

ANNUAL REPORT 2020



First Congregational
United Church of Christ
Washington, DC

First Congregational United Church of Christ Annual Report for 2020

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STATEMENTS OF FAITH, VISION, AND MISSION

COVENANT OF FIRST CONGREGATIONAL UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST

In grateful response to the call of Jesus Christ, we covenant with God and with each other to be a Church of Christ. We bind ourselves, in God's Redeeming Presence, to walk together in ways revealed to us by the Holy Spirit in sacrament and Word, study and prayer, fellowship and mission.

UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST STATEMENT OF FAITH

Adapted by Robert V. Moss

We believe in God, the Eternal Spirit, who is made known to us in Jesus our brother, and to whose deeds we testify:

God calls the worlds into being, creates humankind in the divine image, and sets before us the ways of life and death.

God seeks in holy love to save all people from aimlessness and sin.

God judges all humanity and all nations by that will of righteousness declared through prophets and apostles.

In Jesus Christ, the man of Nazareth, our crucified and risen Lord, God has come to us and shared our common lot, conquering sin and death and reconciling the whole creation to its Creator.

God bestows upon us the Holy Spirit, creating and renewing the church of Jesus Christ, binding in covenant faithful people of all ages, tongues, and races.

God calls us into the church to accept the cost and joy of discipleship, to be servants in the service of the whole human family, to proclaim the gospel to all the world and resist the powers of evil, to share in Christ's baptism and eat at his table, to join him in his passion and victory.

God promises to all who trust in the gospel forgiveness of sins and fullness of grace, courage in the struggle for justice and peace, the presence of the Holy Spirit in trial and rejoicing, and eternal life in that kingdom which has no end. Blessing and honor, glory and power be unto God.

Amen.

STATEMENT ON BEING A JUST PEACE CHURCH

First Congregational United Church of Christ affirms itself to be a Just Peace Local Church. By this affirmation, we understand that we commit ourselves both as a church and as individuals to a process by which we seek to discern and act upon the links between justice and peace. Our affirmation of the United Church of Christ as a Just Peace Church, together with the study document A Just Peace, have been and will continue to be useful resources in pursuing this course.

OPEN AND AFFIRMING STATEMENT

Approved January 31, 2016

We, the community of First Congregational United Church of Christ, are a diverse group of people; we are persons of different ages, races, sexual orientations, and gender identities who have come from varying social, economic, political, and religious backgrounds. We celebrate our diversity even as we acknowledge and affirm our unity in the presence of God. The differences among us are to be understood in the context of a tradition of inclusiveness. The Apostle Paul declared this truth when he spoke of the Christian response to significant categorizations of society in his time:

There is no such thing as Jew and Greek, slave and free person, male and female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus. – Galatians 3:28

We come to this church community with all the complexities of our individual situations. Among the goals of our ministry to each other is the desire to heal the brokenness we experience in ourselves and our relationships with each other and with God. Our congregation's history shows our desire to heal such brokenness; the church's decisions to be a racially integrated community (1865), to stay in the inner city (1956), and to enter into covenant with the Metropolitan Community Church (1973) exemplify our desire to be open and inclusive. We realize our intentions to be inclusive cannot be fulfilled by pointing to our history. Rather, we must act, and continue to act, if healing is to occur.

Within this context, recognizing that sexual orientation and gender identity can be barriers in our society but should not be a part of the brokenness among us, we therefore confirm our church as an Open and Affirming church with respect to sexual orientation and gender identity.

With faith in and the help of God, we lift up the following as evidence of our openness and affirmation:

- We are open to all sexual orientations and gender identities in our church's celebrations and sacraments.
- We encourage involvement by persons of all sexual orientations and gender identities in the ministry and teaching of the church.
- We are open to all sexual orientations and gender identities in our employment.
- We support education for all ages about sexual orientation and gender identity as part of the broad spectrum of human sexuality.
- We commit ourselves as advocates for persons of all sexual orientations and gender identities so that our openness may be affirmed externally as well as internally.

MULTIRACIAL AND MULTICULTURAL VISION

Reviewed and affirmed at the Fall Planning Evening, October 14, 2014

We, the community of First Congregational United Church of Christ, have long been committed to social justice, and to racial and cultural diversity. We celebrate the diversity of our membership, of the many who use the hospitality of our building, and of our city.

We were founded in 1865 at the conclusion of the Civil War by Abolitionists committed to racial equality. The founding of Howard University in 1867 was a major early achievement of our church. A dispute over welcoming African-Americans at the same communion table divided the new church, culminating in 1869 when the segregationists, led by the pastor, withdrew. Howard University purchased the note on the new building, saving us for this day.

Our denomination, the United Church of Christ, was formed in 1957 from four distinct denominations, inspired by the prayer of Jesus Christ that they may all be one. The new denomination was dedicated to being a united and uniting church. This tradition of inclusion is a prophetic call to our ministry. In 1973 and again in 1986, we responded to the exclusion of gays and lesbians from full participation in many churches. In 1973 we entered into a covenant with the Metropolitan Community Church of Washington to share space and ministry. In 1986 we declared ourselves an Open and Affirming church. We declared ourselves a Just Peace church in 1985, dedicating ourselves to work for a peace based upon social justice. We strive to be an accessible church for people with disabilities, overcoming both physical and attitudinal barriers.

In 1993 the 19th General Synod of the United Church of Christ in St. Louis, Missouri, adopted A Pronouncement and Proposal for Action on Becoming a Multiracial and Multicultural Church, calling on us to be racially and culturally inclusive throughout the life of the church. We are responding to that call. Despite varied and recurrent efforts, racism and cultural biases have not been extinguished from our midst. When we read the Apostle Paul declaring that there is no such thing as Jew and Greek, slave and free, male and female, for you are all one in Christ Jesus, we recognize the call to claim an identity which is deeper than race and culture, one which affirms our unity and calls us to be a beloved community, a community where each and every one is the beloved of God.

We therefore declare ourselves a Multiracial and Multicultural church. In a Multiracial and Multicultural church, all have a place at the table of Christ within the household of God: one body, one family, no insiders, no outsiders, each person's gifts recognized and affirmed. Further, we pledge that the fruit of the Multiracial and Multicultural church will be manifest in our staffing, our music and worship, our programs, our relationships, and our outreach.

By affirming ourselves as a Multiracial and Multicultural church, we are expanding our response to God's call to be the beloved community. Our purpose is not simply to welcome the stranger, but to know ourselves as one with the stranger; not simply to make our community more diverse, but to become one with the whole community of God. By claiming our identity as a Multiracial and Multicultural church, we commit ourselves to a path of discernment and action which will lead us toward the fulfillment of Christ's prayer that we may all be one. We acknowledge that our essential identity is grounded in that oneness. We commit ourselves to proclaiming this message beyond our walls and to supporting others who likewise seek to be the beloved community.

MISSION STATEMENT AND ELEVEN SUGGESTED ACTIONS FOR OUR FUTURE

Reviewed and Affirmed at Planning Evening, October 14, 2014

See the Moderator's Report for additional insights about the eleven actions stemming from the Fall Planning Retreat, September 2015

Working Mission Statement

Approved at Annual Meeting, January 2013

We are a United Church of Christ congregation in the heart of Washington, D.C., led by the Spirit and in covenant with God and each other. We seek to understand and experience God and respond to the call of Jesus Christ as reflected in our heritage and today's experiences.

We welcome people of all ages, abilities, racial and cultural backgrounds, sexual orientations, gender identities, and beliefs to share and grow in faith through worship, prayer, education, social action, and community.

In so doing, by God's grace, we nourish each other; embrace spiritual transformation; stand for justice and peace; and strive to heal our city, nation, and the world.

The Eleven Actions

Life within the Church

Action:

Make intentional efforts to be a place of extravagant hospitality—designing our programs, ministries, and leadership to be a more welcoming of a more multi-cultural, multi-racial, multi-generational, and diverse community.

Action:

Explore ways to welcome and engage new members into the life of the congregation with open hearts and minds to the gifts and interests they may offer to enrich us as we change and grow.

