



**The Pension Boards**  
United Church of Christ, Inc.

# **THE PENSION BOARDS ANNUAL REPORT 2025**

*Because of Ministry...  
Community Thrives*



# Listening, Learning, and Leading as a Partner in Ministry

## A Message from the President and Chief Executive Officer, and Chair of the Board of Trustees

At the heart of the Pension Boards' mission is a simple but profound belief: a just and thriving ministry is essential to creating a just world for all.

As ministry professionals—whether clergy, lay workers, or caregivers—you live out this vision through your dedication, compassion, and commitment to God and service. Our role is to ensure you can focus on your call without carrying the weight of unnecessary burdens. By establishing a strong foundation—financially, physically, emotionally, and spiritually—you can serve our UCC communities and devote more of your energy to the mission of the church more confidently and with knowing that you are supported and secure.

You deserve dignity and peace of mind knowing that you will have health and financial security today, when you retire, or continue to serve in your later years. We help provide that security, while upholding United Church of Christ values in every aspect of our ministry service through:

- **Ministerial Resources:** Grants, leadership programs, and financial wellness initiatives.
- **Retirement and Health Benefits:** Holistic support for your wellbeing, now and in the future.
- **Stewardship and Legacy Programs:** Tools to help you plan, give, and build lasting impact.

Since 1914, it has been the Pension Boards' mission to partner with you to provide valued services leading to greater financial security and wellness. This work continues to evolve and advance.

As we move forward with new leadership, we are taking the time to pause, listen, and learn—acknowledging the needs and challenges our ministers face today within the UCC. We've heard the concerns and realities around achieving economic stability, gaining equitable compensation, navigating rising costs, securing future income despite uncertainties of the future of Social Security, managing student loan debt, working bi-vocationally while raising families and overseeing church responsibilities, plus so much more.

What we have witnessed and understood is this: **You are resilient. You thrive. You carry on. But you are not alone. The Pension Boards is walking alongside you.**

[As was stated in the Pension Boards' plenary address at General Synod 35](#), "we are surrounded by a diverse and deeply committed team at the Pension Boards. We bring different gifts and experiences to the table, and together we are focused on one thing: strengthening the foundation from which you serve. That means offering more than just benefits. It means providing stability in uncertain times. It means listening, adapting, and walking with you through every season of ministry."

In 2025, we have made a concerted effort to meet you where you are in life and in your call to serve by providing the tools, education, and resources you need to support your overall wellbeing. Your insights, experiences, and needs are actively shaping how we strengthen and optimize our offerings. This listening posture is guiding us toward better alignment with the evolving needs of our church, our ministries, and the people who make them possible.

In our **2025 Annual Report—Because of Ministry...Community Thrives**—we highlight a few accomplishments from the past year, but not to boast, but rather demonstrate our care, compassion, and commitment to serving your needs. You matter to us and you matter to your community. Be equipped to serve from a place of strength and wholeness as you make the most of your Pension Boards' offerings in the year ahead. Together, we can build a future where every minister and church worker not only serves faithfully but thrives fully.



**David A. Klassen**

President and CEO  
The Pension Boards-United Church of Christ, Inc.



**Rev. Rodney Franklin, D.Min., BCC**

Chair, Board of Trustees  
The Pension Boards-United Church of Christ, Inc.

# Into the Deep...Because of Ministry 2025 Highlights



At **General Synod 35** in Kansas City, Pension Boards staff were honored to take the stage with President and CEO David A. Klassen, who shared our commitment, as your partner in ministry, to walk with you every step of the way.

Our “Because of Ministry” Synod theme, spotlighted the Pension Boards key benefit offerings—Ministerial Resources, Health and Retirement, and Stewardship and Legacy, paving the way for ministry outcomes for those we serve.

We hosted two workshops:

- [Environmental Stewardship through Responsible Investing](#)
- [Engaging People of Call to Service](#)



We created an immersive experience to honor ministry:



[Living Stones—Hearts Alive and Into the Deep at General Synod 35](#)

We launched Evercall Magazine, exploring the foundations needed to build a ministry that is lasting, life-giving, and aligned with God’s call.



[Laying Strong Foundations for a Just and Thriving Ministry, A General Synod 35 Edition](#)



[Evercall: Seasons of Calling: Rethinking Retirement for a Life of Impact, A UCC Lifetime Retirement Income Plan Edition.](#)

To view the above resources,  
scan the QR code or visit:  
<http://pbucc.org/AR-Resources>



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# Because of Ministry—the Pension Boards-United Church of Christ (PBUCC) Invests in a Strong Foundation to Support Those Engaged in the Life of the Church.



## RETIREMENT AND BENEFITS SOLUTIONS

*Financial security and healthcare access help secure a foundation for those who serve.*

### A Strong Foundation that Frees People of Call to Focus on Ministry

Hiring is hard. Training is harder. In churches and health and human service organizations, turnover affects the people who rely on familiar faces for care and community. One of the best ways to retain good employees and demonstrate their value to your organization is by offering robust employee benefits.

