

2022 Annual Report

**Annual Meeting
January 29, 2023**



**First United Church of Christ
(Congregational)
Northfield, Minnesota**

**300 Union Street
Northfield, Minnesota 55057
www.firstucc.org**

Church Covenant

“We covenant together with God and one another,
trusting in God’s continuing guidance,
to seek to understand and do God’s will
to explore the mystery of Christ
and to witness to God’s reconciling love”

STAFF

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Rev. Lauren Baske Davis , Associate Minister	associateminister@firstucc.org
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Agenda
January 29, 2023

Welcome and Opening Prayer

Opening Hymn

Declaration of a Quorum and Approval of the Agenda

Approval of 2022 Annual Meeting Minutes

2023 Budget
OCWM Overview

Nominations Report and Approval of Candidates

Recognition of Ongoing and Outgoing Leaders

Closing Prayer

Adjourn

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2022 CONGREGATIONAL MEETING MINUTES

Annual Meeting (January 30, 2022)

The meeting opened with a presentation of the year in review, featuring Director of Music Chris Brunelle performing “The Annual Meeting Song”, with words by Chris, set to the tune of “On The Street Where You Live”, from the musical “My Fair Lady”.

Senior Minister Cindy Maddox welcomed everyone and led the congregation in an opening prayer, followed by the singing of “Spirit of the Living God”.

Moderator Sam Steinberg declared a quorum, with 91 members present.

The agenda was presented. Beth Kallestad moved approval of the agenda. Chris Brunelle seconded the motion and the agenda was approved.

Approval of the minutes of the 2021 Annual Meeting was moved by Bob Entenmann, seconded by Linda Larson. The minutes were approved.

The 2022 Budget was presented by Treasurer Nalani McCutcheon, who reviewed the plans for developing an endowment with funds from two significant bequests, while still keeping the current system of long and short term reserves in place. Nalani thanked the Stewardship Committee, the Trustees, and the Financial Futures group for their diligent work, which resulted in the good news that First UCC is able to continue with two full-time ministers. She also thanked members of the congregation for their exceptional generosity. Nalani moved approval of the budget. Carol Rutz seconded. The budget was approved.

Pastor Cindy read the Racial Justice Covenant and spoke about the importance of the covenants which ground our social justice work. (The Racial Justice Covenant is still in draft form. When a final version has been developed, this covenant will be voted on by the congregation.)

Dorothea Hrossowyc reviewed history of the Land Acknowledgement Statement and presented the statement. She made a motion to approve. The motion was seconded by Susan Evans. The motion passed.

Gina Washburn reviewed the background of First UCC becoming an Immigrant Welcoming church. Matt Rohn presented the Immigrant Welcoming Covenant and made a motion to approve. Dorothea Hrossowyc seconded. The motion passed.

Nominations Committee Chair Don Perkins presented the slate of candidates and made a motion for approval. Julie Maxon seconded. The motion passed.

Appointment of the Associate Minister Search Team was moved by Deb Gottfried and seconded by Scott Richardson: Tyler Balow, Barb Howe, Julie Maxon, Debra Ehret-Miller, Pastor Cindy Maddox, and Moderator Deb Gottfried. Following questions and discussion regarding the lack of youth representation on the team, the motion was approved and members of the Associate Minister Search Team were given a blessing.

Pastor Lauren recognized and thanked ongoing and outgoing leaders: Sam Steinberg, Don Perkins, Judy Bond, Marie Gery, Linda Burdell, Marty Hodel, Mary Carlson, Katherine Jameson, and John Menk.

Incoming Moderator Deb Gottfried gave the closing prayer.

The meeting was adjourned with a motion by Carol Rutz, seconded by Fred Rogers.

Respectfully submitted,

Judy Bond, Clerk

Purpose: Congregational Meeting to Call a Minister

Date: May 15, 2022

Time: 10:30am

Opening Prayer: Pastor Cindy

Call meeting to order and assure quorum: Deb Gottfried, Moderator. Deb motion to approve. Elizabeth Olson, 2nd. All participants in favor.

Review search process and recommendation: Debra Ehret Miller, Chair of the Associate Minister Search Committee.

Review Terms of Call: Deb Gottfried, Moderator. Pastor Lauren's salary is currently at conference guidelines, so remains the same. Typically a 3 month sabbatical is provided after 5 years of full-time employment. We are honoring the three years Lauren has served in various roles full time, therefore sabbatical will be provided in two years, summer of 2024.

Motion/Discussion: Motion Deb Gottfried, I move that we approve the recommendation from the search team and council to call Rev. Lauren Baske Davis to First UCC Northfield, as our next Associate Minister. Carol Rutz, 2nd.

Positive comments per Fred Rogers and Marie Gehry

Vote: 20 people on line and 91 in sanctuary (total 111-yes!). The vote was unanimous both per youth (14) and all voting members. No abstentions.

Special music by Chris and Theo

Adjourn

Clerk: Anne Meyer Ruppel, council member

Congregational Meeting: To Present and Vote on the Racial Justice Covenant

6/19/22

Quorum was determined. Meeting called to order.

Agenda: Motion by Scott Richardson, Second by Jackie 36 in church voted aye, exact number on zoom unclear. No nays. Motion carried.

Racial Justice Covenant presented by Judy Bond. Motion by Judy Bond to approve, Second by Jackie. Questions presented by Gary Waganbach and answered by Judy or Cindy. 81 in church and on zoom voted aye, 0 nays. Motion carried.

Open & Affirming statement presented by Kathy Sandberg. [I did not note the motion and second] No questions. 84 in church and on zoom voted aye, 0 nays. Motion carried.

Adjourned.

Notes by Nalani McCutcheon

(Gary was the scheduled notetaker, but he was ill. Nalani was not asked to be a formal notetaker, but she took these notes. Thank you Nalani).

Congregational meeting to endorse First UCC Northfield Resolution Endorsing the Electrification Draft Resolution for General Synod 2023 (Substantively the same as a resolution approved by the MN Conference UCC in June, 2022)

Date: December 4, 2022

Time: After worship, ~12PM

Location: First UCC Sanctuary and Online

Welcome and Quorum Declared: Deb Gottfried

Summary given by Matt Rohn: There will be a motion to endorse a resolution urging planning for and implementing electrification. This resolution calls on United Church of Christ congregations and individuals to actively plan for and promote electrifying space heating and cooling equipment, appliances, and machines when old ones fail or become outdated as one of the ways to protect God's earth and its people from climate change emissions, and to become role models for just and equitable electrification for individual members and the broader community.

Motion to endorse the resolution: First Matt Rohne, Second Brad Hoff

Discussion: Which appliances does this church own and use that run on fossil fuels? Not much, but the boiler is one thing. Question about geothermal - not sure if geothermal will be an option in the future, so what about the boiler? Answer: Note that this resolution does not require we DO anything yet; just that we PLAN to do things in the future as updates are needed. Question: Does this resolution require that we do things at home, and how will we know what to do? Answer: We'll be providing information later about how you can implement things at home.

Vote: If you agree, raise hands (unanimous - in person, 64 in the room). Six online (no dissent). Total 70.

Meeting Adjourned

As I sit down to write my annual report, I am reminded of the lyrics to a popular song from the musical *Rent*.

*525,600 minutes, 525,000 moments so dear.
525,600 minutes - how do you measure, measure a year?
In daylights, in sunsets, in midnights, in cups of coffee.
In inches, in miles, in laughter, in strife.
In 525,600 minutes - how do you measure a year in the life?*

It is a good question. How do you measure a year in the life of a congregation? By attendance numbers? Financial figures? The number of people who joined? How about the number of lives touched and enriched by our ministries? That is a much more difficult (if not impossible) number to ascertain, but would be more meaningful than any of the previous numbers.

Still, by most quantifiable measures, we are doing well. Although our in-person attendance is not back to pre-COVID levels, when combined with those who watch online, we are within 75-80%. This is a big accomplishment, as the vast majority of churches in the U.S. show a marked decline since the pandemic began. In fact, most church “experts” say that the decline in U.S. churches that began decades ago has been so exacerbated by the pandemic that many churches will never recover. We are doing well.

We also are doing well financially. We finished the year with a sizable surplus, due in part to the Employee Retention Credit program but also due to a tight rein on expenses and the generosity of our members. Our budget for the coming year is also solid, again thanks to our committed givers.

Our programs have been coming back since the shutdown as well, with Nine to Dine groups returning, children’s and youth programs getting increasing focus, and, most recently, with Wednesdays for Faith, Family & Fellowship (WFFF) dinners now back on our calendar. It is so good to be together! Still, we are missing some faces of members and friends who drifted away during the shutdown and have yet to return. We are looking for ways to reconnect folks to the community, and we welcome your ideas.

As I look back over the 525,600 minutes of 2022, I return again to the lyrics I quoted earlier. The song goes on to say, “How do you measure a year in the life? How about love?” I think that is how we measure the success of any church year. We measure in love. In meals delivered and meals shared. In prayers requested and offered. In support sought and given or, better yet, given without being asked. In hugs at the door and laughter in the pews. In bread dropped in our open hands with the words “Bread of life, given for you.” We measure in love. And according to that rubric, we are doing quite well, indeed.

I remain blessed to be in ministry with you.

Cindy Maddox

Two are better than one, because they have a good return for their hard work. If either should fall, one can pick up the other. – Ecclesiastes 4:9-10

As I look back on 2022, I am stunned by the power of community, of what people can do together, when given the chance. Though we all knew times have been painful for so many in these years of pandemic, divisiveness in our nation, and war in Ukraine, I am starting to see the collective toll it has taken on us. I think we are readying ourselves in this moment for something new, knowing now how much we need each other, peace, and tender care.