Action:

Explore inspirational, challenging and welcoming worship, music, and preaching that nurtures those who are members and also intentionally considers guests and visitors.

Action:

Continue to strengthen our adult education and spiritual formation efforts as we renew our commitment to intentional children's and youth ministry.

The Church and the Community

Action:

Explore how to engage in our historical commitment to the most vulnerable on the streets of DC.

Action:

Choose to explore a contemporary social concern that connects locally, nationally, globally and with the wider UCC – to be a prophetic voice.

Action:

Strengthen our collaboration, relationships, and connections with other organizations in the District through action.

Action:

Explore ways to offer our building to engage the community through music and the arts, cultural events, and lectures; to develop rental policies that support our mission direction; and to seek out potential building uses that advance that mission.

Action:

Move forward as a growing church – lovingly and intentionally in ministry and leadership.

Relationships and Communications

Action:

Explore and nurture our understanding of what it means to live in covenant/unity/fellowship with one another in ways that facilitate open communication, kindness, civility and prayerful support of one another.

Action:

Critically examine and evaluate the different roles and relationships among clergy, staff, members and friends in order to achieve our shared vision and effectively carry out the work of the church.

MINUTES OF THE ANNUAL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

January 26, 2020

Rev. Sam McFerran opened the meeting in prayer, and a quorum was declared.

1) Moderator's Report. Nan McConnell shared highlights from an impressive year for First Church.

- Council participated in two facilitated sessions on a multicultural paradigm which led to the goals for a Designated Minister.
- Completed a Financial Sustainability analysis and report with recommendations.
- Appointed a Designated Minister Selection team, and with congregational feedback, prepared a set of goals and job description.
- Held an all-church read of The Energy Bus. Council subsequently learned how to give and take feedback.
- Hired Rev. Karen Byrne to support Rev. Sam McFerran's ministry while the church is without a senior minister.
- Held an all-church retreat and discussed ways to welcome a new minister.

- Signed a memorandum of Understanding with Sasha Bruce Youthwork for the Youth Drop-in Center, expanded the program from one to two nights per week, and contracted with Amy Driver as Social Action contract program manager for First Church participation in the Youth Drop-In Center.
- Updated all staff contracts.
- Informed church community members of current news in the weekly email newsletter, timely updates to the website and publication of the monthly Gabriel's Horn.
- Held an Opportunity Fair for the congregation to learn about volunteer opportunities.

2) Decision: The Congregational Meeting minutes for annual, spring and fall meetings in 2020 were approved without changes.

3) Treasurer's Report. Treasurer Nora Marsh reviewed the 2019 Actual Budget and the Balance Sheet as printed in the draft 2020 Annual Report, p.54

Income 2019

- Overall actual income was 98.78% of the 2019 budget, and 96.35% of pledges were received.
- An end of year surplus of \$18,000 is due to
 - Months with no senior minister
 - Building income was up
 - Funds received from Sasha Bruce Youthwork for Youth Drop In Center Wednesday program

Expenses 2019

- Facilities costs were over budget, primarily due to 130.17% of budget paid to Lincoln Properties for building maintenance.
- Program expenditures were under budget.
- The \$10,000 cost to repair of the frieze broken by vandalism will be reimbursed by insurance in 2020.

Balance Sheet 2019 Note \$510,000 unrestricted gifts to the church in 2019 will be invested with the endowment.

2020 Asking Budget

- Income is static compared to 2019, with exceptions as follows:
 - Building income assumes a 2-½ month vacancy after tenant Fresh Farms leaves at the end of February 2020.
 - 3-½ % will be used from endowment funds to help complete major capital replacements repairs. If these expenses come in less than expected, we will pull less than this amount from the endowment.
 - Income from the Ross fund can be used for mission.
- Expenses differ from 2019 as follows:
 - Staff salaries increase by 2% and staff retirement and disability insurance benefits for staff increase with payments retroactive to July 2019.

- The Sexton was paid for a partial year by First Church in 2019 and the 2020 budget covers 12 months.
- The 2020 budget assumes payment of a Senior Minister beginning in April 2020.

Nora Marsh then took questions and comments.

Susan Anderson questioned the increased amount for contract musicians requested by the Worship Commission requested for a student stipend to fill choir vacancy(ies). She asked why we would pay for this service since other positions throughout the church are carried out by volunteers?

Action item: Council agreed to clarify with John Horman and the Worship Commission in the coming month.

Decision: The congregation approved the 2020 budget.

4) Nominations Kim Darling presented the Nominating Committee's Report on page 40 of the draft 2019 Annual Report, p. 40 with two changes. Melissa Ho has offered to serve on Care of Parish and Anna Kiss on Christian Education

Decision: The Congregation approved the slate of nominations.

5) Annual Report. Nan McConnell presented the draft 2019 Annual Report for approval, Corrections were identified to the Open and Affirming statement and Clerk's Annual report of membership (Paul Smolinsky did not withdraw his membership in 2019).

Decision: The Annual Report was accepted by the Congregation, with corrections as noted above.

6) Personnel Benefits. Lucille Dickinson presented a motion from Council to increase benefits for staff other than the senior minister. A draft of these changes to the Personnel Manual was circulated. The motion provides:

- For non-ministerial staff a 5% benefit (3.5% for retirement and 1.5% of LIDI life and disability insurance).
- For ministerial staff other than the senior minister an 11.5% benefit (10% retirement and 1.5% of LIDI life and disability insurance).
- Amended pages of the Personnel Manual also define professional development leave and reimbursement, annual and sick leave and worker's compensation.

Decision: The congregation approved the motion from the Personnel Committee as presented (in the handout, which is attached as Appendix A)

7) Designated Minister Selection David Greer team chair thanked the team for the hard work they put in reviewing credentials, conducting interviews, visiting neutral pulpits, and discerning. In five months since September 5 the team has completed review of 10 resumes, interviewed five candidates by phone, and three in person. The team is rapidly coming to a consensus and will complete the selection shortly. David Greer thanked the congregation for patience, and said, "We did everything in our power to get it right."

8) Financial Sustainability Taskforce. John Smeltzer summarized findings and recommendations which were presented to the congregation FYSA (For your strategic awareness). There is much good news, but structural deficits persist. The Financial Sustainability Report Executive Summary was distributed as a handout and is attached as Appendix B.

Income

- Pledges have been flat over 10 years, and have not kept pace with inflation.
- Older members give more than younger members; encouraging younger members to pledge more is an opportunity.
- Building income is strong and good, but we have reached the maximum capacity for generating income without curtailing church use of the building.
- To sustain our financial position, we will continue to take only income, no capital from the endowment.

Expenses

- The greatest expense increase is the 70% increase in payroll from 2012 to 2019.
- We don't pay too much, but we pay fairly.
- This is not a recommendation to decrease staff, because program increases will require increased staff.

Findings

- The budget has a structural deficit.
 - There is an embedded deficit of income vs. programs across years.
 - Months without a senior minister have enabled the church to balance the budget, masking the structural deficit.
- The Church needs to increase levels of giving and build membership.
- Payroll expense. The church must give careful consideration before hiring additional assistant ministers.
- Endowments – The church must define how to handle new bequests, specifically the \$510,000 bequests received in 2019.

9) Outreach and Membership. Lucille Dickinson presented a motion to remove 11 names from the membership roll and move 24 others from active to inactive. A handout with the text of the motion was distributed and is attached as Appendix C.

- Membership has been stable since the late 1970s at around 200 members.
- The church last reviewed the membership roll and moved members to inactive in 2009.
- The number of members affects the dues paid to the Potomac Association and the quorum required for taking actions at congregational meetings, among other things.
- The changes will offer us a clearer sense of who we are.

Decision: The congregation approved the motion to make membership roll changes.

10) Reports from the Community

Polly Gordon, Finance Committee chair thanked all for the jump in number of pledges and support of newer members pledging.

Kim Darling thanked Nan McConnell for using her true gift for leadership in leading the church this year as Moderator and presented her a small token of the great appreciation of the congregation for her hard work and commitment to our church.

The first Council meeting will be February 4th at 6:30. Each commission must identify a representative to Council before then.

