the people connected in partnership in the Council.

You will catch a glimpse of this in the next several pages. There are many who work on your behalf, and there is always room at the table for more. Each judicatory is invited to be represented on the Commissions and the Ohio Ministries Convocation planning team so we can be at our very best!

Throughout the past year, I have worked with a small group from the Foundation, Board of Trustees, as we look at the financial picture, health and future of the Council. They capably came up with a plan, and we are now in the midst of a Fund Development plan with the Council. What this comes down to – we need to raise money. Expenses have been cut to the bare bones; so we need to creatively engage one another in raising revenue. You and I both know that there are generous ecumenical hearts out there – we simply need to connect with them.

I cannot emphasize enough our importance in this state. We are the critical mass as a Council as we raise a voice at the Statehouse, as we witness at vigils when someone is executed, when we join with others to advocate for health care reform and comprehensive immigration reform. Our witness is important in interreligious events and our counsel is sought in addressing issues. We partner with various organizations and strategize about new opportunities. Ohio Interfaith Power and Light spun off after we had an Environmental Stewardship Committee for about eight years. I'm glad we can partner in this way.

How do we expand the ecumenical table? How do we create revenue in order to continue our revised Mission? *The mission of the Ohio Council of Churches is to make visible the unity of Christ's church, provide a Christian voice on public issues, and engage in worship, education and service.* How do we deepen our relationships and understandings of one another?

The Rev. April Johnson, CC(DC) Minister of Reconciliation, says: *Our shared values are greater than our divergences. Said another way, the ways in which we differ are far less than the ways we are alike.*

Thanks be to God!

With warm regards, *Rebecca Tollefson*



The second year of the 128<sup>th</sup> General Assembly for 2010 was a gubernatorial election year. The campaign was relatively close and won by former Congressman John Kasich. The Republican Party was also victorious in winning control of the Ohio House of Representatives. Therefore, they now have complete control of both chambers of the legislature as well as all statewide office-holders.



Ohio discovered that based on expenditures in 2010 that were offset by federal stimulus dollars the state would face a budget deficit of \$8 billion for the new budget and by cutting expenses in 2010, they managed to save nearly \$500,000. The legislature passed very few bills in 2010 but the committees still were meeting and a number of meetings were held with legislators and staff to lobby on behalf of those who needed assistance.

Unfortunately, Governor Strickland was pro-death penalty and throughout 2010, eight executions were held on a partial monthly basis. The OCC participated with protest groups led by the Catholic Conference in front of the statehouse on the day and time of scheduled executions. Ohio now has the dubious distinction of being only second to Texas as leaders in the number of executions in an individual state.

As a part of the leadership team for Ohio Consumers for Health Coverage, we have worked very hard to support and explain the major advantages to passing the Health Care Reform Act in Congress to Ohioans. The first steps have been enacted including prohibiting insurance companies from excluding children

because of pre-existing conditions. The legislation is almost evenly split on those who favor and those who oppose the bill among the public.

### *Dream Act*

During 2010, Church World Services developed an advocacy network to pass legislation to reform America's Immigration laws. The Dream Act would have given those who had immigrated with their families as small children, the right of citizenship as they graduated from school and seek to attend college, join the military or find employment. A filibuster ended the possibility.

Ohio was one of eight states that did not have a stand-alone human trafficking law.



Senator Teresa Fedor introduced Senate Bill 235 to remedy that fact. The legislation passed the Ohio General Assembly on Dec. 8, 2010 and was signed by the Governor on Dec. 23, 2010. The bill increased the penalties for abduction and involuntary servitude.

As I conclude, I hope you take your responsibility as a citizen seriously. We have an incredible nation, and it is vital that we make our voices heard.



In order to celebrate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the World Missionary Conference in Edinburgh, Faith & Order created monthly readings in 2010 to commemorate this significant ecumenical event. They were made available online after being submitted by a diverse group of people associated with the Ohio Council of Churches. Each gave a reflection of the past century of ecumenism and provided a prayer appropriate to the topic.



