

188th ANNUAL MEETING JANUARY 30, 2022



United Church of Christ

MISSION STATEMENT

"Welcoming all, we spread Christ's radical message of
love and justice."

First Congregational UCC Naperville
25 East Benton Avenue, Naperville, IL 60540
630-355-1024 / www.loveandjustice.org

CHURCH STAFF

Rev. Mark Winters

Pastor

Christopher Lorimer
Director of Music Ministry

Sue Flaatten, Organist

Denise Majewski
Christian Education Coordinator

Barbara Bailey
Church Secretary

Ann Marie Gajdalo
Bookkeeper

CHURCH OFFICERS

Susan Greenwood, Moderator

Julie Holzhauer, Secretary

Becky Klein-Collins, Treasurer

Lay Pastoral Leader

Tom George
(Stephen Ministry Leader)

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AGENDA
188th ANNUAL MEETING
FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST
NAPERVILLE, ILLINOIS
JANUARY 30, 2022

Declaration of a Quorum & Call to Order	Susan Greenwood
Invocation	Rev. Mark Winters
Reports	
Pastor	Rev. Mark Winters
Moderator	Susan Greenwood
Treasurer	Becky Klein-Collins
Presentation of Budget for 2022 (Presentation, discussion, motions, virtual vote)	Jerry Stonewater
Officers and Ministry Positions	
Nominating Committee recommendations, discussions, virtual vote	Susan Greenwood
Commissioning of Church Officers	Rev. Mark Winters
Closing Words	Dan Zeman
Benediction	Rev. Mark Winters
Adjournment	Dan Zeman

187th ANNUAL MEETING MINUTES
of First Congregational UCC Naperville
(approved at the April 20, 2021 Council of Ministries Meeting)

Special Announcement: Before the meeting began, moderator Susan Greenwood asked Bob Vonderohe, chair of the Kitchen Renovation Team, to share his great news. Bob shared that 6 months ago, First Congregational UCC began an effort to raise money to renovate the kitchen and as of today, we have raised the full 62,000.00 plus some additional funds-approximately 66,000.00 currently. He thanked all the team members as well as the congregation for their generous support of this effort.

Moderator Susan Greenwood called the 187th annual meeting of the First Congregational UCC Naperville to order at 11:06 a.m. on Sunday, January 31, 2021. A quorum was declared with 73 members present.

Reverend Mark Winters gave the invocation.

Susan Greenwood pointed out the annual meeting notes from 2020 approved last February by the council are available in the annual report.

REPORTS

- **Report presented by Reverend Mark Winters:**
- Reminded everyone to read the annual report.
- Acknowledged how unexpectedly hard this past year was with the loss of in-person worship and interaction as well as the loss of some long time church members.
- Celebrated the resilience of the church body in coping with and adjusting to new ways to reach out to one another.
- Expressed gratitude for new members who have joined in worship during this time of Covid, noting that God always finds a way to bring new life.
- Thanked the two outgoing council members: Nell Lorimer, member-at-large, and Diana Lorenz, Stewardship Chair, for their hard work.
- Thanked the remaining council members who are continuing to serve during this upcoming year.

- **Report presented by Moderator Susan Greenwood:**
- Expressed gratitude to everyone as the congregation worked hard this past year to care for one another.
- Urged everyone to read the annual report, especially the ministry reports to find out all of what has gone on this past year.
- Noted some of our accomplishments this past year: Trustees replacing the administration building furnace and negotiating with the new owners of the bank building to make legally permanent the easement that is a good portion of our current parking lot, Community Life's people tree and other ways to connect church members, Christian Ed for creating online Sunday School, Mission's donations to a wide variety of organizations to help those affected by Covid, Stewardship's amazing stewardship campaign as well as the congregation's generosity and support, and Worship for its adjustments and flexibility in presenting worship services and music in a safe and effective manner.

- **Report presented by Treasurer Becky Klein-Collins on the 2020 budget:**
- The 2020 budget had an expected income of \$387,890.00 and an expected expense total of \$382,749.00 for a projected surplus of \$5,141.00.
- After Covid hit, there was much uncertainty about income and giving in times of economic and health uncertainty.
- The loss of rental income created new worship challenges as the decision was made to provide grace to rental partners as they were no longer able to use the church.
- A decision was made to maintain current staffing levels.