2022 began with another Covid surge, and we found ourselves worshiping online for a few weeks. In the months following, we have found ways to get through. Even through the bumps we are navigating on our journey together, there have been *so many* highlights in our ministries this past year. Here are highlights, from my view as your Associate Minister:

Children & Youth

- St. Olaf student Youth & Family **Ministry Development Intern Katie Johnson** joined us for a month in Jan to interview 25 UCC families about their hopes and dreams for sustainable children, youth, and family ministry at First UCC.
- **Children’s Faith Formation Team**, (Mandy Everhart, Crystal Henslin, Marja Steinberg, Ally Thorkelson, Laura Turek and I) adopted the focus: “God loves you, you matter, and nothing can change that.”
 - To support this, we shifted faith formation to a **community-school model** to increase belonging for children and intergenerational relationships for all. Children gather for music and scripture videos. Then, children choose between rooms for art, large motor games, Legos/engineering, reading, or the nursery in the presence of safe, caring adults with whom children can develop relationships. We test-ran this model in May, got positive feedback from parents and kids, and continued it this fall.
 - We also sent **birthday postcards** to 90+ children and youth, ages 2-18.
 - In Nov./Dec., children and adult leaders tied 10 twin-sized **fleece blankets** as a service project for Operation Joy. Thank you to Laura Turek who coordinated!
- Children and Youth had a joint Oct. **Halloween party** and a Dec. **Advent craft and cookie-decorating** event (cookies were brought to at-home members by the Care Team), both hosted creatively and graciously by the Pettis Eastvolds.
- Children and Youth also collaborated on an **Advent musical, “The Christmas Jazz,”** with Musical Director Chris Brunelle, Jami Reister as Stage Manager and Costume Designer, Janet Lewis Muth as Director, and Greg Muth for some costumes and set construction. The musical was a true delight in worship, Dec 18th!
- Jami Reister continues to be a **faithful leader for 6th-12th grade youth** on Sunday mornings, creating service projects, fun social events, and always including mouth-watering food!
 - **Youth cleaned up Northfield** on a bitterly cold April morning for Earth Day.
 - **Youth** took it upon themselves to inspire the congregation to include **preferred pronouns on church name tags** with stickers, leading by creating and wearing their own.

- May 22 we **recognized graduating high school seniors** in worship.
- In Dec., Children and Youth Team leaders collaborated with Care Team to **mail 21 care packages to recent UCC graduates** and college students, to support them leading up to the holidays.

OWL (Our Whole Lives) & Confirmation

- OWL, a comprehensive sexuality education curriculum, and Confirmation are part of a **2-year cohort cycle**. OWL is offered to 7th-8th graders. Confirmation is offered for the same cohort of youth the following year, for 8th-9th graders.
- OWL continued winter/spring, retreat-style, once a month for a long afternoon, and concluded in May. There were **12 UCCers, and 3 youth from the community**. Member Dena Stulken and I led as trained facilitators, with CYAN leaders Kieran Cuddy and Rae Hoekstra also participating.
- OWL “ministry” continues to maintain or grow. To create more of a good thing, we are excited to **offer expanded OWL programs** soon. Amanda Pettis Eastvold and Kathy Sandberg were trained in August to lead Middle/High School OWL. We will be offering additional classes in the near future!
- Confirmation classes are underway, every other Sunday through the winter as well as Wednesdays in January.
- Confirmation youth are participating in a **J-term collaboration with youth from Bethel, St. John’s and St. Peter’s churches**. Each church is offering 1-2 courses to choose from. We had a kick-off at the high school in October with a band, speaker, and registration.
- These same churches collaborated in September on a **lock-in** as well, and are inviting all youth on an upcoming **mission trip** to Nashville led by St. John’s youth director.

Care Team (please see Care Team’s report)

- At the start of the year, the Care Team **called all of the members of the church** to check in as the pandemic surged again. Though it was a big undertaking, they reported they got to know people at church they hadn’t met before!
- By the end of this year, **over 50 prayer shawls** have been given out to support members and friends. Thank you knitters!
- Besides meals, calls, cards, rides, and friendship, the Care Team has been **writing cards** to different groups through the church thanking them for their ministries.

Adult Education

- Sue Evans led a **Connect** group on spiritual questions in spring
- Bill Poehlmann and Linda Larson lead an online **Connect and Reflective Reading** group that is ongoing. New members are welcome at the start of each book.
- Sue Evans led a **book study** on a Louise Erdrich book this summer
- **Service-learning** opportunity in Aug. at Regi and Amy Haslett-Marroquin’s farm, Salvatierra, centered on regenerative agriculture.
- Mary Carlsen and Judy Bond led a **Connect** group this fall
- Amy and Kadie Ausherbauer led a 6-week spirituality group this fall called, **“God and Everything Else.”**
- **Justice Ministries led small groups** that met for 3 weeks at a time, to discuss deeper involvement in various justice ministries this fall.

- The **Creation Care Team** led two **Compost Workshops** Oct. 23.
- **Beyond the Land Acknowledgement** had a 2-part “**Whose Home Land?**” presentation in Nov., led by Dick Crouter and Matt Rohn.
- Gina Washburn presented on her **trip to the US/Mexico Border**, Nov.

Various Ministry Highlights

- Pastor Cindy was **installed** as Senior Minister in March!
- I interviewed with the **Associate Minister Search Team** (Debra Ehret Miller, chair, Tyler Balow, Barb Howe, Julie Maxon, and Pastor Cindy) was voted on by the congregation in May after being recommended, and in Nov. was officially installed as Associate Minister. The Search Team and hospitality crew definitely know how to throw a beautiful reception! I’m exceedingly grateful for our ongoing ministry together!
- May 29 was our **recognition of volunteers and leaders** for the program year. Thank you to all who contribute to making First UCC’s programs so vibrant!
- **Coffee Hour restarted** in May with collaboration by Bobbie Peterson, Sue Evans, and Annie Kramer. Annie and Sue have taken temporary coordination for now. Thank you to Hans Muessig and Sarah Dennett for coordinating installation of the new coffee maker. Grateful for the Facilities Committee’s leadership, and the Trustees’ support.
- Our church participated again in Northfield’s 2nd **Pride Fest** in June.
- In Aug, I took a 2-week **vacation** to go on a trip with my family to Scotland. Thank you for the time away!
- The **Evening Gathering** worship service initiated in Oct., led by lay leaders from First UCC, Bethel, and St. John’s, in collaboration with First UCC staff, meeting regularly on Sunday nights for contemplative worship.
- **Sermon/worship** series from Sanctified Art, series on “Four Elements” and “Five Senses” over the summer, the “water from many places” project, “Go and Do the Same,” and “What Can’t Wait” with thoughtful music from Chris Brunelle, Bob Gregory-Bjorklund, Theo Wee and guest musicians!
- **Restarting WFFF (Wednesdays for Food Fun and Faith)** again on Nov 29! The joy was contagious! Thanks to Sarah Dennett, Linda Larson, Hans Muessig, and Bill Poehlmann for devoting time, care, and energy to this vital ministry!
- A thoughtful and compassionate **Council** with leadership of Moderator Deb Gottfried.

Conferences/Wider Church Ministries

- “Reimagining Youth Ministry,” national setting of the UCC, Feb.
- “The Advantages of Disadvantages” of children, youth and family ministry with Brian McLaren, Dave Cisnos and Traci Smith, Mar.
- ISAIAH Clergy Summit on Thursday, May
- Annual Meeting of the MN Conference virtually, June
- Northfield Area Interfaith Alliance meetings, monthly
- Women’s clergy group meetings, monthly
- MN UCC Conference Board of Directors

Community Partnership Ministries

- We continue partnering with the **Healthy Community Initiative** (HCI), getting books into the hands of children who may not have them at home. Books are housed at church and volunteers organize and bag the books to be given to children.
- I serve on the **Northfield Promise Reading Team** to meet reading goals for children in the community with representatives from the community. This is an extension of our partnership with HCI.
- Partnership with **The Key/Northfield Union of Youth** through our joint work with CYAN Americorps fellows and clergy and leaders from Bethel, St. John's. Though CYAN came to natural close and fellowships expired, we are working on continuing partnerships to support LGBTQ+ youth.
- **TORCH** care packages continue as a regular twice through the program year, where we send 10-12 care packages to first time college students from Northfield. Thanks to Linda Burdell, who is heading up this ministry!
- We continue our partnership with the **Community Action Center** (CAC) particularly in our support of Hillcrest Village, First UCC Council has agreed to support this community project with \$5,000 for 5 years. This was a project that Executive Director Scott Wopata asked First UCC to support, and came to be supported by the First UCC Council .

In the spirit of community and connection,

May you go out into this bewildering world warmed by the fire of possibility.

May you come to see walking shoes, soup spoons, minivans, and wrinkled hands as worthy tools for connection.

May your heart stay tender, your hands stay open, and your door stay easy on its hinges.

May you find comfort in the moon, art in the clouds, and goodness in the faces around you.

May you gather, listen and hope relentlessly, and may you never give up on the living light of belonging, right where you are.