In our April meeting we welcomed Zeinab Schwen, President of CAIR-OH, to our session. Ms. Schwen spoke about some of the civil rights concerns facing Muslims in this country. There is much negative press and stereotyping of people because of their faith, especially when the views of extremists are understood as the norm for all in that religious group. We discussed ways that OCC and CAIR-OH could work closer together and suggested the possibility of a presentation at one of our future Board meetings.

During the course of the year commission members spent some time discussing major articles that dealt with both challenges and opportunities for interdenominational work. One was "We Ordain Them, They Don't: Must Differences on Gender and Sexuality Prevent Full Communion?" by Ellen Wondra, Assistant Professor of Theology at Colgate-Rochester Divinity School. Another was "Liturgy in the Context of Globalization: Mediating between the Global and the Local" authored by Cody Unterseher. Both of these provided us with much food for thought as we considered the wider context and implications of the issues raised.



The 2010 Ohio Ministries Convocation featured Dr. John Green and the Rev. Dr. Linda Meradante as they addressed: *Spiritual but not Religious: Problem or Opportunity?*

We were invited to dialogue with our Executive Director about future content and directions for the Ohio Ministries Convocation. This discussion led us to consider that there might be new opportunities for interconnection among our denominational members by bringing a common topic into their yearly major gatherings. Through the internet there also could be a chance for people to come together around a statewide table to better live out our call to being one in Christ.

Some projects we are currently considering are 1) Initiating faith & values articles for submission to the state's major daily newspapers; 2) Designing an educational event on the Israeli-Palestinian context; and 3) Initiate an E-News service from the OCC around issues and events that are pertinent to the ecumenical community.

The year 2010 was eventful for the Justice and Advocacy Commission of the Ohio Council of Churches. In three meetings, the Commission's work focused on a wide range of justice matters including immigration reform, responsible public statement formation, and just public education for children.



In a bold call for **Humane Immigration Reform**, the Commission found that current immigration laws and policies do not adequately reflect the needs of all communities, have reduced the dignity of immigrants, and have fractured families. Responding to these realities, the Commission crafted a policy that proclaimed, *“All human beings have God-given human rights, among which are freedom and justice. Our Christian faith moves us to search for ways that favor a spirit of solidarity. This faith transcends national borders and bids us to overcome all forms of violence and discrimination so that we may build relationships that are just and loving.”* The policy was affirmed by the Governing Board.

The Commission wrestled with the need for the Council to speak prophetically to the issues that shape lives and communities while being responsible to the faith traditions that form the Council. This led to the formation of **Ecumenical Guidelines for Developing and Issuing Policy Statements**. Affirmed by the Governing Board, these guidelines recognize that there can be disagreement on key issues within communions and between them as well. In order for the Council to speak publically on these issues, several steps must be followed including (but not limited to) *regular dialogue during meetings of the Governing Board and Justice and Advocacy Commission and other organizational units as a common way for such issues and concerns to be initially identified, and regular dialogue during meetings, through which individual members of the Governing Board or members of other organizational units could propose such issues and concerns.*

Weighing in on the issue of public education of children, the Commission embraced **Prepare the Future**. This organization was created to organize citizens to call for just policies in public education for children in Ohio. With funding from the Gates Foundation, the work featured twenty-four organizations who participated as Action Trees. The plan called for each Action Tree to get 30 people who would then get more people, with hopes of achieving 9,000 participants, all through online efforts. Unfortunately, Prepare for the Future ceased operations. We used the funds granted to us, connecting with another organization with the same focus.



As the Justice and Witness Commission works with the **Public Policy** arm of the Council, significant energy and attention have been given to state and federal legislative initiatives and measures that impact and influence, sometimes harshly, persons across the state. With leadership from Tom Smith, the OCC Public Policy Director, the Commission is updated on a plethora of public policy matters, such as *Immigration Reform*, the state budget, death penalty, health care reform, and public elections.

The Commission's work also addressed the issue of hunger through the **Ohio Hunger Network** with resources sent out by Bob Erickson from the Coalition on Human Needs, and **OHVOAD, Ohio Voluntary Organizations Active in Disaster**, asking persons to help build toiletry kits to be distributed by Church World Service.