- First Congregational UCC qualified for a PPP loan of \$45,900.00 to pay for salaries and Covid related expenses, a loan that was fully forgiven by the government after showing that the money was allocated for those purposes.
 - There was some discomfort about taking the PPP money if we didn't end up needing it. The decision was made to use it for the purposes intended (salaries, Covid mitigation, etc.) and any remainder could be donated to organizations helping those affected by Covid hardships.
- Our income this year was strong. With the PPP money, we ended the year \$43,283 over budget on income; we would have been short \$2,617 in income, compared to the budgeted income, without the PPP money.
- Expenses were \$419,570 actual compared to \$382,749 budgeted Without PPP, we would have spent \$9,079 less than budgeted.
- Actual year-end operating margin for 2020 was \$11,603.
- Fund principle and excess cash at the end of the year totalled \$27,459.
- **Report presented by Trustee Jerry Stonewater on the 2021 Proposed Budget:**
 - Note:** Staff bonuses were \$250.00 instead of \$100.00 this past year. Also, 2021 raises are 2%, a bit above COL.
- 2021 operating income is \$382,224.00.
- Expenses for 2021 total \$389,398 for a budget deficit of \$7,174.00.
- Steve Kilar moved to approve the budget, and Dale Bryson seconded.
- Barb Stonewater asked a question about the plate income on the proposed budget. Becky Klein-Collins explained that plate income is cash and coin collected on Sunday in the plate. Non-pledged income is income donated by a specific individual that is not part of a regular pledge. This year some non-pledged income ended up credited as plate income, though that has been corrected for next year. The only plate income will come if we are able to reopen for in-person worship later this year.
- Bob Vonderohe asked if the kitchen renovation money was included as a separate line item in the budget. Steve Kilar answered that it is in a separate fund, not part of the budget. A discussion ensued concerning funds that have been donated in excess of what ends up actually being needed by the kitchen renovation, whether that money can revert to a reserve fund or if it must be used for the renovation. Although there was some disagreement about the topic, the discussion will wait until it is clear that there actually is an excess of funds.
- The 2021 budget was approved by voice vote as presented.

OLD BUSINESS

- The Angola Partnership was presented by Lisa Mitchell.
- Lisa reminded the congregation about our partnership with Academico Church as voted on last year at the annual meeting, a commitment to learn from each other and pray for each other as partners in collaboration.
- Because of Covid, the church in Angola could not meet and did not have the capability to hold remote services. The church was supposed to call a new minister, but the new minister decided that, because of Covid, he could not fulfill this role.
- Our partnership is on hold as we wait for circumstances to stabilize and improve in Angola and at Academico Church.
- Steve Jones asked a question concerning the use of the adjacent parking lots. We can use the parking lot on Washington and Benton on Sundays.

OFFICERS AND MINISTRY POSITIONS

- Susan Greenwood presented the new officers and directors of the church and asked for a motion to approve this slate of leaders.
- Gene Wollaston moved to approve the slate of candidates; Jim Fancher seconded.
- The new candidates were approved by voice vote as presented.

- Dan Zeman, new moderator-elect, shared a few words about himself and his family. He is looking forward to being the moderator-elect.

CLOSING WORDS

- Susan Greenwood expressed her gratefulness about how we are and will continue to work together to take care of one another.
- Susan also reflected on her personal memories of long time church member Diane Herr, who was moderator when Susan first joined the church council. Susan is happy to be building on Diane's legacy.
- Finally, Susan reiterated her commitment to welcoming all and spreading Christ's radical message of love and justice.

BENEDICTION

- Reverend Mark Winters offered a prayer and blessing for all, especially those who have agreed to lead the congregation in the coming year.

ADJOURNMENT

- The meeting was adjourned at approximately 12:04 p.m.

Respectfully submitted,
Susan McNeal-Bulak

PASTOR'S REPORT 2021

This was the year we thought we'd get back to normal, right? Well, the coronavirus pandemic had other plans.

We began the year with promises of vaccines, and eager congregants sharing information during Zoom coffee hour about where they were finding appointments - all in hope that things were moving back to normal. We stayed worshipping online, however, for the first several months of the year, utilizing Facebook live and YouTube, waiting for vaccines to be more available to more people. We were able to make our way back toward in-person worship in late May, slowly beginning with Confirmation Sunday, where we welcomed the Confirmands' families into the sanctuary. The laying on of hands was limited to family only, but it was indeed a beautiful moment to once again have worshipers in the sanctuary, in person.

We opened up in-person worship in June to whomever wanted to come. It worked out fairly well to start during summer. It's a time of a natural dip in our attendance, and the choir usually takes the summer off. So we were able to get our feet wet in the waters with in-person worship, without having to worry too much about significant risks of high attendance or singing. And maintaining the online worship throughout has also been a God-send for many who could not come in person. Thanks so much to Hannah Graver, Catherine Ross, Scott Farthing, and Sophie Winters, who's volunteer efforts kept that going all year!

While we did maintain the livestream, and most meetings were still held on Zoom video conferencing, getting back to some in person activities was a welcome change for many of us. It was refreshing to finally see more than a handful of people while I was preaching - having people to laugh at my bad jokes, or respond in one way or another. And when the choir returned in the fall, I actually felt a shift in my soul - a sense of hope of healing, of warming and comfort.

As the end of the year saw the arrival of the new Omicron variant, all of us are now again more concerned about in-person activities, and we curtailed congregational singing again. But, as frustrating as this pandemic has been, I'm enormously grateful to have a supportive, patient, and cautious congregation, by and large. You've all been so great about wearing your masks, getting vaccinated, and being careful - loving our neighbors as we love ourselves. In the midst of some genuinely bizarre times, I'm very proud of us!