Grace and peace and gumption be with you.¹

In faith and service, Pastor Lauren

¹ A Neighbor's Blessing, by Shannon Martin

“Become a student of change. It is the only thing that will remain constant.” Anthony D’Angelo

As I look back at the Annual meeting (over Zoom) last January, I am reminded how unskilled I felt stepping into this role. The peace I had in saying “yes” was still present, but the unknowns were daunting. This is a role, like many others in our lives, we learn as we go. With the support of Pastor Cindy, Pastor Lauren, and the Council, I was able to lean into the role. As the year passed, I realized the enormity of time, energy, and love that goes into building and maintaining our congregation. I have a deep appreciation for all those who have served and continue to serve First UCC. And now in 2023, I can happily say, we made it through another year riding the waves of change.

2022 was a year of special congregational meetings. In May, First UCC voted unanimously to formally call the Rev. Lauren Baske Davis as our Associate Minister. With Pastor Cindy celebrating a year with us in October, how wonderful it has been to have two full time ministers! In June, we approved the Racial Justice Covenant. We ended the year endorsing the Electrification Draft Resolution presented by the Creation Care Team.

In addition to these special congregational meetings, Council also invested time on the following:

- Reviewed and approved a fundraising policy that outlines how Council will consider requests from groups, teams, and task forces for special offerings or fundraising efforts.
- A safety task force was formed to develop a comprehensive building safety plan. The four areas of focus are weather related, medical, fire, and potentially violent situations. This group will begin meeting in January 2023.

The end of January brings more change as I step down and Gary Carlson steps in as Moderator. What a true gift it has been to serve with Gary and the other members of Council this past year. I know for certain that no matter what changes we face as a congregation, if we continue to “seek justice, to love kindness, and to walk humbly with our God” (Micah 6:8) we can weather all changes that come our way.

I am honored to have served in this capacity. Thank you for your trust in me.

Submitted by Deb Gottfried

Active Full Memberships as of 01/01/2022	440	
Active Associate Memberships as of 01/01/2022	6	
Additions to Full Membership during 2022	11	
Additions to Associate Membership during 2022	2	
Members/Associate Members Transferred	0	
Memberships Retired	-3	Ray Clyde, Kristin Kasten, Kent Freeze
Member Deaths	-8	
Associate Member Deaths	0	
Active Full Membership as of 12/31/2022	440	
Active Associate Membership as of 12/31/2022	8	

Member Deaths

Tom Pender
 Ed Lufkin
 Bernie Wierson
 Janice George
 Bill Johnson
 Phyllis Wierson
 Ann Wright
 Bardwell Smith

New Members November 20, 2022

Connie Merrell
 Dean Merrell
 Christina Neuger
 Dan Neuger
 Harley Tate

New Associate Members November 7, 2022

Peter Heckman
 Pam Thompson

New Members June 5, 2022

Amy Ausherbauer
 Kadie Ausherbauer
 Fred Blaisdell
 Linda Blaisdell
 John Robinson
 Jo Swanson

Baptisms

Clara Heinz (10/23/22)

After several challenging years for budgeting, even though 2022 had its bumpy moments, it was a fairly straightforward year.

The first months of 2022 were spent organizing systems and structures:

- Trustees spent the beginning of 2022 updating the First UCC Cash Management and Investment Policy. It set target guidelines for the reserve accounts and defined the draw formula for the Long Term Reserve and Endowment accounts after the creation of the Endowment account. This was approved by Council in the fall of 2022.
- Trustees also worked with Carlsen Capital Management to split the Long Term Reserve account into two accounts: one to serve as an Endowment housing the balance of the two large bequests, and the second to house the traditional Long Term Reserve account. Both portfolios have the same equity holdings.
- Staff and Trustees also focused on bringing the church's accounting in house. Once the Director of Operations was comfortable with basic accounting and Quickbooks Online, the contract with Clergy Financial Services for bookkeeping services was terminated. The church still contracts with CFS for payroll services.

The church received the 4 quarters of Employment Retention Credit, which was applied for in 2021. The total was \$46,715.98. This credit accounts for the bulk of the excess revenue with which the church ended the year.

Beyond the anticipated expenses in the 2022 annual budget, additional tasks that were accomplished by the Trustees in 2022 include:

- Replacement of the fans in the sanctuary
- Renovation of the church website
- Furniture replacement for the big room
- Upgrade of fire alert system to a wireless panel, eliminating false alarms due to power outages
- Upgrade Coffee brewing system to better accommodate hospitality events

The departure of the Director of Operations was a setback for in-house financial management, and presented a small bump in the flow of the year. Thankfully, Pippa Younger accepted the position of Finance Coordinator and came to First UCC with extensive experience in QuickBooks and church accounting.

Included in this report is the End of Year financial statements for 2022 as well as the proposed budget for 2023.

Trustees want to recognize and thank Finance Coordinator Pippa Younger for her efforts on behalf of the church. Additionally, Trustees extend their gratitude to Dan Sullivan, the Financial Future task force, and the Stewardship Committee -- their tremendous effort has been critical in providing a positive budget forecast for 2023.

Nalani McCutcheon, treasurer

2022 Trustees: David Beimers, Wes Kinstad, Nancy Johnson Maloney, Carrie Menk, Fred Rogers, and Brian Turek

Pastor Cindy Maddox supported the Trustees in an ex officio capacity.

First United Church of Christ Proposed 2023 Budget

	2022 Budget	Actual Expenses 2022	Proposed 2023 Budget
Income			
001 Pledged Donations			
0401001 Current Year	453,046.00	433,326.99	\$480,000.00
0401002 Previous Year	4,000.00	8,440.50	\$6,000.00
0401008 Uncollected Pledge Allowance	-8,000.00		-\$8,000.00
Total 001 Pledged Donations	\$ 449,046.00	\$ 441,767.49	\$478,000.00
002 Unpledged Donations			
0401004 Gifts	26,000.00	32,109.24	\$26,000.00
0401006 Unrestricted Memorial Gifts	3,000.00	7,068.30	\$5,000.00
Total 002 Unpledged Donations	\$ 29,000.00	\$ 39,177.54	\$31,000.00
003 Investment Income	31,770.00	31,755.68	
0301010 Endowment Income			\$15,691.00
0301015 Long Term Reserve Income			\$11,956.00
0301020 Interest Income		0.03	\$0.00
Total 003 Investment Income	\$ 31,770.00	\$ 31,755.71	\$27,647.00
004 Building Income			
0401020 Day Care Rent	12,960.00	12,960.00	\$14,124.00
0401023 Miscellaneous Rent	2,500.00	585.00	\$1,000.00
Total 004 Building Income	\$ 15,460.00	\$ 13,545.00	\$15,124.00
005 Miscellaneous Income			
0401030 Miscellaneous Income	1,000.00	48,665.80	\$1,000.00
0401051 Solar Panel Incentive Rebate	2,000.00	2,068.80	\$2,000.00
Total 005 Miscellaneous Income	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 50,734.60	\$3,000.00
0401050 Transfer from Intermediate Res	19,520.00		\$9,520.00
Total Income	\$ 547,796.00	\$ 576,980.34	\$564,291.00
Expenses			
006 Staff & Support			
0501000 Payroll Expenses			
0501010 Wages	194,804.00	223,601.81	\$202,858.00
0501020 Housing Allowance	\$ 67,020.00	\$ 32,880.00	\$65,760.00
0501025 SS Allowance	\$ 13,745.00	\$ 13,714.36	\$13,978.62
0501030 Retirement	\$ 27,554.00	\$ 26,000.88	\$27,453.78
0501040 Benefits	\$ 44,376.00	\$ 36,886.08	\$42,236.00
0501050 Taxes	6,284.00	5,623.11	\$6,478.00
Total 0501000 Payroll Expenses	\$ 353,783.00	\$ 338,706.24	\$358,764.40
0501060 Travel	\$ 4,000.00	\$ 0.00	\$0.00
0501070 Mileage	\$ 2,350.00	\$ 390.16	\$1,500.00
0501080 Education & Training	\$ 4,600.00	\$ 2,904.91	\$4,600.00
0501090 Conferences & Meetings	\$ 1,500.00	\$ 596.47	\$1,500.00
0501100 Contractors/Professional Fees	\$ 8,190.00	\$ 6,878.75	\$5,440.00
Total 006 Staff & Support	\$ 374,423.00	\$ 349,476.53	\$ 371,804.40