Meeting was ended with a prayer lead by Rev. Karen Byrne.
Recorded by Gail Sonnemann, Clerk

Appendix A

January 22, 2020

Motion from Council on Benefits for Employees (other than Senior Minister)

In late 2018, the Congregation instructed the Personnel Committee to look at increased benefits for staff; \$15,000 was set aside in the 2019 budget for this adjustment. The Personnel Committee recommended, and Council approved in January, significant new benefits for staff. Council was unanimous in its commitment to making a fair and sustainable improvement in benefits for staff, even as we made cuts to balance the 2020 budget.

The FCC budget is more than an economic tool. It is also a theological statement about what the Congregation believes to be important in its life, mission, and program priorities. We believe the proposal is a good statement of those principles.

PROPOSAL: TO BE INSERTED ON Page 7 of the personnel manual where it refers to Life Insurance and Disability Insurance (LIDI) and Retirement.

For non-ministerial staff who work 20 hours/week or more, FCC will contribute 3.5% of annual salary to the PBUCC pension plan and 1.5% for LIDI (Life Insurance and Disability Insurance), with the option for an employee to add the 1.5% to pension contributions in lieu of LIDI. Employees who work less than 20 hours/week would automatically get a 5% contribution to the pension fund because they are not eligible for PBUCC's LIDI.

For ministerial staff other than the senior minister, FCC will contribute 10% of annual salary plus housing allowance to the pension plan and 1.5% for LIDI.

Further, it is proposed to make the benefits effective July 1, 2019, to meet the promise in late 2018 of benefits in 2019.

Background

In 1995, when the UCC fair and just compensation guidelines were approved at Synod, the standards were 14% for ordained ministers and 3% for lay employees.

The Central Atlantic Conference (CAC) compensation guidelines mention part-time ordained ministers only briefly: "Clergy employed 24 hours or more per week should receive housing and all benefits," a reference to the 14% retirement benefit recommended for full-time senior ministers, who are the primary subject of all the CAC guidelines.

Within the UCC, the Northern California conference in 2017 published comprehensive guidelines. In creating the guidelines, the conference considered the policies of the regional bodies of the Disciples of Christ, Evangelical Lutheran Church in America, the Presbyterian Church, and the Reformed Church in America. This conference recommends 14% for "the Authorized Minister." They also recommend 14% for non-senior ministers -- "Authorized Ministers who serve in a setting under the organizational guidance or supervision of a Senior Pastor are categorized as Associate Pastors [in the guidelines] regardless of their professional title within the Local Church." This conference recommends 8% for salaried program staff. For hourly support staff, the guideline uses a formula based on an amount per hour for the planned hourly accumulation, before any overtime.

The Unitarian Universalist Association (UUA) published comprehensive guidelines in 2014, setting a 10% contribution for all employees, which "may be met by any combination of offered employer contributions (base employer contribution and matching contribution)...."

Except for the UUA, different – i.e., higher -- benefits for ordained staff are recommended. Two references discuss why. From the Northern California conference narrative in 2017: "The Authorized Minister's retirement annuity through [the PBUCC] is quite possibly the single most important component of [their] ability to take care of their needs in their later years. Especially considering the lower wages many Authorized Ministers receive in various settings, this is a critical [component] of the way we honor Fair and Just Compensation and support nurturing environments for our leaders throughout life." The 2020 guidelines for authorized ministers from the Indiana-Kentucky conference cites the UCC's statement on 'Supporting Our Ministry': "People who serve as pastors generally do so because they love Christ's Church. Most realize that they could probably earn a higher salary in a for-profit setting, but they feel called to use their faith, talents and abilities to promote the mission of God through the church. The conviction that they are serving the church often makes them reluctant to engage in conversation about compensation. Nevertheless, the church is called to be a fair and just employer. The health of the employee-parish relationship depends on Congregational leadership addressing the issue of compensation and advocating and providing for it as well."

Total compensation and benefits

With this change, employees of First Church are compensated as follows:

Competitive salary or wage and employer-paid Social Security benefits –

- For ordained ministers on staff, we follow CAC guidelines. We use the CAC-recommended cash salary or wage based on experience and size of the congregation. Because the CAC’s cash salary/wage grid was developed to be accompanied by a housing allowance, we add a reasonable factor for the housing allowance. Finally, because ordained ministers are self-employed and responsible for paying full Social Security tax, including the half that is typically paid by an employer, we add a “social security offset” equal to this half.
- For music staff, we follow the American Guild of Organists guidelines, which reflect education and experience, and pay the employer share of FICA.
- For other staff, we refer to the current market rate for the position and experience and pay the employer share of FICA.

Provision for health insurance via individual contracts –

- The Building Manager is on the PBUCC health plan C, paid in full by the church.
- All other staff (including part-time ministerial staff) receive a health stipend reflective of their hours worked (e.g., 45%, 62.5%, 75%, or 100%). The stipend is included in the employee’s pay on a taxable basis.

Retirement and LIDI –

- As provided in this proposal.

Professional development –

- A modest sum is provided for professional development to all staff except the sexton.

Annual and sick leave –

- All non-salaried employees (except for childcare workers) earn annual leave at the following rates:

<u>LENGTH OF SERVICE</u>	<u>ANNUAL LEAVE EARNED PER FORTY HOURS WORKED</u>
Less than three years	Two hours
Three to ten years	Two and one-half hours
More than ten years	Three hours

No more than 80 hours may be carried over into the next calendar year. Upon termination of employment, they will be compensated for unused annual leave earned during the current year plus up to eighty hours of unused annual leave that has been carried forward from prior years. Temporary employees working less than six months are not entitled to annual leave.

- Salaried staff earn annual leave according to terms of their contracts. Their updated contracts specify they are entitled to four weeks paid annual leave during each 12 months of service. A

maximum of two weeks of annual leave may be carried over into the next calendar year. Upon termination of employment, they will be compensated for unused annual leave during the current year plus up to two weeks of unused leave that has been carried over.

- All staff earn sick leave. They earn two hours of sick leave per forty hours worked. Sick leave may be accumulated from year to year. It may be donated from one employee to another. Upon termination of employment, they will not be compensated for unused sick leave. Temporary employees working less than six months are not entitled to sick leave.

Workers' compensation –

- All staff are covered.

Appendix B

First Congregational United Church of Christ Council Report on Financial Sustainability – January 2020 Executive Summary

In 2019, Council commissioned a group to study trends in church income and expenses and to make recommendations on financial sustainability. Despite some difficult years of transition in our building and leadership, we remain on a sound financial footing with three stable sources of income: (1) pledges and unpledged giving, (2) building rentals, and (3) endowment income. We continue to attract new members and received an increased number of pledges in 2020. However, over the last decade (including projections for 2020), giving income has been flat and overall income has not kept pace with expenses, resulting in a structural imbalance and projected worsening deficits. Given our endowment and recent bequests, we are not in any immediate or short-term financial peril. But we need to be deliberate in our stewardship and programming decisions to maintain a sustainable course. The following is a summary of key findings and recommendations from the report.