Personally speaking, I began a Doctor of Ministry program this past year with Pittsburgh Theological Seminary, in Creative Writing and Public Theology. So far I've completed two courses, both online, and am loving it. I am certain that this is a part of my Calling, and have felt a great deal of Holy Spirit affirmation along this journey - even though I'm still not sure where exactly it will end. I'm enormously grateful to the congregation, and to our leadership, for supporting me with time and resources to do it.

I do see some challenges coming for us in the years ahead. The lack of in-person activity is leading to a bit more mystery about where people are, and how connected we are with one another. Our financial contributions have been impressively consistent during this time, but it's hard to know about how relationally engaged we are with one another. How are we as a community? What kind of programming or events do we want? Staffing the Council and other ministries has been a challenge for the past couple of years. Are we able to continue with this structure of lay leadership, or do we need to evolve? What might it look like to have fewer people making up that structure?

I have written and talked about the opportunity of pandemic, as giving us a chance to think more deliberately about what we want to look like on the other side of it - realizing we may not want - or we may not actually be *able* - to go "back to normal." I look forward to engaging you all with these questions in the upcoming year.

Respectfully submitted,
Rev. Mark Winters

MODERATOR'S REPORT 2021

The past two years have been complex – often joyful but always challenging. Returning to the sanctuary for worship was a Sunday of great joy for me as was the Sunday the choir returned. Seeing the beautiful renovation of the kitchen was a highpoint. But a lot of discussions and decisions surrounded that joy.

The COVID Team and Worship Ministry were at the center of the discussion storm. They debated health concerns as well as logistics. Many thanks to Covid Team members Sandra and Tim Banas, Gene Wollaston, Laura Zeman and Pastor Mark. Also thanks to early team member Bev George. They searched the research and then looked at these results with a practical eye – would it work for FCC? Flexibility, as well as discussion marked the Worship Ministry's year. We're virtual; no, we're in person. And now, maybe we have to re-think everything again! Chris Farthing and her team did a wonderful job. Kudos, too, to Chris Lorimer and the choirs and music groups. It was so wonderful to hear you again in person!

The Kitchen Team and Trustees also deserve special thanks. The new kitchen is beautiful – and very functional! Unfortunately, we haven't been able to enjoy a potluck in the Community room yet but my fingers are crossed for the upcoming year. Thanks to Bob Vonderohe, Roger Dupuis, Loretta Finnegan, Theresa Hus, Steve Jones, Vicki Keller, and Pat Weichle.

The other ministries also worked hard this past year. Stewardship helped us remember that we are Beloved by God. Christian Education, with the able assistance of Denise Majewski, strived valiantly to provide our children with education as well as a sense of security in all the tumult. These children also gave the entire congregation a wonderful Christmas pageant via video. Thanks to Cheryl and Aaron Newman for such a memorable 10th anniversary edition. And thanks to Community Life and the four successful weeks of Coffee Hour with individually wrapped cookies. This provided a remembrance of community that has been so lacking. What wasn't lacking was our congregation's financial generosity. Missions donated almost \$23,000 to different organizations and charities this past year. On your behalf, this ministry did the research to make sure your money was going to well-run groups. They also ran Styrofoam collection drives and kept many carloads of plastic foam out of the landfills.

Special praise to our church staff that was stretched and strained! Many thanks to Barbara Bailey, Sue Flaatten, Ann Marie Gajdalo, Chris Lorimer, Denise Majewski, and Gabriel Salgado.

I want to extend special thanks to my community – the Executive Team and Pastor Mark. While Zoom meetings don't offer quite the same sense of community as 3D meetings, all of you offered extensive support to me during my two years as Moderator. And then there's the support Pastor Mark provided to me and the entire congregation. His care and worry about the health of every member of the congregation was enormous – and a source of strength.

Thank you, First Congregational, for allowing me to be your Moderator. It's been a challenging time, but the sprinkles of joy of returning to the sanctuary and attending Coffee Hour were moments to be savored.

Susan Greenwood
Moderator

TREASURER'S REPORT 2021

Overall Financial Picture

- The 2020 Income/Expenses and Balance Sheet are summarized in two the two tables below.
- We had budgeted for an operating deficit in 2021 of \$7,175, but we end the year with an operating surplus of \$22,446.57. **Overall, 2021 revenues were \$24,302 more than budgeted, and 2021 expenses were \$5,319 less than budgeted.**
- Endowment currently stands at \$162,852.83, up about 8.6% compared to the end of 2020. The increase was due in part to special individual contributions to the endowment made this year.
- Our balance sheet shows our fund principle as \$27,955.11 (accumulated previous years' surpluses) and excess cash received as \$22,446.57 (surplus this year). These funds could be used to help offset future operating and/or capital expenditures.

Income Notes

- For budgeting purposes, we planned for pledge income of \$355,369 (2% less than the full amount pledged, allowing for shortfalls in what is ultimately contributed). Actual pledge income in 2021 was \$370,523.59, which is about 103% of actual 2021 pledges (not discounted for shortfall planning).
- Building usage income was much lower in 2021 compared to pre-COVID numbers, but we met the number we had budgeted.