007 Office Operations			
0501310 Advertising & Marketing	6,000.00	7,883.47	3,000.00
0501330 Internet & Email	1,800.00	1,334.10	2,500.00
0501340 Telephone	2,040.00	2,751.66	3,000.00
0501350 Postage & Delivery	1,200.00	1,346.00	1,200.00
0501360 Printing & Reproduction	2,000.00	2,766.66	2,000.00
0501370 Rental & Lease	3,500.00	1,612.20	2,100.00
0501380 Supplies	2,200.00	1,178.92	2,000.00
0501390 Service Charges	1,150.00	1,762.58	1,200.00
0501391 Miscellaneous	3,000.00	709.76	1,000.00
Total 007 Office Operations	\$ 22,890.00	\$ 21,345.35	\$ 18,000.00
008 Building Operations			
0501410 Grounds & Facilities	20,000.00	16,804.90	\$22,000.00
0501420 Repairs & Maintenance	\$ 38,118.00	\$ 18,563.30	\$37,700.00
0501430 Utilities	\$ 17,080.00	\$ 23,539.01	\$25,626.00
0501440 Insurance Expense	32,780.00	35,241.75	\$41,706.00
Total 008 Building Operations	\$ 107,978.00	\$ 94,148.96	\$127,032.00
009 Program Operations			
0501500 Committee & Program			
0501501 Worship	2,000.00	1,997.99	2,000.00
0501502 Music	1,750.00	1,747.01	1,750.00
0501503 Hospitality	600.00	1,364.45	3,000.00
0501504 Adult Faith Formation	500.00	555.30	500.00
0501505 Children, Youth, and Confirmation	7,500.00	2,809.68	6,000.00
0501506 Stewardship	2,000.00	50.00	500.00
0501507 Annual Meeting Delegates	500.00	828.00	900.00
0501508 Membership	250.00	170.05	250.00
0501509 Congregational Care	250.00	1,049.67	1,000.00
0501510 Miscellaneous Committee & Program	300.00	1,574.78	500.00
Total 0501500 Committee & Program	\$ 15,650.00	\$ 12,146.93	\$16,400.00
0501600 Dues, Subscriptions, Licenses	13,240.00	7,119.75	\$14,960.00
0501700 Charitable Contributions	7,000.00	13,650.05	\$12,000.00
Total 009 Program Operations	\$ 35,890.00	\$ 32,916.73	\$ 43,360.00
0501320 Equipment & Computer		1,411.69	\$2,000.00
Total Expenses	\$ 541,181.00	\$ 499,299.26	\$ 562,196.40
Net Operating Income	\$ 6,615.00	\$ 77,681.08	\$ 2,094.60
Net Income	\$ 6,615.00	\$ 77,681.08	\$ 2,094.60

Sunday, Jan 15, 2023 12:02:15 PM GMT-8 - Cash Basis

BUDGET OVERVIEW

Total Giving (local/ocwmm/missions)	Pledges + Special Offerings	2015	2016	2017	2018	2019	2020	2021	2022	2023
		Actual	Budget							
INCOME										
Donations	Annual pledges and offerings	378,875	453,570	412,846	469,444	460,413	431,580	442,706	480,945	509,000
Other Income	Income & building use fees	23,728	26,191	37,414	37,426	30,085	52,667	42,711	96,035	45,771
Missions Income	OCWMM pledges & other special offerings	87,248	80,388	82,242	83,290	92,863	99,115	72,881	78,115	TBD
	Transfer of Estate Bequests for "Bridge" Income									9,520
TOTAL OPERATING INCOME		402,603	479,760	450,260	506,870	490,498	484,247	485,417	576,980	564,291
EXPENSES										
Personnel, Compensation	Salaries & benefits for ministers and staff	260,053	271,588	293,793	291,498	298,939	318,135	308,049	338,706	358,764
	Includes the following:									
	Senior Minister Compensation	93,993	95,037	104,709	108,441	80,122	116,099			144,390
	Associate Minister Compensation	73,400	76,845	83,733	82,284	51,230	0			120,133
	Minister for Congregational Life Compensation	0	0	0	0	73,218	109,467			0
	All Other Staff Compensation	92,660	99,706	105,351	100,773	94,370	92,569			94,241
Personnel, Other	Auto expenses, continuing education, other professional expenses, worker's compensation, and future sabbatical	8,741	6,548	7,090	31,065	7,617	5,071	23,718	10,770	13,040
Administration	Printing, copier maintenance & supplies, office supplies, phone, postage, computer maintenance & software	13,545	13,476	15,042	20,115	19,423	19,394	24,134	21,345	18,000

Building Operation	Utilities, building & organ maintenance, insurance, and future maintenance	71,923	79,182	87,791	77,204	111,866	95,722	99,314	94,149	127,032
Committees & Programs	All Boards & Committees	15,874	17,043	13,933	14,008	14,599	12,658	5,672	12,147	16,400
Dues & Seminary Support	Conference Dues & Seminary support	7,110	7,510	7,470	11,975	13,080	13,250	19,158	20,770	26,960
Equipment & Computer	Technology Hardware								1,412	2,000
TOTAL LOCAL EXPENSES		377,246	395,346	425,118	445,865	465,524	464,229	480,046	499,299	562,196
Missions Expense	OCWM (100%) OGHS, NIN, Christmas Eve, and other Special Offerings	66,913 20,335	69,621 10,768	64,815 17,427	68,786 14,504	77,650 15,213	79,816 11,725	58,976 10,794	65,161 12,955	
TOTAL MISSIONS EXPENSE		87,248	80,388	82,242	83,290	92,863	91,541	69,770	78,115	
TOTAL OPERATING EXPENSE		377,246	395,346	425,118	445,865	465,524	464,229	480,046	499,299	562,196
OPERATING INCOME LESS EXPENSE		25,357	84,414	25,142	61,004	24,974	20,018	5,371	77,681	2,095

First United Church of Christ

Balance Sheet

As of December 31, 2022

	TOTAL
ASSETS	
Current Assets	
Bank Accounts	
0101001 Merchants Bank Checking	149,102.78
0101002 Merchants Money Market	204,062.89
Total Bank Accounts	\$353,165.67
Total Current Assets	\$353,165.67
Other Assets	
0101006 Schwab LT Reserves	369,794.74
0101007 Charles Schwab Endowment	520,674.74
Total Other Assets	\$890,469.48
TOTAL ASSETS	\$1,243,635.15
LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	
Liabilities	
Current Liabilities	
Accounts Payable	
0105001 Accounts Payable	14,146.41
Total Accounts Payable	\$14,146.41
Other Current Liabilities	
0109001 LED / Center Energy & Environ	3,074.20
0109002 Payroll Liabilities	
Dental Benefit Liability	0.00
Federal Taxes (941/944)	0.00
Flex Benefits	0.00
Health Benefit Liability	0.00
Life Disability Ins	0.00
MN Income Tax	0.00
Pension	0.00
TSA	0.00
Total 0109002 Payroll Liabilities	0.00
Total Other Current Liabilities	\$3,074.20
Total Current Liabilities	\$17,220.61
Long-Term Liabilities	
0301001 Short Term Reserves	10,536.46
0308001 Intermediate Reserves	204,062.89
0309001 Long Term Reserves	376,365.92
0310001 Endowment	529,951.68
0311000 Restricted Reserves	
0311001 90% OCWM	0.00
0311002 Discretionary Fund	4,467.22
0312001 One Great Hour of Sharing	0.00
0313001 Neighbors in Need	0.00

First United Church of Christ

Balance Sheet

As of December 31, 2022

	TOTAL
0314001 Food Share	0.00
0315001 Christmas Fund - UCC	0.00
0317001 CAC & Christmas Sharing	0.00
0320001 Strengthen the Church	0.00
0329001 Racial Justice & Equity Fund	5,792.00
0340001 Children's Offering	1,192.40
0340007 Adult Ed Projects & Events	471.84
0344001 Youth Mission Trip	1,113.44
0344002 Youth Special Projects	-198.07
0350001 Congregational Care	542.24
0351001 WFFF	660.91
0352001 Flower Power	1,643.54
0352003 Courtyard Memorial Garden	2,628.65
0352004 Prayer Shawls	130.41
0358001 Special Functions	447.71
0359001 Softball Team	479.65
0367001 Pilgrim Point	0.00
0368001 Minister Sabbatical	12,600.16
0380001 Organ Restoration	-8,978.36
0390001 Prepaid Local	83,806.06
0392001 Prepaid OCWM	20,101.52
Total 0311000 Restricted Reserves	126,901.32
Total Long-Term Liabilities	\$1,247,818.27
Total Liabilities	\$1,265,038.88
Equity	
0399001 Opening Balance Equity	2,887.68
0399003 Temp. Restricted Net Assets	-367,977.00
0399004 Unrestricted Net Assets	377,520.58
0399006 Unrealized Gains & Losses	-108,547.93
Net Income	74,712.94
Total Equity	\$ -21,403.73
TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$1,243,635.15

First United Church of Christ
Budget vs. Actual 2022
January - December 2022

	Actual	Budget	Total over Budget	% of Budget
Income				
001 Pledged Donations				
0401001 Current Year	433,326.99	453,046.00	-19,719.01	95.65%
0401002 Previous Year	8,440.50	4,000.00	4,440.50	211.01%
0401008 Uncollected Pledge Allowance		-8,000.00	8,000.00	0.00%
Total 001 Pledged Donations	\$ 441,767.49	\$ 449,046.00	-\$ 7,278.51	98.38%
002 Unpledged Donations				
0401004 Gifts	32,109.24	26,000.00	6,109.24	123.50%
0401006 Unrestricted Memorial Gifts	7,068.30	3,000.00	4,068.30	235.61%
Total 002 Unpledged Donations	\$ 39,177.54	\$ 29,000.00	\$ 10,177.54	135.09%
003 Investment Income				
0301020 Interest Income	0.03	31,770.00	-14.32	99.95%
Total 003 Investment Income	\$ 31,755.71	\$ 31,770.00	-\$ 14.29	99.96%
004 Building Income				
0401020 Day Care Rent	12,960.00	12,960.00	0.00	100.00%
0401023 Miscellaneous Rent	585.00	2,500.00	-1,915.00	23.40%
Total 004 Building Income	\$ 13,545.00	\$ 15,460.00	-\$ 1,915.00	87.61%
005 Miscellaneous Income				
0401030 Miscellaneous Income	48,665.80	1,000.00	47,665.80	4866.58%
0401051 Solar Panel Incentive Rebate	2,068.80	2,000.00	68.80	103.44%
Total 005 Miscellaneous Income	\$ 50,734.60	\$ 3,000.00	\$ 47,734.60	1691.15%
0401050 Transfer from Intermediate Res		19,520.00	-19,520.00	0.00%
Total Income	\$ 576,980.34	\$ 547,796.00	\$ 29,184.34	105.33%
Expenses				
006 Staff & Support				
0501000 Payroll Expenses				
0501010 Wages	223,601.81	194,804.00	28,797.81	114.78%
0501020 Housing Allowance	\$ 32,880.00	\$ 67,020.00	-\$ 34,140.00	49.06%
0501025 SS Allowance	\$ 13,714.36	\$ 13,745.00	-\$ 30.64	99.78%
0501030 Retirement	\$ 26,000.88	\$ 27,554.00	-\$ 1,553.12	94.36%
0501040 Benefits	\$ 36,886.08	\$ 44,376.00	-\$ 7,489.92	83.12%
0501050 Taxes	5,623.11	6,284.00	-660.89	89.48%
Total 0501000 Payroll Expenses	\$ 338,706.24	\$ 353,783.00	-\$ 15,076.76	95.74%
0501060 Travel	\$ 0.00	\$ 4,000.00	-\$ 4,000.00	0.00%
0501070 Mileage	\$ 390.16	\$ 2,350.00	-\$ 1,959.84	16.60%
0501080 Education & Training	\$ 2,904.91	\$ 4,600.00	-\$ 1,695.09	63.15%
0501090 Conferences & Meetings	\$ 596.47	\$ 1,500.00	-\$ 903.53	39.76%
0501100 Contractors/Professional Fees	6,878.75	8,190.00	-1,311.25	83.99%
Total 006 Staff & Support	\$ 349,476.53	\$ 374,423.00	-\$ 24,946.47	93.34%

