

for justice that we can say together that it is unacceptable for the gap between rich and poor to continue to widen or that more and more of us are unable to afford necessary health care.

104. Making a difference on the issues just mentioned, and many more, takes planning, research and the combined efforts of many people. The process begins with the NYSCC Public Policy Commission spending two days in discernment at their annual planning meeting—a gathering that brings together denominational and local ecumenical representatives from across the state. From this meeting lists of suggested priorities are brought to the governing body for adoption for the coming year. Then staff and the Public Policy Commission get to work doing research, checking on national denominational positions, developing resources for congregations, arranging press conferences, writing position papers and distributing them, meeting with legislators, and doing lots of behind-the-scenes work with boards and other decision-making bodies. On some issues the Council hosts an interfaith working group, such as the one in recent years on education that has agreed upon principles from which to base their combined support of public schools and call for more equitable funding of education. At the annual Legislative Day representatives come from across the state in early spring to visit with legislators after being updated on the issues.
105. The Collegium (board of directors whose members are denominational bishops and executives) also raise their voices together in the public square. Continuing a tradition of over 10 years, they look forward again this year to a meeting with the Governor. These meetings often set the stage for staff-to-staff problem solving. And it is known and respected in Albany that if one of them testifies on behalf of the NYSCC at an Assembly hearing on the death penalty or speaks at a rally on education or immigration that their message is not just that of one person, but that they are speaking for the leadership of over 6,000 congregations.

## **UNITED METHODIST HOMES**

**Robert L. Clapp, President, James Stinson, Director of Spiritual Life**

***For Information Only — This Report Was Not Presented to the Annual Conference Session***

101. **United Methodist Homes** (UMH) provides retirement housing, assisted living and health care at four Connecticut locations, in Shelton, Farmington, Newington, and Sharon, and serves more than 1,000 residents annually. UMH also operates Foxbridge, an assisted living community in Memphis, Tennessee, and a nursing and rehabilitation facility in Cloverdale, Indiana named Summerfield Health Care Center.