Expense Notes

- Due to reduced activities due to COVID, particularly in the first half of 2021, expenses were lower than budgeted in all categories except building maintenance and related categories; several building improvement and maintenance projects were completed in 2021.
- As reported in 2020, the church received \$45,900 from the Small Business Administration through the Payroll Protection Program (PPP) to support the continued employment of staff through the early days of the pandemic. The church's intention was to use the funds to cover expenses related to the pandemic and/or related charitable contributions. In 2021, the Council decided to allocate the PPP funds as follows:
 - o \$15,000 for charitable contributions related to the pandemic. The Council created a small task force of four members of the congregation to make recommendations to Council regarding which charities would receive the funds. The task force identified three critical areas of need: adolescent mental health, international vaccine efforts, and concrete financial needs. Their recommendation, approved by Council, was to send \$5,000 donations each to: 360 Youth

Services, Gavi: The Vaccine Alliance, and Chicago Theological Seminary's Student Emergency Fund.

- o \$15,000 for making improvements to our buildings for COVID mitigation. Based on the recommendations of the COVID task force, the church spent a total of \$14,774 on a consultant, an air purification system, air filters, and hand sanitizer units.
- o \$15,000 to be held in reserve to cover any operating deficits in 2021. A small portion of this set-aside – \$668.59 – was approved for spending on equipment for remote worship. As there was no operating deficit in 2021, the Council will consider in early 2022 how the remaining funds will be used.

2021 End of Year Operating Budget (Income and Operating Expenses)

	Budget	Actual	Differences
Income			
Member Contributions			
Pledged	355,369.00	370,912.59	15,543.59
Non-Pledged	14,445.00	14,651.50	206.50
Other Period Pledged	-	12,080.30	12,080.30
Plate	3,070.00	572.77	(2,497.23)
Other			-
Interest/Dividends	-	0.27	0.27
Interest Income/Schwab	390.00	23.81	(366.19)
Building Usage	6,300.00	6,355.00	55.00
Miscellaneous	500.00	-	(500.00)
Endowment Income	2,150.00	1,930.28	(219.72)
Total	382,224.00	406,526.52	24,302.52
Expenditures			
Ministries	90,271.00	82,059.06	(8,211.94)
Pastor Expenses, all	144,266.00	142,644.07	(1,621.93)
Building Operation/ Maintenance	83,451.00	90,398.33	6,947.33
Administrative	71,411.00	68,978.49	(2,432.51)
Total	389,399.00	384,079.95	(5,319.05)
Net Operating Margin	(7,175.00)	22,446.57	

2021 EOY Balance Sheet Summary

Assets	2020	2021
Cash and equivalents	239,688.46	204,148.30
Endowment	150,011.96	162,852.83
Other (prepaid bills)	9,063.33	12,038.91
Total	398,763.75	379,040.04
Liabilities		
Payroll Withholding	2,251.85	2,300.64
Accounts Payable	(15.06)	(15.06)
Endowment	150,011.96	163,352.83
Designated Funds	174,906.45	112,012.59
Memorial Funds	44,149.78	51,483.70
Total	371,304.98	329,134.70
Fund Principal, Excess Cash	27,458.77	49,905.34
Total	398,763.75	379,040.04

Respectfully submitted,
Becky Klein-Collins, Treasurer

TRUSTEES MINISTRY 2021

I have been reflecting on the past two years during which I have served as the Chair of the Trustees ministry. It has certainly been an eventful period, both in the life of the church and for all of us individually, I am sure. Experientially, I have personally found the past couple years to be disruptive and challenging; I also feel as though time has somehow both flown by and stood frozen - stuck in a strange COVID time warp. But at this time of year, when many of us are taking stock of our own lives, I'd like to tally up some of our accomplishments in the life of the church. I find that this makes the positives more concrete, and takes the sting out of the occasional feelings of frustration.

Of chief importance, we have continued to weather the long storm of the pandemic, working hard to keep each other physically safe and keep the church financially healthy. It has not been easy, but through the combined efforts of the Stewardship ministry, careful management of expenses, and of course the generosity of our church members, we are positioned for success in the coming year. Quite remarkably, we conceived, collaborated, fund-raised, and executed a wonderful kitchen remodel! It was a true team effort, but special recognition is owed to Bob Vonderohe for championing the project and doggedly carrying it forward to reality. And throughout the past year, we have thoughtfully navigated myriad uncertainties as we made repairs, looked ahead to future projects, and continuously re-assessed the needs of the church.

Some of us on Trustees may have wondered at times how we found ourselves on the ministry during such a turbulent period in our community. I know I have....often. Although some may conclude that they were meant to be in the role, or that this was what God wanted for them, that is not how I see the world. I don't believe I was "put" in the role based on any special talent or competency to meet the challenge of these times. My conclusion is rather simple: wherever we find ourselves at any given time, frequently, success only requires that you show up and give your best. That is what I have tried to do over my two years as Chair, and my hope for the year ahead is that we all continue to show up for each other.