007 Office Operations					
0501310 Advertising & Marketing	7,883.47	6,000.00	1,883.47	131.39%	
0501330 Internet & Email	1,334.10	1,800.00	-465.90	74.12%	
0501340 Telephone	2,751.66	2,040.00	711.66	134.89%	
0501350 Postage & Delivery	1,346.00	1,200.00	146.00	112.17%	
0501360 Printing & Reproduction	2,766.66	2,000.00	766.66	138.33%	
0501370 Rental & Lease	1,612.20	3,500.00	-1,887.80	46.06%	
0501380 Supplies	1,178.92	2,200.00	-1,021.08	53.59%	
0501390 Service Charges	1,762.58	1,150.00	612.58	153.27%	
0501391 Miscellaneous	709.76	3,000.00	-2,290.24	23.66%	
Total 007 Office Operations	\$ 21,345.35	\$ 22,890.00	-\$ 1,544.65	93.25%	
008 Building Operations					
0501410 Grounds & Facilities	16,804.90	20,000.00	-3,195.10	84.02%	
0501420 Repairs & Maintenance	\$ 18,563.30	\$ 38,118.00	-\$ 19,554.70	48.70%	
0501430 Utilities	\$ 23,539.01	\$ 17,080.00	\$ 6,459.01	137.82%	
0501440 Insurance Expense	35,241.75	32,780.00	2,461.75	107.51%	
Total 008 Building Operations	\$ 94,148.96	\$ 107,978.00	-\$ 13,829.04	87.19%	
009 Program Operations					
0501500 Committee & Program					
0501501 Worship	1,997.99	2,000.00	-2.01	99.90%	
0501502 Music	1,747.01	1,750.00	-2.99	99.83%	
0501503 Hospitality	1,364.45	600.00	764.45	227.41%	
0501504 Adult Faith Formation	555.30	500.00	55.30	111.06%	
0501505 Children, Youth, and Confirmation	2,809.68	7,500.00	-4,690.32	37.46%	
0501506 Stewardship	50.00	2,000.00	-1,950.00	2.50%	
0501507 Annual Meeting Delegates	828.00	500.00	328.00	165.60%	
0501508 Membership	170.05	250.00	-79.95	68.02%	
0501509 Congregational Care	1,049.67	250.00	799.67	419.87%	
0501510 Miscellaneous Committee & Program	1,574.78	300.00	1,274.78	524.93%	
Total 0501500 Committee & Program	\$ 12,146.93	\$ 15,650.00	-\$ 3,503.07	77.62%	
0501600 Dues, Subscriptions, Licenses	7,119.75	13,240.00	-6,120.25	53.77%	
0501700 Charitable Contributions	13,650.05	7,000.00	6,650.05	195.00%	
Total 009 Program Operations	\$ 32,916.73	\$ 35,890.00	-\$ 2,973.27	91.72%	
0501320 Equipment & Computer	1,411.69		1,411.69		
Total Expenses	\$ 499,299.26	\$ 541,181.00	-\$ 41,881.74	92.26%	
Net Operating Income	\$ 77,681.08	\$ 6,615.00	\$ 71,066.08	1174.32%	
Net Income	\$ 77,681.08	\$ 6,615.00	\$ 71,066.08	1174.32%	

Sunday, Jan 15, 2023 12:02:15 PM GMT-8 - Cash Basis

Hallelujah from the heart of God, and from the hand of the artist inimitable,
and from the echo of the heavenly harp in sweetness magnificent and mighty.

—Christopher Smart, *Jubilate Agno* (c. 1760)

Even if we can't often hear it directly, how could there not be music in heaven? And how could we not make music on earth? Christopher Smart's wild poem (parts of which were famously set to music by Benjamin Britten) imagines a world in which everything plays a part in connecting us with the divine, and I hope that music at First UCC has played a part this past year in connecting you as well with others and with our shared creator.

The biggest musical news of 2022 was surely Theo Wee's announcement this fall of her upcoming retirement. As I wrote in my letter to the church, Theo has been the bedrock and the wellspring of our musical life since 1969, and nearly all of us have only known First UCC as a church with Theo on the bench and at the controls. But she has decided that the time has now come for her to complete her work with us and for the church to begin a new chapter in its musical ministry. I am grateful for my fellow members on the organist search committee who will be working with me throughout the coming months to ensure that our musical future remains vibrant, and I am likewise grateful to the many members of the congregation who responded thoughtfully and at length to the recent survey about our use of music in worship.

This year also saw the beginning of a program at First UCC drawn from other white churches: payment for the use in worship of African-American spirituals, whose unknown composers never received compensation for their creations. As a form of musical reparations, our church's payments are meant to ensure direct support for local Black musicians and are thus being sent to Sounds of Blackness, the multiple-Grammy-winning ensemble based in the Twin Cities. We will continue to support them with future payments for our use of spirituals in worship.

Our church enjoyed a number of musical highlights throughout the year. After the pandemic put a hold on children's singing for several years, it was a particular delight on December 18 to experience *The Christmas Jazz*, the marvelous children's musical directed by Janet Lewis Muth and coordinated by Jami Reister, with dozens of kids taking part (and parents helping out in myriad ways). We hope to continue to incorporate children's music into worship in this new year as well. On December 11 the Senior Choir shared its annual choralpalooza with a medley of old and new Christmas music, from the 15th to the 21st century. Four St. Olaf music professors—Tracey Engleman, Chung Park, Charles Gray, and our own Marty Hodel—added to that morning's glorious sound. Other groups were featured in 2022 as well, including the Northfield Wind Quintet (August 14), the Northfield Handbell Choir (November 6), the Dodworth Saxhorn Band (on July 31, as part of the Vintage Band Festival), and several organ students from Carleton (May 29). On August 17 Noah Klein performed an organ concert, one of several that comprised the annual Northfield Noon Organ Concert series.

As always, our church's musical life relies most heavily, and most gratefully, on the volunteers who share their talents on a weekly basis. If it were not for the steadfast members of the Senior Choir and the Spirit Voices, we would still have a music program, but it would not be the sort of program that fits our church's character of generosity, inclusion, and dedication. I am deeply thankful as well to all the soloists and instrumentalists (whether church members or not) who stepped in at various points throughout the year: Donna McMillan, Mary Carlsen, Ann Gregory-Bjorklund, Marty Hodel, Shana Hodel, Emmett Forster, Carol Rutz, Anne Sawyer, Joey Heinz, David Hougen-Eitzman, Myrtle and Trevor Lemon-Todd, Mary Ann Aufderheide, Jack (formerly Rachel) Wolff, Kay Sahlin, Brian Borovsky, Mark and Holly Fischer, Judy Mason, Laurie Stegner, Rose Sorenmann, Amelia McNeil-Maddox, Gary Carlson, Kathy Kanazawak, Andrea Een, Kathy Szydlo, and William and Henry Beimers. Thanks also to the youth, especially Annika Reister, Mackenzie Perkins, and Theo Miller, who have assisted as audio and video tech assistants for our online worshipers.

Finally, let me express my thanks for the marvelous colleagues with whom it was a pleasure to work this year: Theo, of course, and Bob Gregory-Bjorklund, and Green Bouzard (who continued to help in a myriad of ways before her departure this fall), and Brynn Artley, our weekly sound and video technician, and Mark Fischer, who keeps our Bosendorfer in good shape, and Cindy and Lauren, now both finally and firmly installed (on March 27 and November 20) as our senior and associate ministers. Our church's musical life is no less a collaboration than music itself, and I am grateful to be part of such a talented and good-hearted team. This month marks the completion of my first two decades as the director of music at First UCC; if the next twenty years are anything like the first, I will count myself even more fortunate than I already do.

No matter whether we worship in person or online, music is a gift from God to all of us, and the best way to enjoy that gift is to give it right back and to share it with each other. Come share your gifts.