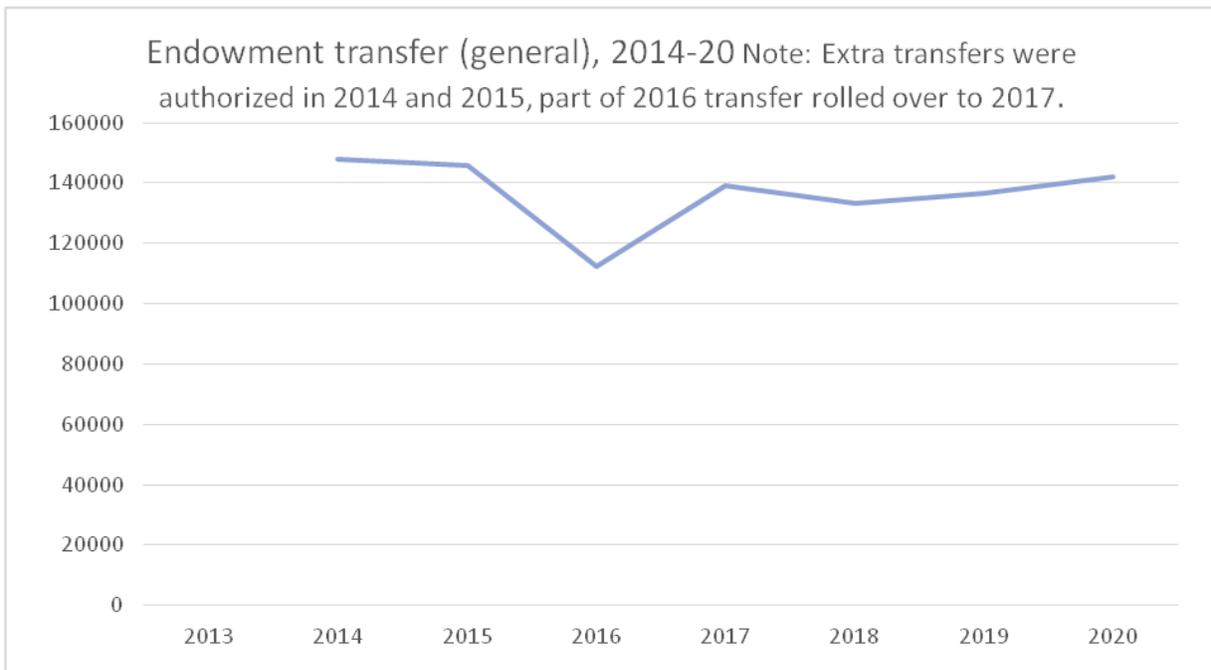
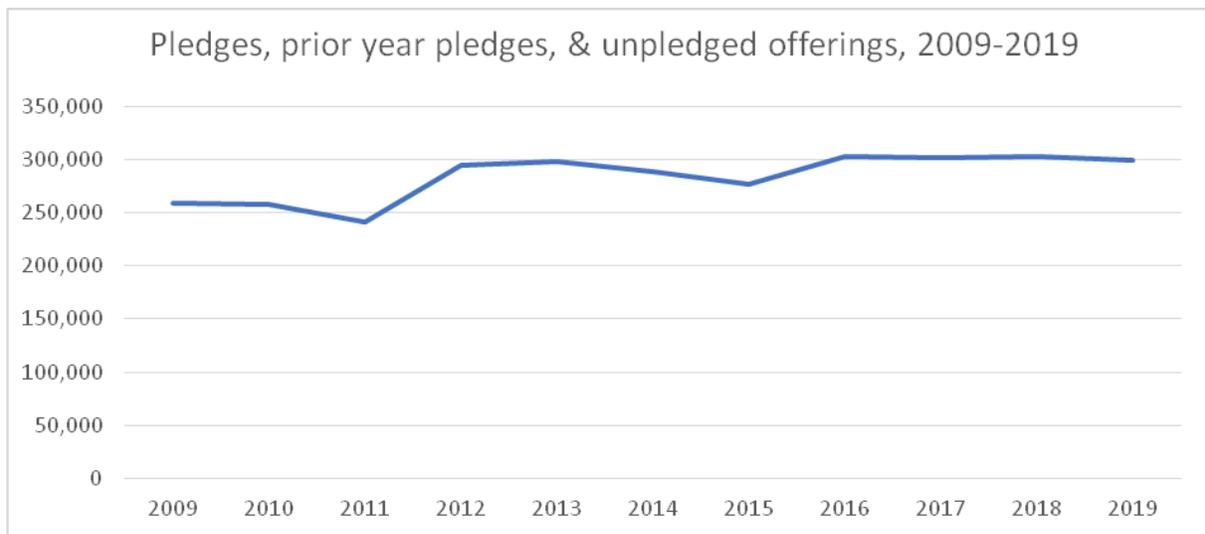
Findings

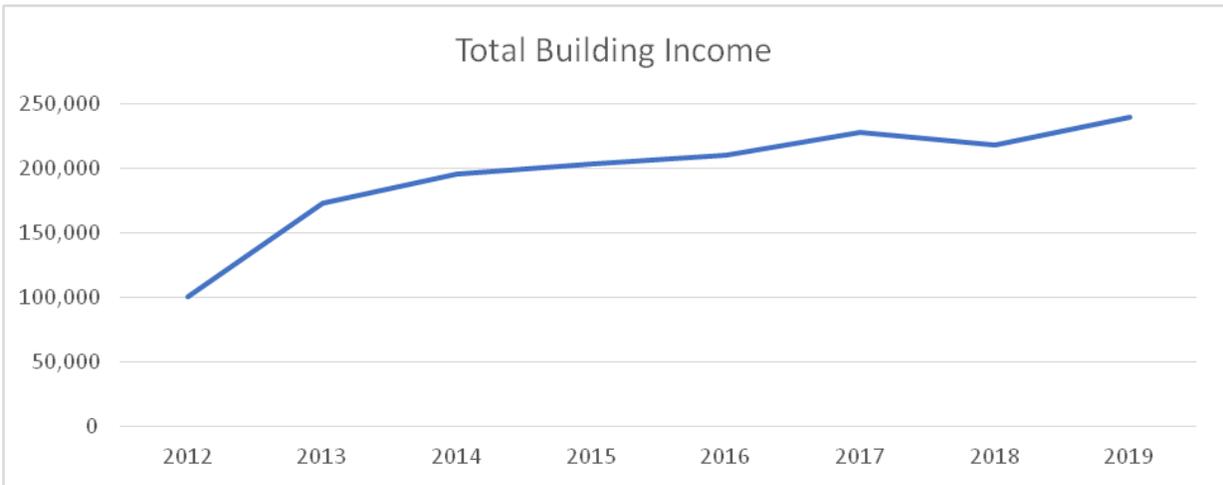
- Over the past decade, our most important funding source (pledged and unpledged offerings) has not kept pace with inflation. In addition, our older members give a disproportionate share of the total (which in 2019 was just under \$300,000).
- Building income (from rental and shared-use agreements) has grown since the opening of our new building, reaching nearly \$240,000 in 2019. But there is little room for additional growth in building income, consistent with present church programming. Building expenses have remained relatively steady over the same period but could rise as systems age. A reduction in building costs is unlikely (if current use levels continue).
- We have a substantial endowment that generates significant income for programming. In 2019, the transfer from endowment was over \$135,000 and will be \$142,200 in 2020. But this amount

cannot be significantly increased consistent with a policy of protecting the endowment capital to ensure steady income into the future.