Respectfully submitted,
Dave Nordsieck, Chair
Trustees Ministry

WORSHIP MINISTRY 2021

Last year, I ended my report referring to 2021 as a time to find a new normal. Please allow me to amend that... It has been a year of steps toward a new normal. We started 2021 with prerecorded worship services in January and February, followed by alternating Sundays of live streamed and pre-recorded worship in March to May. At the end of May we began in-person worship with mitigation measures, with the services streamed online to those who could not attend in person. There was even a worship service rerun two days after Christmas.

Gathering in person for worship has required some adaptations to try to keep people as safe as possible. Everyone in the sanctuary is required to wear a face mask except vaccinated people speaking from the chancel area. Communion is BYOE (Bring Your Own Elements), or use provided pre-packaged elements. Passing the Peace is by sign or elbow bump - no handshakes or hugs. Some practices have evolved as we learned more about what we were comfortable with and received more information about the coronavirus. We started out in the summer with no unison reading, but eventually added that back in. Children initially stayed with families in the pews during Children's Time, but in the fall resumed gathering in front of the Communion Table. There was no congregational singing in the sanctuary during the summer, but in the Fall a verse, and sometimes a few verses, was allowed. And in late breaking news, now that we are seeing a surge in COVID cases in January 2022, congregational singing has again been (temporarily) removed. When the congregation is not invited to sing, a hymn team of two or three choir members sings the verses. We have not been passing Welcome pads or offering plates. Those changes started as mitigation efforts, but as concern about surface-to-surface spread has decreased, reintroducing those activities now is more an issue of when we will have the volunteers to support them.

In addition to "regular" services, in March we enjoyed the Lenten musical program of Spirituals. Maundy Thursday was an online service, and about 25 people gathered outdoors for a traditional Easter Sunrise service. SpiritFest was rained out in August, but a few of us still had a picnic in the park after the service in the sanctuary. Totenfest was more traditional this year, with people able to come up front to place a carnation on the Communion Table. It was a joy to be back in the sanctuary, particularly for Christmas Eve. The music program was wonderful, and it was nice to have the Chancel Choir occupying the choir loft and wearing robes for that evening. Due to the recent surge in COVID cases, the program was slightly shorter than usual, and the Lessons and Carols portion of the service had less congregational singing than originally planned. However, we still lit candles during Silent Night and sang out our Joy to the World. We also learned that inverted glass communion cups are pretty good at snuffing out candles when blowing them out is discouraged.

In September, we celebrated ten years of music direction by Christopher Lorimer. Penny Schaschwary put together a fun program recognizing the milestone, including references to Christopher's perceived dislike of music composed by John Rutter. I noticed there was a piece by Rutter in the Christmas Eve Music Program - not sure about cause and effect there. Christopher has done a wonderful job making sure that we have music in each service, taking into consideration whatever COVID protocols are suggested around that time, which seem like moving targets. He also organized three wonderful First at Two Concerts that benefited a variety of organizations, as well as the fun Zoom 2021 Epiphany party.

Every member of the Chancel Choir who could come back did in the Fall, enthusiastic and ready to sing together again even with masks and protocols for singing. It was very moving for many in the congregation when the choir returned to sing in services in September. Chancel Choir members have also stepped up to sing on the hymn teams. Sue Flaatten continues to share her wonderful organ and piano talents, adapting to whatever format is needed.

In October, Laura Kopff stepped back from directing the bell choir. We are so thankful for her work in securing the handbells and starting the bell choir. We look forward to hearing more from the bell choir, particularly as ringing is a relatively safe activity, at least regarding COVID. Deb Zelman and the Spirit Band share a more folk-type of music about once a quarter. The Chancel Band led by Ron and Vicki Keller is on hiatus due to the potential for brass and woodwind instruments spreading virus. And a big thank you to the soloists and ensembles who contributed special music or sang as part of the hymn teams

Many more people make the worship services happen and we are so thankful for them. Liturgists and Scripture Readers have participated in a variety of ways, sometimes pre-recording, other times reading to an almost empty sanctuary, and finally to a masked congregation in the sanctuary. During the Spring, the roles were combined so they were doing double duty. The usher team, led by head usher John Klein-Collins, attends to the needs of those in the sanctuary and greets us as we arrive. The Sound Team, led by Peter Fales, makes sure that we can hear the services. The Sanctuary Preparation team readies the sanctuary for the service. Peggy Bradley and Vicki Keller ensure that the sanctuary is beautifully decorated. Bev Parker makes sure that we are set for communion each month. Denise Majewski and Christian Education have taken over signing up the Children's time leaders-. We are thankful for that and for everyone who has led Children's Time. The COVID Team has given us guidance so that we do not have to make up our own path. Barbara Bailey provides administrative support, including producing at least two versions of the bulletin each week.

The tech team has become integral to the Worship Ministry. Currently, Hannah Graver, Catherine Ross, Sophie Winters, and Scott Farthing handle the camera to livestream the services. Hannah and Scott edited pre-recorded services last winter. Catherine and Sophie streamed the services in the Spring before the congregation was back in the sanctuary. Catherine and Hannah put a great deal of work into researching options for live-streaming and making sure we have the equipment and technology that we need. Peter Fales supports the technology particularly in times when troubleshooting is needed. Catherine updated the church website in preparation for the return to in-person worship in the sanctuary.