Christopher Brunelle, Director of Music

REPORT OF THE DIRECTOR OF
COMMUNICATIONS AND OPERATIONS

GROVE MUTH

This report will be brief and likely incomplete since I was out of the office for most of the year. That said, there are a few things to mention. Since its success last year, we have continued hybrid worship in the same way with Zoom access, a YouTube livestream, and in person worship. The website redesign, while a bit confusing behind the scenes, has made updating and posting worship services much easier once I learned what everything meant! In exciting news, we now have Pippa Younger as our new finance manager, with her in the office my role shifted back to communication and general operations. There was a blip this year with our bulletins, but they have been fixed and we have been able to return to the traditional format. Since losing both Green and Kevin this year, we are hopeful to find the right person for our office soon.

It has been great being back in the office this month, though I hope I won't be needed again!

Respectfully Submitted,

Grove Muth, Temporary Office Manager

It is hard to contemplate all that has transpired over the past three years of the pandemic; we are clearly in a better place now, as we enter year four, with access to vaccines and utilizing practical mitigation efforts such as masking, good handwashing and staying home when ill.

The effects of the pandemic will continue to manifest themselves, as each and every one of us in this congregation knows. This community continues to demonstrate care and support for our members and friends.

March, 2020 seems distant; this is when Pastor Lauren sought input from interested individuals about a new emerging virus and how to determine whether or not in person worship was safe and how to proceed. The initial Covid Task Force was chaired by Janet Lewis Muth, with Linda Larson, Gary Carlson, Greg Muth, Erin Barnett, Ben Miller, Pastor Lauren, Pastor Wendy and myself as members.

Over the next months and then over the past two years, we have paid close attention to the experts: the MN Department of Health, the CDC, Covidactnow.org, metrics developed by Ben Miller and more recently, wastewater reports for updates, vaccine information, use of various spaces, air purifiers, gatherings of all sorts, and of course, masking. We are linking mask use to community transmission levels and make recommendations accordingly. It is important to emphasize that wearing a mask is always okay and that staying home when ill is an example of practicing self care as well as a courtesy to others.

Our current task force includes Pastor Cindy, Pastor Lauren, Ben Miller, Erin Barnett, Linda Larson, Janet Lewis Muth and myself. We meet less frequently than in the past, but connect as a concern is raised, or if recommendations need to change.

None of our work would be possible without the dedicated and talented staff at First UCC. I am most grateful to everyone who has contributed to our efforts. I will echo my sentiments of a year ago when I add my sincere appreciation for the members of this congregation for your excellent questions, patience, and continued good cheer.

Respectfully,
Anne Meyer Ruppel, Chair
Covid Task Force

MINISTRY REPORTS

Membership Team Annual Report 2022

Membership Team Members: Marsha Kitchel, Muriel Hachfeld, Pat Kriesel, Jean Haslett, Pastor Lauren Baske Davis, Pastor Cindy Maddox

Team members maintained the “Welcome Pads” with Welcome Pad inserts (ordered from Carleton College Print Shop), Prayer Request forms, blank name tags, and pencils. After worship, “Welcome Pad” pages with entries of worshipers were collected each week by two ushers. Visitors and potential members (Friends) were recorded in the computer database (currently Breeze) by the Office Manager, who notified Pastor Cindy of first-time visitors, to which she sent notes. Emails were sent to first-time visiting St. Olaf and Carleton Students.

When requested, name tags were prepared for members and frequent visitors.

The estimated attendance figures Zoom worship services were derived by Jean Haslett from screen shots from Brynn and forwarded to the Office Manager along with the names of attending Visitors and Friends to be recorded in Breeze. The current procedure relating to visitors is that Pastor Cindy sends a note for first-time visitors and the Membership Team sends a letter with a First UCC brochure and magnet after the third visit.

New Member Sundays were held during the Worship Service on June 5 (Jo Swanson, John Robison, Amy & Kadie Ausherbauer, and Linda & Fred Blaisdell) and November 24 (Connie & Dean Merrill, Dan & Christina Neuger, Pamela Thompson & Peter Heckman, and Harley Tate).

Two weeks prior to each New Member Sunday, a Membership Orientation meeting led by the Pastors was held after Worship. Sponsors were recruited for those planning to join. Photographs of the new members were taken by Hans Muessig and displayed in the New Member photo frame that is mounted on the bulletin board in the hallway.

Due to the pandemic, it has been difficult to determine who the inactive members are, so we did not send any letters asking about retiring memberships. Now that we have been back to in-person worship for a while, in 2023 we will plan to do some screening of the rolls in case there are members who wish to retire their membership.

Although attending a Connect group is not a requirement for becoming a member, potential new members as well as current members and friends were encouraged via reminder emails to attend a Connect group. These groups are a wonderful way to have meaningful conversations and get to know a few people well.

Jr. Worship Team

Jr. Worship Team paused during the Covid-19 pandemic, and it remained on hold in 2022 due to the challenge of providing consistent worship assistance with variable children/youth attendance. Hopefully, JWT can resume in 2023!

Submitted by Jami Reister

Middle and High School Youth Group

The middle and high school youth group met regularly on Sunday mornings throughout the school year in 2022, following Covid Task Force protocols. Led by Jami Reister, the 6th-12th grade students participated in a number of fun, community-building activities. When the youth group resumed in the fall, they began working with Janet Muth on the musical “A Christmas Jazz,” along with younger children in the church. The memorable and amazing musical was presented in worship on December 18 and was a highlight of the year.

Submitted by Jami Reister

Meals on Wheels

In 2022, First UCC volunteers completed five weeks of meal delivery for Northfield’s Meals on Wheels program. This was the largest commitment ever from First UCC and represented the combined efforts of 94 individual volunteer hours serving on 112 routes! Wow! In 2023, we will be responsible for delivering meals for 1 week in January, 2 weeks in March, and 2 weeks in May. Please continue to watch for and volunteer when these opportunities are announced. The generous spirit of our Meals on Wheels drivers is greatly appreciated.

Memorials Committee

I continue to serve as the Memorials Committee. My duties this year included writing notes to those who have given gifts in memory of those who died from November 2021-November 2022, as well as a brief presentation on the Sunday celebrating All Saints Day. This year, under the recommendation of both Pastor Cindy and Pastor Lauren, the comments were limited to two to three sentences and allowed for those in attendance to learn a bit more about the character of each person.

Those remembered include:

Tom Pender

Ed Lufkin

Bernie Wierson

Janice George

Bill Johnson

Phyllis Wierson

Ann Wright

I continue as the Memorials Committee of one. For those who have donated money in memory of special people in their lives, I send a note which lists the amount donated as well as grateful thanks. It is my pleasure to do so.

Respectfully submitted.

Barb Howe

Creation Care 2022

Creation Care Revival

When a handful of First UCC attendees, Tim Lloyd, Jan Mitchell, Leonna Openshaw, Jan Shoger, Mary Savina and Matt Rohn, underwent Master Recycler training in Spring of 2022, they decided to turn their attention to the church as well. Beth Kallestad and Mary Ann Polley joined this initiative, and the group revitalized the Creation Care Ministry this past summer. That coincided with the restructuring and revitalization of the church's social justice ministries. It prompted our researching the history of Creation Care at First UCC and revising the mission statement (available at <https://firstucc.org/our-justice-commitments/>). We worked all year with the other social ministries on the variety of endeavors they have undertaken, and we shared a shortened version of our history in the second issue of the Covenant, the monthly newsletter of the social justice ministries (subscribe using the link above).

Zero Waste Focus this Year

We decided at the outset to focus in 2022 and the near future almost exclusively on zero waste by developing comprehensive zero waste practices for the church and educating members to pursue this ethos and its better practices at home as well as in the church. The Northfield United Methodist church has been a leader in this realm thanks in good measure to Mary Ann Polley. We learned about how they pivoted to this outlook as a church and the systems and actions they have adopted. This has helped us decide what First UCC might do and has led us to write an early draft policy that we've shared with the ministers, staff and Council for their feedback. Two members of the team surveyed the church to find which rooms had trash, recycling, and compost receptacles and which needed them. A generous donor has volunteered to cover the costs of obtaining all the proper containers needed. We have begun researching what receptacles would serve us well and how to obtain them. We developed a list of other areas for pursuing healthier zero waste practices such as the janitorial services, procurement of office supplies and the like. We will pursue those areas, starting in 2023.

Composting (part of Zero Waste)

Composting has been a major emphasis for the Creation Care group in 2022. We initiated what we called a composting "soft launch" when the post-COVID coffee hour started in the summer. We supplied a receptacle, biodegradable bags and basic instructions. Creation Care members have been manning this each week to help educate people on what gets composted and see that the bucket is always ready for use by taking full bags to one of the city's collection sites. We are researching the possibilities of regular compost collection by a commercial service and hope to get the church to subscribe to that. We have enlisted the Social Functions committee in following composting practices, have been in conversation with those overseeing flowers about composting discards, and are working to see that WFFF meal activity includes composting as well as other aspects of sustainability.

Electrification

Last summer, the Minnesota Annual Conference passed a resolution that calls on all Minnesota UCC "congregations and individuals to actively plan for and promote electrifying space heating and cooling equipment, appliances, and machines when old ones fail or become outdated as one

of the ways to protect God's earth...from climate change emissions." Its main sponsors would like this year's General Synod to adopt a version of this resolution at the national level. They needed 5 congregations in the state formally to endorse this action before the new year and asked First UCC to be one of those. The Creation Care team wrote a resolution for the congregation to do this, shared it with the ministers and shepherded it through Council and a congregational meeting, where it was unanimously approved. We wrote a Covenant article to help individuals plan to electrify as much as feasible at home, and it explained why households should do this. We have been in contact with the Facilities Committee about the church doing such planning and will do more advocacy and education for the church and individuals in the year ahead even as our main focus will remain on zero waste. We do all of this as part of our mission "in affirming God's gifts of Creation. We unconditionally commit ourselves to the intertwined responsibilities of creation care and seeking justice for the oppressed. We desire that these deeply felt commitments be reflected in all dimensions of our congregational life."