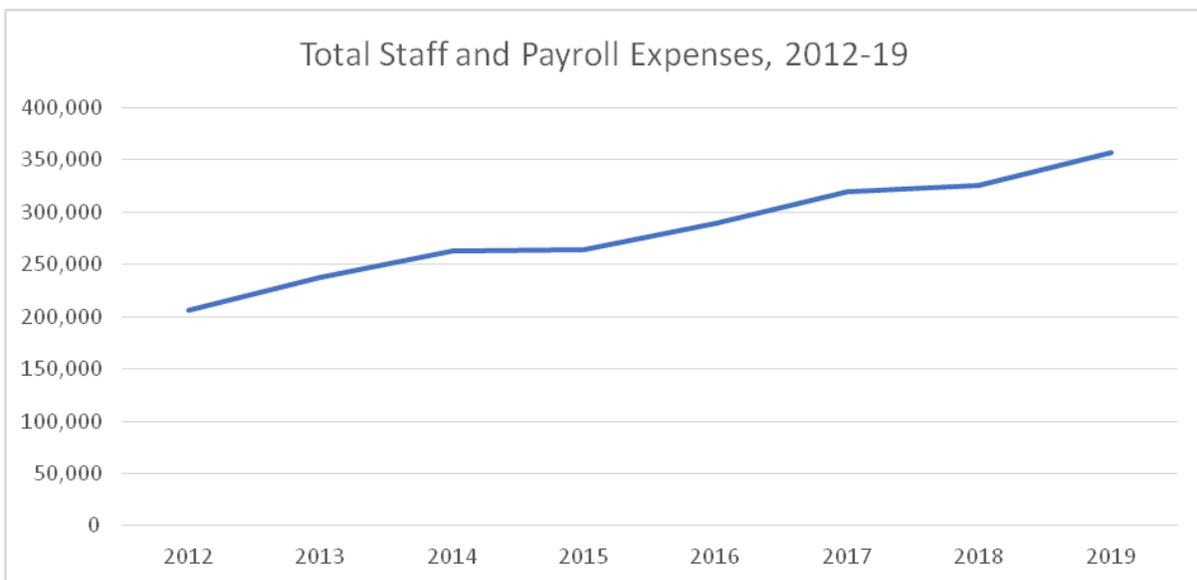
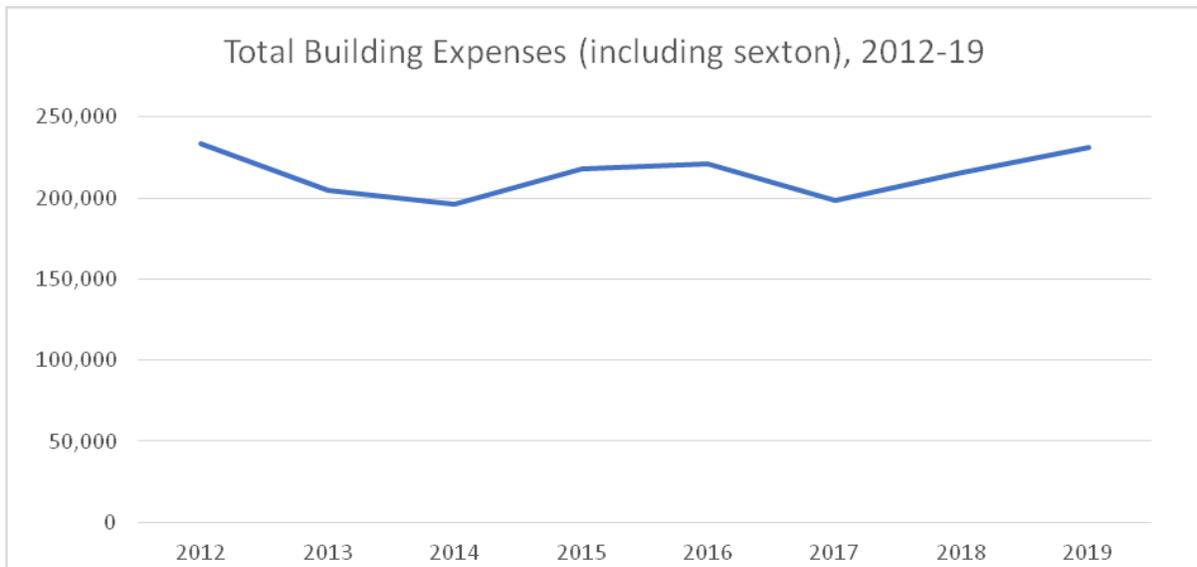
- Staff and payroll expenses rose almost 70% between 2012 and 2019, due in part to increased hours, rates of pay, and benefits to provide compensation consistent with professional guidelines and social-justice commitments.
- The following figures summarize trends in income and expenses. The numbers and assumptions used to generate these figures are available in the full report.

INCOME





EXPENSES



- Predicting future income and expenditures from present trends is very difficult, given the great number of variables. But using present trends in income and expenses, and assuming a continuation of present programming, we project significant and increasing annual operating deficits, to over \$100,000 by 2023. Further details on this projection and assumptions used are set out in the full sustainability report.

Observations and Recommendations

- In recent years, the imbalance in our budget has been obscured by cost-savings resulting from vacancies in the senior minister position. As we prepare to hire a designated senior minister, we need to strengthen our commitment to budget discipline, to find cost-savings where possible, and to think creatively about ways to increase revenue.
- Annual giving is the most important part of our budget. We need to increase our levels of giving—and grow our membership—to sustain our programs and mission.
- We are committed to paying fair compensation to all employees, to providing sufficient hours for work expected of part-time employees, and to providing appropriate benefits. To ensure that payroll costs remain sustainable, however, we need to take care not to increase staffing without a plan for ensuring that payroll costs remain sustainable. We should foster a culture of volunteerism and seek to rely on volunteer work from members, wherever appropriate.
- Our endowment (generated largely by the site redevelopment) is a great blessing and legacy for the church. If we are to protect that legacy and ensure endowment income in perpetuity, we need to bring spending back into balance. But with the imminent hiring of a new designated senior minister, we are also in a period of transition and renewal, which presents new opportunities. We need to be wise about using the endowment, as necessary, to cover unusual capital expenditures and perhaps to make short-term investments in programs that foster growth. We should review our investment policy (approved May 2012) to determine whether any short or long-term changes should be considered, either in investment or transfer strategy.
- We should also review our policy with respect to new bequests. The church has recently received two bequests totaling \$510,000. Council has temporarily segregated the \$510,000 on the balance sheet as a special purpose fund, to be invested by the Investment Commission along with the endowment fund and the capital reserve, pending final decision on the use of these bequests.

Appendix C

As of January 28, 2020

Motion from Council Membership Roll Changes

As amended, motion from Council on Outreach and Membership proposal regarding membership rolls, to move 24 members from active to inactive status and to remove 11 members from the membership roll.

Background

The Outreach and Membership Commission reviewed the membership rolls of the church. The Commission sent notes and/or emails to members who have not attended a service or pledged in some time to learn where life is taking them and ask whether they are interested in retaining membership in the church, narrowing their connection by becoming an inactive member, or coming off the rolls (e.g., because they joined a new church). We heard back from several members, who shared information and provided guidance. We could not reach a couple of people, and we make recommendations about them. Those members recommended for inactive status have been advised that their names will be placed on the inactive roll of the church by vote of the congregation at its annual meeting on January 26, 2020. They have also been advised that their active status can be restored at their written request.

Proposed Changes

No response to outreach, move to inactive (21)

Karen Denny Stanga	(member since 1961)
Andrea Low	(1983)
Beth Minear	(associate member, 1987)
Christine Evans-Klock	(1994)
John Evans-Klock	(1994)
Mary Layne	(2002)
Nathan Gehlert	(2003)
Anne Nelson	(2004)
Hart Nelson	(2004)
Laura Mecagni	(2006)
Gail Spane	(2007)
Michael Brooks	(2009)
Abbie Mae Miller	(2009)
Jessica Lambertson	(2010)
Pearline Coleman	(2012)
Russell Crayton	(2012)
Ezana Edwards	(2014)
Dave Stroup	(2015)
Javier Garcia	(2016)
Sharon Howell	(2016)
Derrick Hodge	(2017)

NOTE JAN 28, 2020: At the January 26 annual meeting, Lucille Dickinson erroneously reported that Larry Minear had responded and asked to be removed from the rolls. As a result, the motion was amended and his name was moved from the inactive list, above, to the remove-from-rolls list. Upon review, his letter covered both himself and Beth Minear. So to be responsive, Beth Minear's status, approved on January 26 as inactive, could also reasonably be changed from inactive to remove-from-rolls.

Responded to outreach, move to inactive, retain on listserv and in directory (3)

John Sherry	(2004)
Mark Tokola	(2014)
Nancy Tokola	(2014)

Responded to outreach, remove from rolls (10)

Larry Minear	(associate member, 1987)
Jean Limvere	(1995)
Patrick Summers	(2003)
Caroline Coffey Zedella	(2012)
Mark Zedella	(2012)
Julia Haslanger	(2012)
Justin Myers	(2012)
Sarah Pettijohn	(2012)
Wendy Martin	(2013)
Monica Carmean	(2015)

No information for outreach, remove from rolls (1)

Peter Dennebaum	(pastor 2009-2011)
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MINUTES OF THE SPRING CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

May 17, 2020

Moderator Kim Darling called the online meeting to order at 12 Noon.

Senior Minister, Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss led an opening prayer.

Video compilation of member testimonies. The Darling-LaGamma family put together gathered video testimonies from members of the congregation about what First Church means to them.