Of course, Rev. Mark Winters sets the tone, leads, and inspires us. We are blessed by and thankful for his leadership and support.

Finally, I thank the members of the Worship Ministry, Peggy Bradley, Rhonda Carpenter, Vicki Keller. Bev Parker, Penny Schaschwary, Hannah Graver, Deb Zelman, Christopher Lorimer, Rev. Mark, and Catherine Ross. Catherine has been serving on the ministry for several years and is stepping back in 2022. We are grateful for the knowledge, enthusiasm, ideas, and so much more that she has shared so generously.

Respectfully Submitted,
Christine Farthing, Chair
Worship Ministry

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION MINISTRY 2021

The 2021 Christian Education Ministry members included: Denise Majewski (Christian Education Coordinator), Michele Day, Amy Freitag, Laura Nelson, Eva Kilar, and Tom Southwood. Ministry members really stepped up this year and showed incredible flexibility as we sought to provide our families the best possible Christian education experience through another tricky year.

I cannot say enough about Denise and what she means to our church. She does an amazing job of welcoming new families and getting them involved in Sunday school activities right away. She also recruits the many church volunteers it takes to make our youth program thrive. This year she took on additional responsibilities, including coordinating Children's Time. She continuously ensures that volunteers are well informed, equipped and having fun as they contribute their gifts of time and talent to the Christian Education Program.

Christian Education started 2021 with remote Sunday school over Zoom. In the summer, as our church transitioned back to in person, Denise ran a Sunday school class for any children who attended with their families. In September, as the new Sunday school year began, we finally returned to in-person Sunday school, and it was amazing to be back together with our children. Facing teacher shortage along with unpredictable and overall lower attendance projections, we decided to continue providing 2 Sunday school classes like we had been while remote: preschool through 2nd grade and 3rd through 5th grade and this has proved to be very successful.

Beginning in Fall 2021, we had 7 Sunday school teachers, 2 Joyful Sound Leaders and 1 Daycare Coordinator. This group led 42 active students including: 23 Pre-K to 5th grade students, 12 middle school students, and 7 high school students.

We had Joyful Sound lessons on the first Sunday of each month where children made music together. Sunday school classes ran on the remaining Sundays each month. Middle school youth group met one Sunday during church for a Sunday school class and then, along with the high school youth group, had two evening meet-ups a month.

In December, due to the amazing talents and dedication of Cheryl and Aaron Newman our children were able to complete another outstanding Christmas pageant with the participation of 34 children! Thanks to Cheryl and all parents and children who spent hours preparing a fantastic show for the congregation! We also want to send a huge thank you to Jeffrey and Catherine Ross for once again taking amazing portraits. They are hanging in the Community room, so if you attend church in person, please check them out.

The CE Ministry would like to thank all teachers, coordinators, parents, and members for the time and energy they spent teaching, learning, and having fun with our youth!

Respectfully submitted,
Tom Southwood, Chair
Christian Education Ministry

MISSIONS AND SOCIAL ACTION MINISTRY

2021

At the beginning of 2021, The Missions and Social Action Ministry set four goals for the coming year. We are happy to report that we have accomplished, at least to some degree, each of these four goals:

1. Fully fund Our Church's Wider Mission contribution to our recommended level of \$8,600. This we accomplished by increasing our donation to this important UCC organization that supports both churches at home and ministries abroad.
2. Organize more actual MSA events. Though COVID put a damper on fully accomplishing this goal, we did continue our Styrofoam and food collections, supported the Naper Pride event, and walked in person or virtually in the CROP Walk event. Thanks to **Eva-Genevieve!** for helping us participate in the Naper Pride event and **Todra Oken** and **Pat Swindle** for leading us in our CROP walk participation. Our church raised over \$3,000.00 for this worthy cause.
3. Expand our environmental contributions and support. This is an on-going goal for MSA that we will carry into the 2022 calendar year. We expanded our environmental contributions to include the Illinois Sierra Club as well as continuing our support for the National Resource Defense Council. Our Styrofoam collections continued and grew thanks to **Susan Greenwood** and **Claudia Hackney**, as well as many other volunteers who helped collect the Styrofoam and drive it to Dart in North Aurora.
4. Move forward with a statement of support for the Islamic Center of Naperville proposal for its south Naperville Campus. A letter of support was written and submitted to the Planning and Zoning Commission as well as the Naperville City Council. Mark Winters spoke in support of the Center and many members of the congregation joined in by sending letters to the Council. We are happy to report the revised campus plan was approved by both the Planning and Zoning Commission and the City Council after a long and arduous process.