ISALAH

Our congregation belongs to ISALAH, a faith-based coalition that works for a multi-racial democracy and an economy where everyone can thrive. This year many people in our congregation participated in our work with our chief contact people being Leota Goodney, Carolyn Fure-Slocum, Matt Rohn and Lisa Sexton. Pastor Lauren and Pastor Cindy have provided support and continue to call us into action "so we may know that hope.../not made of wishes but of substance/ hope made of sinew/ and muscle/and bone..." (Jan Richardson "Blessing of Hope").

ISALAH at First UCC is an active participant in our congregation's social justice ministry. The legislative work that is the main focus of ISALAH carries out and supports all the other components of our social justice ministry. The social justice ministries as a team developed a curriculum and carried out three different group discussions of how our faith values relate to social justice work, what social justice work is happening at First UCC and where people want to become active. 22 people participated in these discussions. We expect to repeat the series in spring 2023.

Early in the year, ISALAH at First UCC focused our efforts on the legislative session at the State Capitol. We joined other ISALAH members in southern Minnesota and met weekly for updates from the 2, ISALAH-affiliated legislators representing Northfield and Rochester, Todd Lippert and Liz Bolden. They provided updates on the status of bills and issues. We learned how to help in pressing for key outcomes, and people followed up with letters to the editor, testimonies at committee hearings and by contacting legislators and the Governor. Our efforts tended to center on affordable childcare and housing, paid family medical leave, police reform, and environmental matters; especially as they improve racial equity and better life in rural Minnesota.

Many people in the congregation attended the Northfield ISALAH summit January 2022 where we heard from Representative Lippert about his work in the legislature, and then heard more in depth discussions of housing issues, environmental issues, issues around our democracy, child care and paid family leave.

Members of our congregation attended various statewide ISALAH events including monthly central leadership team meetings to plan the actions of the organization. In March there was a Southern Minnesota Summit similar in agenda to the Northfield summit. An in person leadership assembly was held in June, to hear about all parts of the organization - Muslim Coalition of ISALAH; Barbershop and Black Congregation Cooperative; Kids Count on Us representing childcare centers across Minnesota, the young people's coalition, and various regional segments of the organization, and to hear about the current political landscape and what we need to do to move our agenda. Carolyn Fure-Slocum serves on the Board of Directors of ISALAH.

Many members of our congregation participated in events and advocacy for particular candidates through ISALAH's sister organization Faith in Minnesota. The candidates were all people who are strong supporters of racial and economic justice issues. This work continued through the election. ISALAH sponsored a candidates' forum in July, before the primaries.

Starting in August, ISALAH at First UCC worked on a letter writing campaign to the Rice County Commissioners in support of our current system of voting. This was in response to a strong lobbying effort by people in Rice County that are advocating for hand counting votes, as well as questioning the integrity of the hardware and software used in our local elections. Such lobbying, if left unanswered, might result in changes to policies and laws that reduce ease of voting. We believe that every person is important and should be able to vote if they so choose.

The new year starts a new legislative session. We have already been meeting with legislators and others in ISALAH to continue the work of making manifest the racial equity and social justice our faith tradition calls us to pursue. With your help, we will continue to work on affordable housing, equity in schools and a safe environment for all, justice and wellbeing for immigrants, including drivers' licenses for all, the care of creation, affordable childcare and paid family medical leave, and other matters the times and you call upon us to pursue. This past year, we wrote weekly notices in the Chronicle and Bulletin to keep all informed about ISALAH matters and will continue to do this. Please respond as you can to these and other ISALAH requests for participation and action.

-The 1st UCC, Northfield, ISALAH leadership team

Immigrant Welcoming Ministry

The Immigrant Task Force became the Immigrant Welcoming Ministry upon the passage of the Immigrant Welcoming Congregation Resolution & Covenant at the January 30, 2022 Annual Meeting. The Covenant is now periodically printed in the Bulletin and read at church service throughout the year.

The Immigrant Welcoming Ministry (IWM) worked in collaboration with community advocates and organizations to serve our migrant neighbors in Northfield, Minnesota and at the Southern border.

Locally

In collaboration with the Community Action Center (CAC) we arranged for space at our church for AmeriCorps volunteers to host Narcotics Anonymous and Overdose Grief groups.

We negotiated an improvement in the working relations between the Mexican Consulate and the CAC by streamlining access to the Consulate's services through a Google Doc request for assistance.

Much was done through personal meetings to re-educate banks, businesses, landlords and pharmacies about the City's Municipal ID which allows people without driver's licenses to prove who they are and that they are a resident to cash checks, apply for an apartment and pick-up medicine. We participated with the City in an informational booth at the annual Pride in the Park and Hispanic Heritage Days to promote the ID.

On a January 9th Zoom, Reginald Haslett-Marroquin updated members on his and Amy's research and development Regenerative Agriculture Poultry Farm. Then, on August 20th we held a service-learning day, first at their family farm, Finca Mirasol, and then at the R & D farm, Salvietera where 27 people learned about regenerative agriculture and then spent the afternoon working on the farm.

Minnesota

Throughout 2022, Gina Washburn participated in the settlement of Afghan Refugees in the Metro area through the nonprofit, Alight (formerly the American Refugee Committee). This organization continues to solicit volunteers to engage in social events with this population and invites churches to sponsor Ukrainian families settling in Minnesota. To volunteer, go to their website: wearealight.org

Southern Border

In October, Gina joined UCC members from Minneapolis and Elk River in a journey to the US/Mexican border visiting sanctuaries and Samaritans serving migrants. On December 6th a presentation was given to our church members on what we need to know about migration and how we can serve our neighbors.

Social Justice Ministries

In March Senior Pastor Cindy Maddox called together our church's ministries and we formed the Social Justice Ministries. We pledged to meet regularly to share our knowledge and our actions. We also now have a monthly newsletter – [The Covenant](#). In May, we held a Social Justice Fair to inform and engage members about our ministries. In November we held small group discussions with members to develop a deeper understanding of our ministries and to enlist them to join us. As a result, Immigrant Welcoming added: Dean Paxton, Joan and Roger Lindholm and Laura Funke to our team.

[Beyond Land Acknowledgement Ministry Team](#)

Members: Nancy Carpenter, Barbara Crouter, Dick Crouter, Holly Fisher, Dorothea Hrossowyc, Margit Johnson, Linda Larson, Matt Rohn, Gary Wagenbach.

The congregation adopted a 1st UCC land acknowledgement statement in January 2022. It is now one of our Social Justice covenant statements. The statement is framed and exhibited near the east door.

Throughout the year articles in the Social Justice *Covenant* newsletter have featured resources and opportunities to learn more about and listen carefully to Indigenous voices and perspectives. Numerous books, podcasts, websites, and sites to visit have been cited.

Coordinated efforts with the wider community included field trips to Inyan Bosdáta/ Castle Rock, a showing of the film *Doctrine of Discovery*, and St. John's Lutheran Church Courageous Conversation about the City of Red Wing and the Prairie Island Indian Community working together on a more inclusive understanding of He Mni Can/Barn Bluff.

UCC members were encouraged to attend events at the colleges related to Indigenous issues, including art exhibits, convocations, and public lectures. In November Dick Crouter and Matt Rohn presented two adult forums at our church about the history of the Dakota and settlers in Rice County and the Christian mission in this area as it relates to our own church history.

The team anticipates in 2023 that we will update our webpage on the church's website with easily accessible resources, offer book group discussions, invite members of all ages to visit sites related to Indigenous people past and present, and advocate for legislative efforts to support Indigenous people in Minnesota. Anyone interested in supporting our planning efforts may contact Margit Johnson, johnson.margit@gmail.com.

-Submitted by Margit Johnson

Racial Justice Ministry Team

The major task accomplished by the Racial Justice Ministry Team during 2022 was the preparation and presentation of the First UCC Racial Justice Covenant. Many members of the congregation contributed to this document. After more than a year of discussion, writing, word-smithing, re-writing, prayer, and presentation, a special congregational meeting was held on Juneteenth, June 19, 2022 for the purpose of voting to approve the covenant. There was unanimous agreement by First UCC members present at the meeting to approve the following Racial Justice Covenant:

As members of the First United Church of Christ of Northfield, we covenant with God and each other to engage in the work of racial justice to unmask, dismantle and eradicate racism from our society. We make this commitment knowing we are fallible people in a fractured world. Our actions will include building an anti-racist community through confronting our own racism, owning our racist history, and repenting of our role in systemic racism; fostering existing and new relationships to work toward racial equity; committing resources to racial justice; and listening to, trusting, and valuing the experiences of the people most impacted by racism. Our commitment to this covenant rests on our belief that God envisions a world in which people are treated with equality and dignity.