Moderator's report by Kim Darling

- Church bylaws require baptism before membership. We cannot carry out the sacrament of baptism during an online worship service. In order to welcome a new member who has not been baptized, council sent the following motion to the congregation for approval: "Move to hold in abeyance baptism as a requirement before membership." The motion was approved.

- The Poor People's Campaign and Moral March on Washington will be held online in June. Please sign up at <https://www.poorpeoplescampaign.org/june2020/>
- Council and staff are putting together a framework for return to operation in the church building by forming two task forces. Please let Kim Darling know if you wish to join either task force: the taskforce on building use and users, or the taskforce on congregational use of the building.
- A finance group gathered to issue a current balance sheet and a set of 2020-2022 budget predictions intended to highlight the toll of lost rental income. The group includes member of the Finance Commission, the Investment Committee chair, the senior and associate minister, the three treasurers and moderator Kim Darling. These documents were sent to the congregation for review and discussion prior to the spring congregational meeting. Each officer and commission chair has been asked to look at assumptions in budget docs and send corrections or suggestions to Treasurer David Greer.
- First Church has financial reserves set aside for a rainy day, which has now arrived. For this reason, First Church did not apply for a federal small business loan.
- Caring for our staff is a priority of the First Church Council. We continue to pay staff salary and benefits. DC restrictions through June 8 prevent staff from working together within in the building. We will have practices that ensure staff are safe after restrictions are lifted and return to the building.
- We need to plan for extended period of distanced community addressing the following. How do we do more than tread water? How do we show extravagant hospitality? What new programs can we carry out to better live out our mission and heritage in isolated state? How do we find new ways to seek God and share community while we continue to strengthen the bonds that connect us?

Senior Minister's report by Amanda Hendler-Voss

- Congratulations to Dan and C.J. Thayer and big sister Juliet on the birth Jesse William Thayer on Wednesday May 13.
- We are a resilient church and have learned to pare to the essentials, use new platforms and listen deeply. We are caring for those in need and the staff. We have new spiritual practices, with more sharing, enabling a change to more open and heartfelt community.
- Kudos to the staff for creativity and leadership, to officers, especially Kim Darling for hard work and constant communication, Alyx Cheng for tech support, and Sam McFerran for pastoral care.
- In our time of living as a church but outside the building, permanent changes have occurred: We will always offer live-streaming, membership includes many from around the world, staff can work from home, and we can participate in meetings virtually.
- Looking ahead we will have a phased re-gathering, listening to local, state and CAC guidelines but deciding for our own congregation. We look forward to new opportunities for deep sharing in small groups, nurtures, guest preachers and listening sessions.

Break-out groups met to discuss and answer four questions. The questions and a summary of the break-out group discussions follow.

1. How is our current system for Sunday morning worship working? Any suggestions, concerns or comments?
 - Overwhelmingly positive comments.

- Strong desire to continue with online services once we start gathering again.
- Coffee hour chats are great!
- Would like to see nurtures scheduled, possibly on a weeknight.
- People have really like having the choir dropped into Zoom so they have someone to sing with.
- Appreciation of weekly prayer service and Rev. Amanda's spiritual practice videos.
- Several specific recommendations were made concerning the worship service. These have been forwarded to staff and Worship Commission for consideration.

2. When we're able to have small groups in the sanctuary, would you prefer for the church to revert to streaming directly to YouTube (what we did the first week), or would you prefer we continue with Zoom as the interface?

- Strong preference to stay with Zoom. People like to be able to see each other and felt Zoom invited more interactive participation.
- One group did have a stated preference for the Sanctuary, important to keep recording and make available via YouTube for people who are not available at 10:30 or who have internet that gets overburdened by Zoom.
- General sense, though, that the staff should do what's easiest for them.
- Do you have any questions or need additional information about the budget documents that were shared via email? We are going to compile a list of questions and provide answers in writing to be sent out to the congregation next
- General sense of comfort with the level of oversight and information provided.
- Desire to receive regular updates Some questions and comments about specific line items were asked. These have been forwarded on to Finance.
- What are your thoughts about policies or guidelines for when we are able to start regathering? Questions or issues we should keep in mind as we start to form these policies?
- Should follow scientists and gather as they recommend.
- Need to use multiple sources to gather information not just the CDC.
- Health and safety issues have to be paramount.
- Guidelines from NIH and Mayor could serve as guideposts for small groups.
- Instrumental music would be nice if we cannot sing.
- Could we try to create some outside, in-person get together?
- Where would be the big concern as many members come to church via Metro and are not currently comfortable doing that. Maybe several small gatherings at local parks
- Different jurisdictions have different rulings; need to be carefully monitored and taken into account.
- Gather data on how people get to church (drive, Metro, etc.)
- Need to consider cost of sanitizing and Ines's ability to handle the workload.
- Policies and guidelines need to be clear and available, and there needs to be someone who will answer questions.
- How do we incorporate our homeless friends and keep them safe?
- We should not be in a rush to resume full in-person participation – be conservative.
- We should not do anything that would put someone else at risk.

- Some concern about how soon we allow renters, which often means large groups, into our space.
- Concern about the openness of a church gathering where you can't (and shouldn't) control who walks in the door and what precautions they may or may not be taking.
- Also concern about members who may have a greater need for communal contact as they are quarantining alone.
- If we take a gradual approach toward regathering in person where some are in the sanctuary and some are at home, need to make sure we bring on-line attendees into the service in a meaningful way.
- Might try to rethink our more centralized model of interaction and consider a decentralized circle of care.
- Small group gatherings for service efforts like packaging meals for DC Central Kitchen

MINUTES OF THE FALL CONGREGATIONAL MEETING

November 1, 2020

Moderator Kim Darling called the online meeting to order at 12 Noon.

Senior Minister, Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss led an opening prayer.

Moderator's report by Kim Darling

- Based on recommendations of the Regathering Taskforce we have agreed to meet o meet online only and not in person at least through December 2020. Based on increasing Covid numbers, the Taskforce is sending a survey to congregants and will make further recommendations for 2021.
- The congregation used the Zoom polling function to vote:
- Approved: May 2020 Spring congregational meeting minutes.
- Approved: Updated 2020 Nominations Report.
- Approved: Christian Education Commission charter as updated July 8, 2020 to include young adult ministry.

Designated Senior Minister's report by Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss

- Since March 2020 we have welcomed 10 new members.
- Generated and shared a Comprehensive Plan for Dismantling Racism, formed a renewed Antiracism Taskforce, and began plans for a racial justice audit in 2021.
- Through small groups, meetings and fun activities we deepened relationships.
- We have learned to worship online through Zoom and live streaming. Graham Marsh, Tom Sowers, Alison Truhlar and Alyx Cheng provide the technical support that makes online worship possible.
- Staff have made a successful transition of all work and services to the digital platform, e.g., John Horman records music and leads the online choir, Cindy Dobbs has moved forms to online, Rev. Sam McFerran maintains online programs with youth and young adults, Byron Adams shares Covid protocols and maintains relationships with building users, Inez Marquez keeps our space clean and safe.

- Moderator Kim Darling “has been an absolute rock for me personally and for this church”. Thank you to Kim for her clear leadership, embodying our mission.
- Thank you to all of you, for participating in the life of the church.

Associate Minister Rev. Sam McFerran was not present. See report in Appendix A

John Smeltzer reported for the Social Action and Advocacy Commission.

The Commission proposed a policy framework for active involvement in social action issues. See the text in Appendix B. Council approved and brings this proposal to the congregation for approval.

This policy document:

- Guides and empowers groups and staff within the church to be advocates in writing or speech on behalf of the church.
- Confirms that it is important that the church and its bodies be able to speak out and act.
- Establishes a relationship of trust that empowers constituent individuals and bodies to write or speak without prior approval.
- Affirms that we must be transparent and nonpartisan.

Decision: The congregation approved the proposal as the social action advocacy policy of the church. The Sanctuary Taskforce advocacy policy describes an existing policy already approved by the congregation which falls under the umbrella of and serves as an addendum to the newly approved advocacy policy. When other issue advocacy policies are approved by the congregation they will fall under this same framework.

Treasurer David Greer reported on 2020 finances.