In addition to these goals, MSA continued its support of PADS, Loaves and Fishes, Night Ministry, 360 Youth Services, Community Renewal Society, and Youth Outlook. We have also supported our own Ellis Billington in his seminary journey. This year we made additional donations to the Northern Illinois Food Bank, West Suburban Food Pantry, Doctors Without Borders, UNICEF, Hessed House, Red Cross for tornado victim relief, World Relief for Afghan refugee relief, and Naper Pride.

Retiring Medical Debt: The Illinois Conference of the UCC set a goal to raise \$100,000 to help retire 10 million dollars of medical debt that burdens our neighbors through a partnership with RIP Medical Debt and the national UCC organization. We prayerfully contributed \$1,000.00 to that goal.

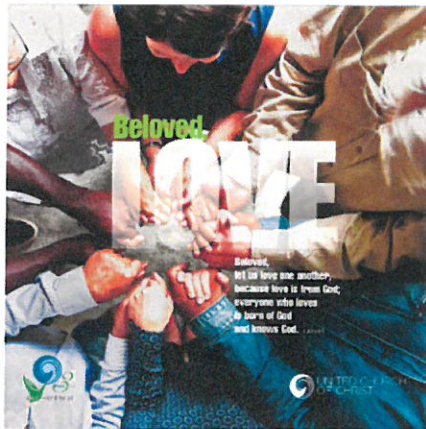
Angola: As we have continued our support for our partnership with the church and language institute in Angola, Covid created some complications as vaccines were hard to come by and hard to administer to the people in need. Special thanks to **Lisa Mitchell** for being on top of all the information and details as this partnership weathered many set-backs. Dr. Moma of the church in Angola came to the United States supported by the Angola Partnership of the Illinois UCC, and we offered our support for Dr. Moma by making a donation to help defray his expenses while here and having Dr. Moma speak at a service at our church. It looks like finally, hopefully, events have settled in Angola, and we will be able to have a productive partnership in 2022.

Fair Trade Coffee: Our journey to provide Fair Trade coffee for Coffee Hour continues as we have found a vendor at North Central College but have had great difficulty connecting to get the coffee to the church.

ESG: Environmental, Social, and Governance Investing: Thanks to the in-depth research by **Gene Wollaston**, MSA has begun a journey, perhaps even a campaign, to educate and persuade members of First Congregational UCC to consider switching their investments to ESG funds. More to come!

STEWARDSHIP MINISTRY

2021



Three Great Loves

Love of Neighbor

Love of Children

Love of Creation

When Stewardship met for the first time in 2021 we knew we would be embracing a year that was once again heavily dominated by the pandemic. Our first mission was to discuss a theme. As we reflected on the 2020 campaign, it became clear that we truly valued the advantages of purchasing a packet of themed materials that are available online from several like-minded organizations. We learned in 2020 that this saved considerable effort in developing graphics and creating outlines for follow up letters and source material.

As we sorted through our options; however, we were struggling to find one that connected with what we all were feeling as a committee. In our minds, we were feeling a year ahead of us that would be full of rebuilding and rebirth. We felt there would be a strong need for reconnection as we all struggled with how to return from some of the darkest days of the pandemic. We ultimately turned to some specific UCC materials and found the theme of the Three Great Loves. We connected with this theme of Love and hoped it would resonate with our congregation as we were hopeful to return to in-person service and reconnect with our community.

With service being a hybrid version of in-person and online we again didn't think a kick-off Sunday brunch was appropriate and instead planned a partnership event with the other ministries to celebrate kick-off. The plan was to give a short in-person presentation and entice participation in the event by doing a Styrofoam and Food Drive (Love of Neighbor, Love of Creation).

The pledges were consecrated October 31 but pledges have been coming in throughout the end of the year. As it stands today, we have received **\$357,742**. This is **\$4,679 less than last years campaign**. I will outline some details below because I think there are a lot of positives in the pledge trends despite the lower number. Also, to date, we have not received one of our larger pledges from previous years. To achieve a similar year over year total despite this is a testament to the many members who have continued to raise their pledges year over year.

The complete results of the campaign are as follows:

- Total number of pledging units participating in 2022 Stewardship Campaign: **103** (2 more than last year)
- Total amount pledged in the 2022 Stewardship Campaign: **\$357,742**
- Number of new pledging units: **12**
- Total dollar amount pledged from these new pledging units: **\$12,465**
- Number of pledging units increasing their pledges: **63**
- Total increase from these 61 pledges: **\$21,271**
- Number of pledging units keeping their pledge the same: **20**

- Number of pledging units reducing their pledges: 8
- Total dollar amount decrease from these 8 pledging units: **-\$4,030**
- Number of pledging units not renewing their pledges: 9
- Total decrease in dollars from these 11 pledging units: **-\$31,145***

***Note: \$21,600 from one member**

A special thank you to everyone who contributed to this year:

- A HUGE thank you to Diana Lorenz who took time out to help us develop the pledge cards and provide guidance through several calls and e-mails. Her organization and leadership from previous years was greatly beneficial to the committee this year!
- Thank you to Jerry Stonewater and Tim Nelson for their partnership on the budget targets;
- Barbara Bailey and Ann Marie Gajdalo for providing outstanding administrative support.