Preparation for adoption of the Racial Justice Covenant included participation in the Sunday morning worship service on Martin Luther King Sunday, January 16, 2022, when a draft of the covenant was presented. Members were invited to respond with written comments, questions, and suggestions. The covenant was also read at the annual meeting, and members were again invited to reflect on the intent and meaning, and to share comments, questions, and suggestions. Through this process of discussion, sharing, reflection, and revision, the covenant took shape with the hope that commitment to the meaning and intent would be taken to heart, and that action toward racial justice would be inspired. Current leaders of the Racial Justice Ministry Team are Jackie McNeil, Kathy Sandberg, and Judy Bond. Please contact them with ideas, questions, suggestions, and concerns.

Care Ministry Team

The Care Ministry Team at First UCC is a group of people dedicated to being God's feet, hands, heart and mind to all people in our church community. We seek to increase awareness of and witness to one another's struggles, foster connection among people and provide ways for mutual support.

The Care Team's mission continues to guide and direct our ministry. Covid-19 is still present in our church family and community. Thankfully, we are more able to be connected in person at our church, homes and Care Centers. Through our years of increased isolation, the realization of needing contact with friends and family became more evident and important in our lives. We are grateful to be able to do in person visits and continue to be vigilant in protecting ourselves and others from Covid-19 and other communicable diseases.

Many people feel more comfortable to meet on zoom or watch services on YouTube. We are grateful for our church continuing to provide that service.

The Care Team has been continuing to reach out to our church family. Thanks to the ministry and beautiful work of the Knitters Group we have been able to give out 51 prayer shawls in 2022. Recipients of the prayer shawls are so touched and comforted by this special gift. The knitters truly are able to put love and care in each shawl. We have delivered about 65 meals prepared by many people in our congregation and given many rides to appointments and other activities. We have delivered groceries and other supplies to those unable to get out themselves. Each month we send out cards of appreciation, support and encouragement to different groups and ministry teams in our church.

We are grateful for all the ways our church community is strengthening and encouraging one another. If you or someone you know would like to connect with someone from the Care Team, please contact the care team by calling the church office or contact through the email: careteam@firstucc.org

Landscaping/Gardening Task Force

Due to the challenge of the coronavirus pandemic, the landscaping/gardening task force continued to count on untold numbers of UCC members to pull a weed or two whenever they stopped by church. Annie Kramer, Ed Langerak, Elizabeth Olson, and Mary Ann Polley weeded and watered specific garden areas throughout the 2022 growing season. Tom Gagnon maintained the shrubs and trees, and Margit Johnson cared for the Memorial Garden. A big thank you to everyone who expressed their enjoyment of our landscaping/gardening efforts.

Prayer Shawl Ministry

The Prayer Shawl Ministry gathers monthly during the school year. A prayer shawl is intended to be a reminder of God's ever present love. It is a gift..for every occasion...joyful or sorrowful. Come join us as we knit for those we care about.

Prayer shawls are distributed by the Care Team. Each shawl is placed in a gift bag with a special note and finds its way to those who are ill, isolated and lonely, dealing with grief, facing surgery or in hospice. We welcome monetary gifts to assist in buying yarn for our project!

Submitted by Liz Hankins

STANDING COMMITTEES OF THE COUNCIL

Facilities Committee

With use of the building increasing, the facility committee transitioned back to more routine activities in 2022.

Early in the year we explored the possibility of adding particle removers to the HVAC system. This was brought to our attention as an option when we researched updates to the air conditioning system. Quotes were collected and recorded. This is a project that could be revisited if major issues arise with the current HVAC system in the future or when it reaches the end of its useful life.

Our elevator maintenance agreement was set to expire in June and Steven Pak helped coordinate the effort to solicit new quotes and find a more reliable vendor. As part of the process we asked the vendors to inspect the elevator and provide recommendations and budgets for any upgrades or major repairs that may be necessary. Lots of good information was collected and is saved in the archive. Schindler was chosen as the maintenance vendor and a new one year contract was executed.

More efficient and reliable fans were selected for the sanctuary. Unfortunately, due to some very long lead times we're still waiting for the delivery but excited for them to arrive and get installed.

In April we began having water issues in the electrical room. Mark was able to identify the issue as a backed up storm drain in the Northfield daycare playground. After it was cleared the issues stopped.

Also in April a large hail storm damaged the church roof. The insurance company was contacted and found that the damage was significant enough that it was a total loss. Quotes for new shingles were solicited and a contractor was selected. This will be a major project that is scheduled for the spring of 2023.

Several other items were addressed in the spring. A big thanks goes out to everyone that cleaned and helped update the Big Room space. A new key policy and a Building Use Application Policy was agreed upon. One of the walls in the assembly room was showing wear and Rachel Egeberg coordinated to have it repainted.

A few years ago the bike racks were damaged by a snowplow and we've gone without since. In August new bike racks were purchased and installed! The committee really appreciates everyone that helped with selecting, purchasing, and assembling them.

In September the committee met with Sarah Kaul, the Northfield Daycare Director. Sarah will be applying for a First Children's Finance grant which would be available March 2022 to Spring 2024. She has a wish list of playground improvements that she will email to us. The committee supports Sarah's plans. Additionally, with Sarah's help and coordination, the problem tree branches in the playground area were trimmed by Cannon River Tree Care. Finally, Sarah met with a community service officer and they came up with a safety plan if there was an intruder. Several things were done to make the daycare space safer for the staff and kids.

Many likely noticed the wear and stains on the carpets early this year. The committee reviewed quotes from two vendors and CCS was chosen to complete cleaning on two levels. This was staged in two phases; the first one was completed in the fall and the second phase is scheduled soon!

When the ice maker in the kitchen malfunctioned, it caused water damage in one of the Faith Formation classrooms. The damage has been removed and hopefully we will be able to coordinate the repairs soon.

The committee decided to organize a volunteer day in October. Many small miscellaneous items were addressed during the afternoon focused around getting ready for the winter months and we appreciate everyone that pitched in and made quick work of everything.

The committee continues to be prudent in its use of its gracious resources, grateful for the members who volunteer on the committee or help along the way, and humble in serving to this special place of worship.

Stewardship Committee

The Stewardship Committee began meeting in the fall to plan this year's campaign, deciding on the theme "Go and Do the Same" focused on the parable we often call The Good Samaritan. The committee worked hand in hand with others from Generosity Ministries to create a plan and write letters to our members. Members of the Stewardship Committee recruited speakers for each Sunday in October to share how the church has made a difference in their lives. We were inspired by the words of Marie Gery, Brad Hoff, Scott Richardson, Mary Carlson, and Mary Savina. Commitment Sunday was held on October 30.

Estimates of Giving began coming in right away, though it took until January to receive enough to meet our financial needs and goals. Dan Sullivan, chair of the Gift Planning Committee, worked with Pippa Younger, our new Finance Manager, to keep us on track, while Dan and other members of the team reached out to people who had not submitted an estimate of giving. It is extremely helpful for folks to complete the forms in a timely manner, but of course we welcome news of your generosity at any time!

We are thankful to all our members and friends who continue to support the ministries of First UCC!

Stewardship Committee Members: Elise Eslinger, Marie Gery, Brad Hoff, Annika Reister, Ann Sullivan, and Pastor Cindy Maddox

Annual Nominations Committee - December 2022

Members: Laura Turek, Margit Johnson, Pastor Cindy

The Nominating Committee worked from September through December to identify individuals for specific leadership positions on our standing committees. Email and phone call outreach was made to individuals to gauge interest and availability. Follow up emails and calls were made by each committee chair to ensure they were still available to start in late January 2023 and that they were clear about their role and commitment details (meeting dates/times, congregational meeting process etc). Thank you notes were sent to those that were ending service and going off of committees.

Our nominees for the coming year are (new nominees and/or new positions are in **bold**):

Church Council (7) Officers (2 years terms)

- Moderator: **Gary Carlson (Start in January 2023 and done January 2024)**
- Vice Moderator: **Anne Meyer Ruppel (done with Vice Moderator January 2024, moves to Moderator til January 2025)**
- Treasurer: **Dan Neugar (starts in January 2023 and is done January 2026)**
- Clerk: Anne Sawyer Heinz (done January 2024)
- At-Large Members (3 year terms)
 - Marty Hodel (done January 2024)
 - Steven Reuter (done January 2024)
 - **Gretchen Gillis (starts in January 2023 and is done January 2026)**

Board of Trustees (5+ treasurer)

Treasurer: **Dan Neugar (starts in January 2023 and is done in January 2026)**

Fred Rogers (starts in January 2023 and is done in January 2026)

David Beimers (Done January 2024)

Nancy Johnson Maloney (Done January 2025)

Fred Blaisdell (starts in January 2023, done in January 2026)

Randy Hachfeld (starts in January 2023, Done in January 2026)

Nominating Committee (3)

Margit Johnson (done January 2024)

Nominations- council member TBD

Patsy Dew (begins January 2023, done January 2025)

Facilities Committee (5)

Rachel Egeberg (done in January 2024)

Jay Demas (January in 2025)

Joan Higenbotham(January in 2025)

Bill Szydlo (starts in January 2023, done in January 2026)

Derek Melby (starts in January 2023, done in January 2026)

Dean Paxton (starts in January 2023, to complete a vacated term done in January 2024)

** Resource for specific projects could be Sarah Dennett as needed

Stewardship Committee (4)

Brad Hoff (done in January 2025)

Elise Eslinger (done in January 2024)

Annika Reister (done in January 2024)- youth member

Marie Gery (done in January 2025)

Scott Richardson (new in Jan 2023, done in January 2026)

In July or August 2023, the Nominations Committee will resume the work of aligning strengths and gifts of the members of the congregation with opportunities to serve.