- Thank you to Assistant Treasurers Lucille Dickinson, Nora Marsh, and Susan Anderson, gifted “numbers people” working for the church.
- Handouts reviewed: summary budget estimates 2020-2021, and 2020-2021 detailed Budget Actual.
- “We are doing OK” with the 2020 \$748,393 total budget.
- Pledges are up above expected 75%.
- Investment assets include \$649,113 total current assets in general fund, and in addition \$5,548,626. in endowment and capital reserve investment assets.
- Actual income through September was \$345,908, plus the regularly scheduled transfer of 3% (\$179,665) from investment funds. This is roughly 50% of planned revenue for the year.
- We are hit by lack of rental income, both for ad hoc events and long term tenants. We predict a \$93,000 budget deficit at the end of 2020 which will be taken from funds on hand in the general fund. 2020 will not touch bequest funds.
- Program expenses are down, and we continue to make building repair investments that are prudent while the building is largely unoccupied.

Lucille Dickinson reported for the Budget Committee on the proposed 2021 budget

- In this difficult budget year, a special Budget Committee including Kim Darling, Scott Day, Meg Maguire, John Smeltzer, Nora Marsh, and Lucille Dickinson, was formed to prepare the 2021 asking budget.

- A one-page budget summary 2020-2021 handout was distributed.
- Each commission provided a detailed analysis of the cost to carry out its mission.
- The Budget Committee based decisions on the goals of the designated ministry, (become a multicultural community, build community, determine social justice goals), as well as the costs of online operations and building maintenance.
- The asking budget is a draft budget upon which the request for pledges is based. The revised final budget will be presented for congregational approval at the annual meeting on January 24, 2021.
- 2021 budget assumptions:
 - Assumes 6 months virtual and 6 months on site, and the same number of staff with the same hours and salaries as 2020.
 - No significant building income in the first half of 2021. In 2021 we hope to rent the flex space which has been vacant since March 2020.
 - Draw \$112,600 (15% of the 2021 budget) from recent bequests from Marlene Ross and Bruce Hansen to compensate for lost building income and to balance the 2021 budget.
 - WIN dues are funded fully; but we phase down our Downtown Cluster and Penn Quarter contributions.
 - Increase payment to Our Church World Mission (OCWM), which in part supports the Central Atlantic Conference.
 - Increase the amount we pay annually to our First Church capital improvement fund, used for planned replacement of major systems over the life of the system. We dipped in earlier that expected for an HVAC major upgrade and will revise the plan for replacements with Lincoln properties building engineering company.
 - The Youth Drop in Center resumes in the second half of 2021, which is part of the Social Action and Advocacy Commission budget.

Rev Amanda Hendler-Voss closed the meeting in prayer

Adjourned at 1:12 PM

Appendix A.

Associate Minister's Report for the Fall Congregational Meeting

It continues to be both a joy and a profound privilege to serve with the community of First Congregational UCC as your Associate Minister. Since the Spring Congregational Meeting, I would like to highlight the following contributions in the different ministries.

Children's Ministries

- Spring Sunday School – three gatherings per week on Zoom
- Summer Sunday School – twice per week
- Fall Sunday School – one per week (since we moved worship to the Sanctuary)
- Family Fall Outdoor Gathering at Anacostia Park
- Passed out Pentecost sticks to children and youth
- Providing at-home activities for young children

Youth Ministries

- Weeknight Youth Group meetings from March through August, co-taught with Troy Bent, exploring issues of social justice
- Fall Youth weekly "Sunday nights for Justice Journey" co-taught by Kate Foster Connors and McKenna Lewellen of The Center. We explore issues of mission and crossing boundaries in our neighborhood and cities.
- Youth Canoe Gathering
- Planned Service outing for 11/7 with Seabury Resources for the Aging

Young Adult Ministries

- Weekly Monday Gatherings since March
- Young Adult Get-Out-The-Vote initiative (1100 postcards mailed)
- Young Adult hike at Roosevelt Island

Worship

- Helped organize Faith Formation Sunday
- Regular children's messages during worship
- Helped coordinate two Young Adult Sunday Services
- Preached in August
- Organized 5th Labor in the Pulpit Sunday Service

Nurtures

- Two summer nurtures where church members reflect upon the summer worship theme: "Unravel"
- Coordinated nurture by Jasmine Martier to share the challenges and opportunities facing the Cheyenne River Reservation on Labor in the Pulpit Sunday
- Coordinated and planned nurture series led by Rev. Ron Hopson, "Prophets for Perilous Times."

Appendix B

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION CHARTER

Feb 1, 2020– Jan 31, 2021

Chairperson:

Members:

Class of 2020 – Mark Jensen, Elise Villemez, Joseph Meyer

Class of 2021 – Anna Kiss, Alisa Tanaka-Dodge,

Clergy: Sam McFerran, Associate Minister

The Christian Education Commission exists to:

1. Help our church family grow as a family of faith, strengthen its understanding of faith, and be a source of transformation for the wider community through:
2. Designing adult programming that help deepen our faith spiritually and intellectually or help expand how we can better live out our faith in being agents of compassion, healing, and justice in the world.

3. Support a Young Adult group by providing opportunities for community building, spiritual formation, and service to the greater world.
4. Developing Sunday School with the goal of helping each child develop an authentic relationship with God that will help the child navigate the world, his or her relationships, and journey through life. In understanding God through the unconditional love as expressed through the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ, the youth will gain a strong faith identity upon which they can rely during both good times as well as difficult times.
5. Fostering an intergenerational community where the children and youth have a strong sense of belonging to the larger church community. They also are a part of a community where they perceive many adults who are actively engaged in their spiritual formation -and overall well-being.
6. Strive to be a community of love and compassion to one another.

The Pillar Values of First Congregational UCC Christian Education are:

- Affirmation and engagement of life experiences
- Intergenerational experiences
- Intellectual Challenge
- Tradition
- Belief in the transformational powers of faith and community.

The Christian Education Commission assumes the following specific responsibilities:

1. In cooperation with the Minister of Faith Formation, the CE Commission will create a robust Faith Formation program and curriculum for its children and youth as well as an adult education program by:
 - a. Recruiting Christian Education teachers, middle/high school youth group leaders and confirmation mentors.
 - b. Developing adult education programs, in coordination with Social Action and other commissions.
 - c. Supporting a Young Adult ministry that meets regularly and plays an active role in the life of the church.
 - d. Developing, approve expenses and monitor the Christian Education Budget.
 - e. Managing education equipment, classrooms and supplies.
 - f. Coordinating special programming such as family fellowship events, Sunday School recognition Sunday, Christmas Pageant, MLK Sunday which will be youth led, and intergenerational opportunities for youth to participate in worship.
 - g. Setting policy direction for professional staff's work with Christian Education.
2. Review, give input and assist the Minister of Faith Formation with the following responsibilities:
 - a. Administer the Christian Education programs of the church including all members and all ages.
 - b. Select, implement and utilize Church School curricula.

- c. Supervise Sunday intergenerational Christian Education Programs: Bible Study, Sunday Nurtures, and Sunday School.
 - d. Develop and coordinate middle/high school programs, including Confirmation.
 - e. Hire, manage, evaluate and dismiss childcare providers. Work with childcare providers to develop age-appropriate activities for children who are pre-readers.
 - f. Manage the Christian Education calendar and provide regular communication with parents and youth through email, the weekly email newsletter, and with the entire congregation through periodic letters in the all-church newsletter, Gabriel's Horn.
2. Serve as a resource to commissions, committees and other staff on how to integrate children and youth into their activities:
 - a. Arrange childcare as needed.
 - b. Advise groups on age-appropriate ways to integrate children and youth.

In carrying out these responsibilities, the Christian Education Commission:

- Communicates with the Church Council and other commission groups in planning and implementing the church's Christian Education programs and activities.
- Sets objectives for nurture programs and evaluates their effectiveness in light of those objectives.

Christian Education Commission meetings:

- Will be held once per month, or when needed.
- Will involve regular participation in growth and support activities.