Given the continuation of issues such as the poor economy, political transitions, foreclosure, immigration and racial and ethnic diversity, and inadequate funding for public education, the 2011 agenda of the Justice and Advocacy Commission promises to be challenging and full of opportunities to articulate a vision of the reign of God values of love and justice to become as real on earth as they are in heaven. We will take steps toward this work during our initial 2011 meeting on February 1. May God grant us wisdom and courage for the facing of this hour.



## **2010 Annual Report Executive Summary:**

**Staffing:** The major challenge of 2010 has been our transition to a new Executive Director (ED), with Cleve Callison taking on the ED role in May of 2010. Sara Ward served as Interim Director from January until May of 2010, after Greg Hitzhusen accepted a full-time position at The Ohio State University in January 2010. Cleve brought many exciting qualifications and skills to the job, but unfortunately he was in higher demand than we could compete with, and in August he moved out of state to take on an NPR station manager job in North Carolina. Sara Ward is again serving as Interim Director while the board determines the next steps with regard to staffing.

**Advisory Board:** We now have an Advisory Board of high-profile Ohioans, which first met on February 15, 2010, to help us deepen our mission and vision and improve our funding opportunities.

**Covenant Congregations:** OhIPL has grown to 70 covenant congregations in 2010, including Episcopal, Presbyterian, Lutheran, Methodist, Quaker, Muslim, Jewish, Catholic, United Church of Christ, and Unitarian Universalist members. Several other communities are currently considering covenant membership, and individuals in Hindu, Interfaith, and non-denominational evangelical Christian communities have also been involved in OhIPL programs. Our list of members is found here: <http://www.ohipl.org/Members> .

**Planning:** The board engaged in a strategic planning retreat in November where we began a re-visioning process for how we will move forward and prioritize our efforts in 2011. A primary focus as this process continues to develop and we assess our capability is to support our covenant congregations, to supplement our working board with new skills, and expand our statewide impact.

**Funding:** We received our 2009 challenge award for \$20,000 from National IPL in January, 2010 and we applied for and received our 2010 challenge award for another \$20,000 in July, supplementing our budget at a time when it was most needed. We have applied for this same funding for 2011 and were notified that we are eligible for up to \$19,500 as long as we can produce a dollar for dollar match. Since we were not successful in being awarded ReAMP funds for 2011, our challenge will be to raise the matching funds to allow us to draw upon the new award before the end of the calendar year 2011. Other 2010 funding received is highlighted below.

**Financial Records:** We entered our financial records into QuickBooks, in order to be compatible with our sponsoring organization, the Ohio Council of Churches, and to give us better tracking and reporting capabilities. We are maintaining our finances in QuickBooks going forward.