To view these resources, scan the QR code or visit: <http://pbucc.org/AR-Resources>



### 2025: Strong Global Markets

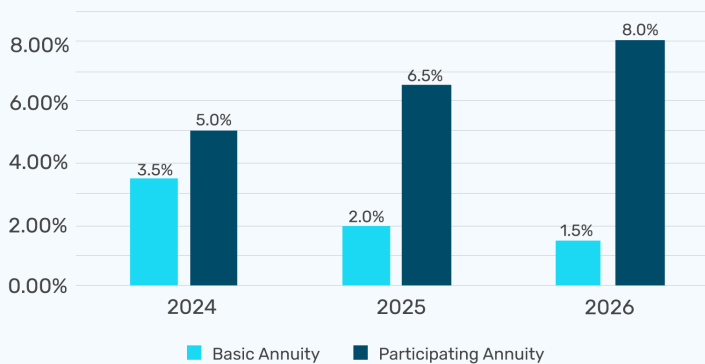
#### Third Consecutive Positive Year Led by International Markets

Global equity markets had a third year of strong performance, driven by AI optimism, corporate earnings growth and the U.S. Federal Reserve proactively cutting interest rates. Notably, both emerging markets and international developed markets outperformed U.S. markets in 2025.

**UCC Lifetime Retirement Income:** The funded status (assets compared to the future projected payments to annuitants over their lifetimes) both improved over 2025.

**Outcome:** There was a 1.5% increase for the Basic Annuity and 8.0% increase for the Participating Annuity, beginning in 2026.

#### Annuity Rate Increases



*Note: The increases in both the Basic and Participating Annuities are added to annuity payments that already include a four percent interest rate assumption.*

*The Basic Annuity invests in primarily fixed-income asset classes, while the Participating Annuity invests across all asset classes including equities, bonds, and private investments. Past performance is not indicative of future returns.*



## Because of Ministry—Assistance is Available for Your Time of Need



### MINISTERIAL RESOURCES

*From emergencies to educational needs, a dependable partner in ministry is essential.*

## Ministerial Resources that Strengthen Wellness and Vocation

Because we know the challenges and sacrifices that are made while serving in ministry, the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance (UCBMA), the philanthropic arm of the Pension Boards, seeks to relieve worries and financial demands that come by way of unexpected life events. We ensure that you receive the care of the Church in your time of need.

**\$852,164**

**IN PENSION SUPPLEMENTATION**  
Provided to 166 retirees

Helping eligible retirees bring their total household income up to a minimum established annually.

**\$109,702**

**IN HEALTH SUPPLEMENTATION**  
Provided to 48 retirees

Helping eligible retirees pay their health premiums for the UCC Medicare Advantage Plan with Rx.

**\$211,975**

**IN EMERGENCY GRANTS**  
Provided to 67 individuals

Assistance for unforeseen circumstances that cannot be addressed by personal income or savings.

**\$253,500**

**IN THE CHRISTMAS FUND "THANK YOU'S"**

Provided to 507 retirees

Saying "Thank You" to eligible retirees for their years of faithful service.

**\$291,739**

**IN MINISTERIAL MONTHLY GRANTS**  
Provided to 59 individuals

Helping eligible retirees and persons on long term disability receive monthly assistance to meet basic living expenses.

**\$156,074**

**IN NEW AND RENEWING CHURCH BENEFIT GRANTS**

Provided to 13 congregations

Providing health care benefits to pastors.



## Next Generation Leadership Initiative (NGLI) and The Annuitant Visitor Program

The future of ministry demands leaders who are prepared for more than preaching and administration. In 2025, more than 50 creative and dynamic UCC pastors representing new generations of ministry gathered for the 2025 Next Generation Leadership Initiative (NGLI) Core event, a leadership development experience that aims to equip and empower clergy to co-create vibrant congregations that change lives, engage their communities, and further God’s mission in the world.

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*These gatherings were far more than conferences; they were sacred spaces of renewal, discernment, and community. The time away from my congregation allowed me to step back, reflect deeply on my vocation, and return home re-centered and re-energized for the work of ministry.*



**Rev. Dr. Michael L. Sloan, Senior Minister**  
First Congregational Church of Spencerport, NY

### Go Deeper on Online with These Impact Stories:

- [Because of Ministry— Leading for the Future in an Ever-Changing World](#)
- [Holy Dreaming](#)
- [Adapting to Feelings of Failure: Individuality and Community with NGLI](#)



To view the above resources, scan the QR code or visit: <http://pbucc.org/AR-Resources>

## The Annuitant Visitor Program

Annuitant Visitors serve as ambassadors for the Pension Boards’ benefits, communicate appreciation for a lifetime of dedicated service, and offer collegial support.

In the fall of 2025, about 100 Annuitant Visitors and Deans gathered online for the annual **Annuitant Visitor Gathering**. New annuitant visitors participated in orientation sessions, and all participants attended educational workshops for key tools they need to best serve our members.