Also a big thank you to the team that makes up the Stewardship Ministry – Frank Breithaupt, Jeff Van Eeuwen, Sandra Blood, and Mark Winters. This was a small but mighty group and we rallied to come up with some great ideas and execute a great campaign.

Drew Walker, Chair
Stewardship Ministry

COMMUNITY LIFE MINISTRY 2021

The Community Life Ministry was excited to be able to bring back some pre-Covid activities this year. We're looking forward to bringing back more events once we can do so safely.

This year our ministry accomplished the following:

- Welcomed new members in February, July, and November
- Celebrated the work of our church secretary, Barbara Bailey, through recognition on Administrative Assistants' Appreciation Day
- Began 'un-coffee' hours following worship during the summer months
- Encouraged 'bring your own picnic' to SpiritFest, as we were still unable to safely hold potlucks in the Community Room
- Welcomed our new neighbors, the Montessori school, presenting them with a basket of apples and messages of greeting from our Sunday School children
- As a congregation, showed our appreciation for Pastor Mark on Pastor Appreciation Sunday
- Led the organizing efforts to move items back into the beautiful new kitchen
- Resumed the calling/emailing tree for a one-time check-in
- Through our Caring Ministry, organized by Bev Parker, provided many church members with meals during times of illness, pregnancy, surgery, etc.
- Resumed full Coffee Hours in the fall, including "Christmas Cookie Coffee Hours" in December

As a final note, we would like to express our appreciation to Bob Vonderohe and the kitchen remodel committee for their hard work, resulting in the wonderful space we now have. We also extend our thanks to

the organizational talents of Lori Shepard, who planned our third annual Pick-A-Party (A Cautiously Social Edition).

Barb Kling and Carol Patterson, Co-Chairs
Community Life Ministry

CLERK REGISTRAR'S REPORT
2021

Active Members as of December 31, 2020 256

New Members Received

Confirmation	5
Confession or Reaffirmation of Faith	3
Letter of Transfer	2

Active Members Removed

Deaths	4
Transfers	2
Inactivated or Released	4

Active Members as of December 31, 2021 256

During 2021, there were 2 children baptized, 2 memorial services, and no wedding ceremonies.

Respectfully submitted,
Anne Swanson, Registrar

DENOMINATION DELEGATE
2021

Once again this year, events for the Fox Valley Association (FVA), Illinois Conference and UCC General Synod were virtual. Encouraged by Rev. Mark, Ellis Billington and I registered for some activities at the UCC General Synod in mid-July.

The two events I attended at Synod were "The Fierce Urgency of Now: Climate Justice and the UCC" and the Opening Plenary. Both were very interesting and the climate webinar provided a wealth of resources, excellent speakers and more than one call to action. I hope to be able to use those resources going forward as our very own Green Team ramps back up again this coming year.

The fall meeting of the Fox Valley Association in early November (again via Zoom) unfortunately fell on a date where I had an unavoidable conflict. Let's hope the coming year will bring your delegates and FVA's events into scheduling alignment!

Thank you,
Claudia Hackney

2022 COUNCIL OF MINISTRIES ROSTER
Officers and Ministry Nominees / Elected Lay Leadership of the Congregation

Moderator* †	Dan Zeman
Secretary*	Diana Lorenz
Treasurer* †	Tim Nelson
Member-at-Large	Marty Shepard
Registrar	Anne Swanson
UCC Denominational Delegate	Claudia Hackney
Alternative Delegate	Ellis Billington

All ministry chairpersons and the pastor(s) are considered members of the church council pursuant to FCC bylaws Section 7.1

Non-Elected Lay Leadership of the Congregation -- Ministry Serving in 2022

Christian Education

Tom Southwood, Chair

Andy Day
Eva Kilar
Denise Majewski
Laura Nelson

Stewardship

Drew Walker, Chair

Sandra Blood
Frank Breithaupt
Sally Pentecost

Community Life

Carol Patterson and Barb Kling, Co-Chairs

David Blood
Loretta Finnegan
Lee Ann Huang
Theresa Hus
Vicki Keller
Jean Kosiara
Bev Parker
Michelle Powers
Barb Stonewater
Pat Weichle
Dave Wise
Veronica Wise

Worship

Chris Farthing, Chair

David Blood
Peggy Bradley
Rhonda Carpenter
Hannah Graver
Vicki Keller
Bev Parker
Penny Schaschwary
Deb Zelman

Trustees

Lewie Mitchell, Chair †

Steve Bradley
Roger Dupuis
Becky Klein-Collins
Joan Lausier
Tim Nelson, Treasurer
Jerry Stonewater
Bob Vonderohe
Gene Wollaston

Missions and Social Action

Susan McNeal Bulak, Chair

Susan Greenwood
Claudia Hackney
Lisa Mitchell
Todra Oken
Barb Stonewater
Pat Swindle
Gene Wollaston

Pastoral Relations Committee

Dale Bryson
Diana Lorenz
Steve Kilar
Rev. Mark Winters

Notes: † Designates a director of the corporation

* Designates an officer