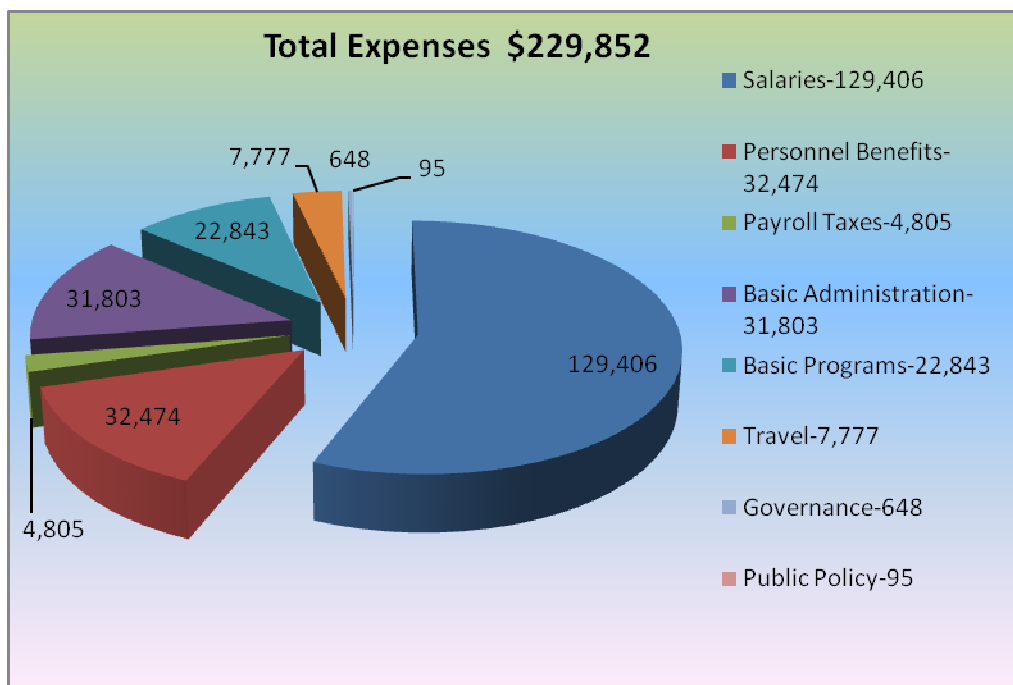
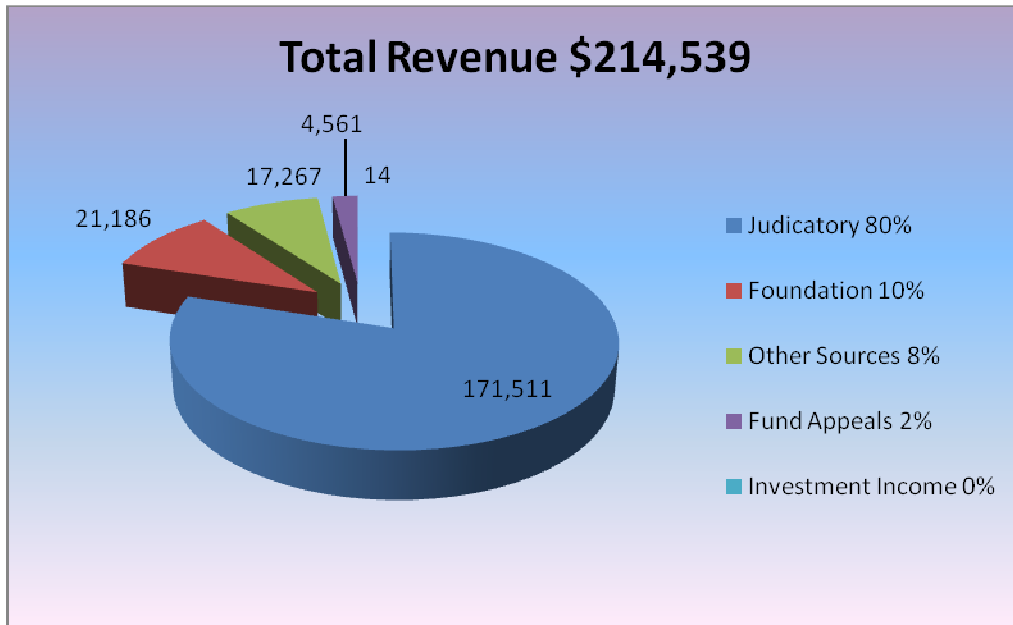
**Web Site and Blog:** OhIPL maintains a website and blog at [www.ohipl.org](http://www.ohipl.org).

**E-Newsletters:** OhIPL issues a monthly e-newsletter, with 26 issues published to date. Our mailing list grew from 700 names in 2009 to 1100 names in 2010. The newsletter archive is located at:  
<http://archive.constantcontact.com/fs029/1102168938434/archive/1102238746389.html>

**National and State Advocacy and Public Policy Efforts:** OhIPL is a partner in the Ohio RE-AMP network. RE-AMP is an engaged and active network of nonprofits and foundations working on climate change and energy policy in an eight-state region of the upper Midwest. This ambitious project is aimed at transforming the upper Midwest energy sector into a model of clean, efficient and safe energy use, while reducing global warming pollution economy-wide 80% by 2050. OhIPL received a \$14,047 grant from RE-AMP in 2010 to hold media events. We are partnering with the Sierra Club on these media events, which spotlight faith community efforts to lead by example as good stewards of creation and their own financial resources through implementing energy efficiency projects. In 2010 events were held in Columbus and Dayton with more being planned for Cincinnati and Cleveland.

**Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance:** We began a very fruitful collaboration with the Greater Cincinnati Energy Alliance (GCEA), which saw five congregations (Jewish, Muslim, Catholic, Methodist, Episcopal) selected for the pilot phase, and 23 more congregations accepted in the competitive grant phase of GCEA's energy retrofit program. These congregations are all receiving energy audits, and will also receive retrofit grants of up to \$15,000 each to complete energy efficiency improvements to their facilities. We received a \$7,500 grant from Duke Energy to support our work with Cincinnati-area congregations participating in the GCEA programs, and to facilitate the establishment of an energy steward in several of the denominational communities in Duke Energy territory.

**Recognition:** Green Energy Ohio recognized OhIPL as its "Non-Profit Group of the Year" for 2009. News stories related to our work with congregations can be found here: <http://www.ohipl.org/?q=OhIPLNews>



Our sources of income and program work are shown above. Communion/judicatory support is significant as well as Foundation support. The Foundation provided the Council’s rent which was \$16,307. Our judicatory commitment decreased by about 13% from 2009 which amounts to approximately \$25,000. Our expenses in 2010 were again lower by about \$11,250 which is about a 5% decrease over the prior year.

## Ohio Council of Churches 2010-people serving

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### Officers:

**Bishop Bruce Ough, President**  
United Methodist Church, West Ohio Conference

**The Rev. William F. Schnell, Vice-President**  
Ohio Fellowship of Community Churches

**The Rev. Deb Oskin, Secretary**  
Church of the Brethren, Southern Ohio District

**The Rev. Timothy Philabaum, Treasurer**  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, NW Ohio Synod

### Staff:

**Ms. Anne Hill**  
Accountant

**Ms. Ximena Jones**  
Administrative Assistant

**Mr. Tom Smith**  
Public Policy Director

**The Rev. Rebecca J. Tollefson**  
Executive Director

### Faith and Order Commission:

**The Rev. Ron Botts**  
United Church of Christ, Ohio Conference

**The Rev. Ward Cornett**  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, NE Ohio Synod

**Dr. Marsha Dutton**  
Episcopal Church, Diocese of Southern Ohio

**The Rev. Dr. William Owens**  
Christian Methodist Episcopal Church, Second District

**The Rev. Laura Strietelmeier**  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, NE Ohio Synod

### Justice and Advocacy Commission:

**Ms. Deborah Archie**  
United Methodist Church, West Ohio Conference

**The Rev. Glen Bengson**  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, S Ohio Synod

**The Rev. Earl Harris**  
African Methodist Episcopal Church, Third Episcopal District

**The Rev. Dr. Charles Lockett**  
Christian Church in Ohio (Disciples of Christ)

**The Rev. Deniray Mueller**  
Episcopal Church, Diocese of Southern Ohio

**The Rev. Dr. Jack Sullivan, Jr., Co-Chair**  
Christian Church in Ohio (Disciples of Christ)

### Other:

**Mr. Greg Hitzhusen, Director**  
Ohio Interfaith Power & Light

**Rev. Bob Erickson**  
Hunger Network in Ohio

### Ohio Ministries Convocation Committee:

**The Rev. Kim Bayless**  
United Church of Christ, Ohio Conference

**The Rev. Dr. Eric Brown**  
Christian Church in Ohio (Disciples of Christ)

**The Rev. Acie Collins**  
African Methodist Episcopal Church, Third Episcopal District

**Ms. Sue Koenig**  
Moravian Church, Eastern District of the Northern Province

**The Rev. Leslie Lake**  
Church of the Brethren, Northern Ohio District

**The Rev. Jeff Myers**  
Presbyterian Church (USA), Synod of the Covenant

**The Rev. Philip Van Dam**  
Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, S Ohio Synod

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## Contributors

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### (\$500)

Henry W & Martha L Bruner Philanthropic Fund

### (\$250-\$499)

David McCoy

### (\$100-\$249)

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Catherine & Glen Bengson  
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David's United Church of Christ  
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Rebecca Tollefson  
University Baptist Church, Columbus, OH  
West Ohio United Methodist Women  
Laura Cean Wilson

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Warren Tropf  
Harold Walker, Jr.  
James Wuerthner

***Share your passion for the ecumenical vision!***

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### MAKE A GIFT TODAY

Mail: Simply complete the enclosed form and return it with your gift to the Ohio Council of Churches. On-Line: You can give online at [www.ohcouncilchs.org](http://www.ohcouncilchs.org)



### PLANNED GIVING

You can leave a legacy for ecumenical work by naming the Ohio Council of Churches as a beneficiary in your will or living trust; or your life insurance or IRA. For more information, call the Council.