Annuitant Visitors were also joined by several Pension Boards staff who conducted interactive chat sessions to connect with visitors and capture their personal experiences and feedback in serving our members’ needs.

**Outcome:** The listening and learning experience helped Pension Boards staff become better aware of its members’ needs so they can further support those who require specific assistance with our services and benefit offerings.



## Financial Wellness for Ministry and Life: A PBUCC Ministerial Resource Pilot

Launched in 2025, Financial Wellness for Ministry and Life provided personalized financial guidance to members of the UCC Lifetime Retirement Income Plan.

### Pilot Highlights

- 45 members engaged in individualized financial wellness consultations
- All participants completed a financial wellness assessment and follow-up conversation
- Participants received access to no-cost financial counseling through LSS Financial Choice and estate planning tools via FreeWill

### Early Impact

- \$73,000 of credit card debt enrolled in structured debt management
- \$23,455 already paid down, reducing long-term interest costs

Participants identified retirement planning, debt management, emergency savings, and legacy planning as key areas where trusted guidance made a difference—reinforcing the importance of this work for sustaining both financial health and vocational wellbeing.

### Go Deeper on Online with These Impact Stories:

- [Your Journey to a More Secure Financial Future Begins Today](#)
- [Navigating Student Loan Forgiveness through Financial Counseling](#)



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*As a follow-up from enrolling in the pilot program, I spoke with a PBUCC team member who directed me to LSS Financial Choice, to guide me through the Public Student Loan Forgiveness Program. This single conversation opened a door I have been searching for. I am getting closer to financial relief which will free up approximately \$500 a month—money that I can redirect towards rebuilding my retirement savings!*

Financial Wellness Pilot Participant



# STEWARDSHIP AND LEGACY

*Sustainable growth and lasting influence ensure the longevity and impact of ministry.*

## Generosity that Sustains Ministry Today and Tomorrow



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*Every act of generosity helps shape the ministry we share—but some gifts carry a legacy that extends far beyond the present moment. Planned giving is a meaningful way to ensure that the values, hope, and mission you support today continue to flourish for generations to come. Thank you to all of our faithful donors who have become a partner in sustaining ministry’s long-term vision and strengthening its ability to serve, inspire, and create lasting impact.*

**-Rev. Dr. Paul L. Ramsey**

Director of Church Relations and Philanthropy

### The Christmas Fund 2025

Donations to The Christmas Fund allow the United Church Board for Ministerial Assistance (UCBMA), the philanthropic arm of the Pension Boards, to provide direct financial relief such as emergency grants to sustain the wellbeing of those who serve our church, and who may be facing unforeseen circumstances. Thank you to our 1,072 faithful donors for your ongoing generous support.

**\$1,695,745**

Total Given

**1,995**

Total Gifts

**1,072**

Total Donors

Through **Together for Tomorrow**, a shared legacy campaign in partnership with National Ministries, we offer FreeWill, which allows donors to create a will at no cost, and leave planned gifts to causes that align with their faith and values.

**\$9,854,276**  
Planned Gifts in 2025

### Other Contributions for Ministry Impact

In 2025, we also raised over \$300,000 for The Christmas Forever Fund, Ministerial Assistance, and Our Church’s Wider Mission.

**The Christmas Forever Fund:** This endowment fund helps support future ministry endeavors and manage legacy gifts to secure resources for future generations. Assets are invested sustainably to protect both people and the environment.



**Ministerial Assistance:** Allows UCBMA to administer and raise funds for leadership initiatives that promote faithful and fruitful ministry across the United Church of Christ and provide direct financial support to authorized ministers, lay church employees, and their surviving spouses/partners in times of urgent need and personal crises.

**Our Church’s Wider Mission (OCWM):** Provides basic support that strengthens local congregations and leaders while connecting the wider church to ministry beyond our own community. Most OCWM support remains within Conferences, where it provides leadership development, mentoring, and congregational vitality resources such as conflict transformation, ministry reimaging, and direct grants to churches.

### Go Deeper on Online with These Impact Stories:

- [Finding the UCC: A Story of Gratitude and Giving through The Christmas Fund](#)
- [Legacy Planning: An Act of Love and Faith that Strengthens Communities and Sustains Ministry](#)



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## How to Connect with Us

Whether you are looking to become a better steward of your finances, exploring health and retirement options for yourself or for your employees, or considering building your legacy, there are many ways we can support your needs. Reach out to us today. We're here to help you every step of the way.

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### Stay Connected with Us!

**Sign Up and Be a  
Part of the Evercall  
Community!**



**Create Your Free,  
Legal Will**



**Questions?  
We'll connect with you!**



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**To view all the resources in this report, use the link below:**

<http://pbucc.org/AR-Resources>

**Contact Us**

 1.800.642.6543

 [contactus@pbucc.org](mailto:contactus@pbucc.org)

 [www.pbucc.org/evercall](http://www.pbucc.org/evercall)





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