Thank you for your prayers and support!

The major accomplishment for 2010 was the creation of a Fund Development Plan which recommended five key action steps:

- 1) Enforce the “Fair Share” model for contributions based on Judicatory membership
- 2) Launch an Individual Giving campaign to seek funding from individual donors
- 3) Pursue grants from Foundation and Government sources
- 4) Create a wider reach for existing OCC programs through electronic media
- 5) Adopt “Fund Development” as a new core competency of the organization

It is critical that our current financial support model be strengthened and expanded. We will continue to support the OCC by working closely with the Governing Board to implement this plan through enhanced communications.

Investment portfolio: – January 1, 2010      \$372,667  
 – December 31, 2010      \$350,731

The OCCF investment portfolio continued to be invested in short-term U.S. Treasury Notes. The Foundation continued to support OCC financially by paying rent and a portion of the insurance.

Expenses:

- Rent	\$16,307
- Insurance	745
- Other OCC Support	<u>4,903</u>
TOTAL:	\$21,955

Foundation, Board of Trustees:

Mr. Randy Applegate  
 Christian Science

The Rev. Dean Cole  
 United Methodist Church, West Ohio Conference

Mr. John Gray, Chair  
 Presbyterian Church, (USA), Synod of the Covenant

The Rev. Canon George Hill, III  
 Episcopal Church, Diocese of Southern Ohio

The Rev. Bill McKee  
 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, S Ohio Synod

Mr. Alan Mooney  
 Roman Catholic Church, Diocese of Columbus

The Rev. Timothy Philabaum, (OCC Treasurer)  
 Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, NW Ohio Synod

The Rev. Rebecca J. Tollefson (Executive Director)

Mr. Carl White  
 African Methodist Episcopal Church, Third Episcopal District

## MEMBER JUDICATORIES

- **African Methodist Episcopal**  
*Third Episcopal District*
- **African Methodist Episcopal Zion**  
*Mid Atlantic One Area*
- **Christian Church in Ohio (Disciples of Christ)**
- **Christian Methodist Episcopal Church**  
*Second District*
- **Christian Science**  
*Committee on Publication in Ohio*
- **Church of the Brethren**  
*Northern Ohio District*  
*Southern Ohio District*
- **Community Churches – Ohio Fellowship**
- **Episcopal Church in the USA**  
*Diocese of Ohio*  
*Diocese of Southern Ohio*
- **Evangelical Lutheran Church in America**  
*Northeastern Ohio Synod*  
*Northwestern Ohio Synod*  
*Southern Ohio Synod*
- **Greek Orthodox Church**  
*Detroit Metropolis*  
*Pittsburgh Metropolis*
- **Moravian Church in America**
- **Ohio Baptist General Convention**
- **Presbyterian Church (USA)**  
*Synod of the Covenant*
- **Religious Society of Friends**  
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- **Roman Catholic Church**  
*Archdiocese of Cincinnati*  
*Diocese of Columbus*  
*Diocese of Steubenville*  
*Diocese of Toledo*  
*Diocese of Youngstown*
- **United Church of Christ**  
*Ohio Conference*
- **United Methodist Church**  
*East Ohio Conference*  
*West Ohio Conference*

### ***Observers:***

**Roman Catholic Church, Diocese of Cleveland**  
**Ohio Chapter, Alliance of Baptists**  
**Church of the Nazarene, East Ohio District**

### ***Affiliated Body:***

**Unitarian Universalist Association**  
*The Ohio-Meadville District*  
*Trinity Community Church*

### ***Related Organizations:***

*Church Women United*  
*Church World Service*  
*Hunger Network in Ohio*

*Interfaith Center for Peace*  
*Ohio Campus Ministries*  
*Ohio State Chaplain's Association*