Appendix C

First Congregational United Church of Christ Policy on Social-Action Advocacy

Introduction

1. We desire as a church to live out our faith through witness and action; to advocate for the oppressed, impoverished, or forgotten people; and to be an instrument of justice. In furtherance of these goals, we desire to partner with other churches and ecumenical organizations striving for social justice, to be an active participant in the work of these organizations, and to have the ability to promptly lend our church's voice to calls for social justice and policy reform, as circumstances dictate.
2. We are also a church of many members who strongly value independent thought and diversity of opinion. We are bound together not by any religious or political creed or dogma, but only by the covenant we make with each other to travel together on a path of discernment.
3. We understand that there are many different social-justice needs, many different ways of meeting these needs, and many different public-policy priorities among our members. Whenever speaking as a church, we strive to express our deepest principles and greatest commonalities, while being open to and discussion and differing voices on the particulars of any issue.

Policy

1. The church, by vote of the congregation at a duly called congregational meeting, may adopt social-action platforms on matters central to our faith, and may partner with other churches and ecumenical organizations to lobby and advocate for policy reforms consistent with these platforms. Policy platforms may authorize the Social Action and Awareness Commission (SAAC) or an ad hoc committee assigned to SAAC, together with the ministers and staff of the church, to work on behalf of the church and with partner churches and organizations in support of the platform, including through advocacy and outreach and fundraising. Any ad hoc committee created for such purpose shall report to SAAC. SAAC shall maintain a copy of all social-action platforms subject to this policy as an addendum to this policy.
2. The senior minister of the church or any member of the staff or congregation so delegated by the senior minister may write or endorse, in the name of the church, any advocacy letter, editorial, or similar statement, including any letter prepared by a partner church or ecumenical organization that is consistent with and within the letter and spirit of a social-action platform of the church. Wherever reasonably possible, the writer or endorser of an advocacy letter or document within this policy will share the writing with SAAC before publication or endorsement, to enable SAAC to provide recommendations, comments, or concerns. As time and circumstances allow, any document originating from the church ordinarily should undergo a peer review process involving all relevant commissions or committees.
3. The senior minister of the church or any assistant minister so delegated by the senior pastor may likewise speak on behalf of the church at any public forum, rally, or similar event and may participate in any media interview, if such participation is consistent with a social-action platform of the church and the speaker adheres to the letter and spirit of the platform.
4. The senior minister and assistant ministers of the church may write or join advocacy letters, editorials, or similar statements on their own behalf, and may participate in public policy forums and events on their own behalf, and may identify their association with the church in so doing. If the writing or statement is not covered by paragraph 5 or 6, the minister shall take care to be clear that she or he is speaking or participating personally and not on behalf of the church.
5. SAAC shall make available, to all members of the church, all advocacy letters, editorials, or other recorded statements made on behalf of the church under paragraphs 5 or 6, by posting statements on a bulletin board in the narthex and by posting statements or links on the church's web site. SAAC shall also endeavor to publicize or publish such statements in Gabriel's Horn or the church's weekly newsletter. SAAC shall encourage education, awareness, and discussion on any issues discussed in advocacy statements, by providing or directing members to further sources of information and by providing a mechanism for member comment or feedback.
6. The church shall not engage in any partisan political activity.

7. When engaging in any activities under this policy, the ministers and lay leaders of the church shall be *uncompromising* in their pursuit of social justice, *uncompromising* in their welcome of and attentiveness to members with different viewpoints, and *uncompromising* in their embrace of the creative tension that results from these goals.

ADOPTED by vote of the Congregation

DATE: November 1, 2020

CERTIFIED BY: Gail Sonnemann, Clerk

DESIGNATED SENIOR MINISTER'S ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss

*God is our refuge and strength, a very present help in trouble.
Therefore we will not fear, though the earth should change,
Though the mountains shake in the heart of the sea...
God is in the midst of the city; it shall not be moved.
Psalm 46: 1-2, 5*

A New Call in Pandemic Times

When I joyfully accepted the new call to serve as the Designated Senior Minister at First Congregational UCC early in 2020, I imagined preaching and leading worship from our beautiful sanctuary lit up by a sea of faces, introducing my family to this new community of faith, and a celebratory time of fellowship (with cake!). Beyond these visions, I anticipated the great joys of ministry in community—the baptizing of babies and embrace of children, the poignant questions of youth and ministries of justice, the blessing of the bread and cup, the shared meals, the mingling of praise with lament, the feeding of the soul and proclamation of the word.

Then came the date on which I was to start: March 17, 2020. The world had turned. The coronavirus pandemic arrived at our doorstep, and what we had imagined did not come to pass. Instead, my first week was consumed with pivoting to virtual services; initially livestreamed to YouTube, then transitioning to the more participatory Zoom platform. Deep in the heart of Lent, as we walked the lonesome valley, our early virtual services reflected the starkness of the season as we experimented, learned, and incorporated the authentic participation in worship that typifies the First Church community. The choir courageously recorded their voices under the leadership of our Director of Music, John Horman, and those voices were masterfully blended together by Graham Marsh. Suddenly we could join our own voices to others during hymns in worship.

Even as we learned to use Zoom, many attended the virtual listening sessions I hosted to get to know you and hear about your dreams for this community. And still we wondered if we might regather for Easter or Pentecost, while around us the conditions of the pandemic worsened, making in-person worship a risk that cut against the grain of our values. With the clear-eyed leadership of our Moderator, Kim Darling, we conducted surveys, broke out into discussion groups, and made decisions collectively.

We eventually opted to worship virtually through the year's end and beyond to ensure the safety and wellbeing of our members.

Racial Reckoning Kindled

Then, the world turned once more with the brutal murder of George Floyd, another beloved child of God and Black sibling lost to racist violence. Coming, as it did, on the heels of the murders of Ahmaud Arbery and Breonna Taylor, the hunger for racial justice drove many to the streets and to our knees. There, a racial reckoning was kindled, and the flame of it still consumes the land.

Following Floyd's death, a Council meeting was rescheduled so we could instead gather virtually for a time of heartfelt sharing and prayer. Leadership approved a comprehensive response in defense of Black lives: to take a stand with signs at the corner of 10th & G, to pray together with Peoples Congregational UCC, to offer a Sacred Conversation on Racism, and to support the actions of local partner organizations. We occupied the street corner in front of our building with shifts of members and friends taking a stand for Black Lives over the course of 10 days.

On June 19, I met several members in person for the first time as we marked Juneteenth (the day when slavery officially ended) on the street corner in front of our building along with Associate Conference Minister, the Rev. Marvin Silver. Wearing masks and observing physical distancing guidelines, the First Church bell choir tolled bells as we read the names of those whose lives were stolen by racist violence. Under gently falling rain, we offered a prayer of lament and knelt for 8 minutes and 46 seconds in honor of the life of George Floyd. Our children and youth joined us in this public witness, acknowledging that our liberation is bound up in one another.

Following a summer of protest, prayer, and community building, we re-formed the Anti-Racism Task Force, which guided the creation of a Comprehensive Plan to Dismantle Racism. The working plan includes three focus areas: interior (soul work), internal (within our institution), and external (within the city and wider world). This plan offers accountability to ensure we lean into our calling to become a multi-racial, multi-cultural church. In 2021, we anticipate being one of the first churches in the Central Atlantic Conference to undergo the renewed Racial Justice Audit, a year-long process of assessing our community life and ministries through the lens of racial justice.

A Consequential Election

On Homecoming Sunday, we could not gather in person, but worship leaders once again began livestreaming from the sanctuary to Zoom. This offered glimpses of our beloved sanctuary, seasonal settings for the worship table, and included the artistry of liturgical dancer Dr. Josie Hoover who put our worship theme, "Unraveled" into movement set to an original piece of music written and performed by John Horman.

In the weeks leading up to what some characterized as the most consequential presidential election of their lives, we participated in the get out the vote efforts of both the national UCC and our Conference, including a special Faith & Democracy worship service. The Rev. Dr. Ron Hopson led an adult nurture

series entitled “The Prophets for Perilous Times,” which provided a theologically curious space for conversation about what our nation was undergoing and what God’s love and justice require of us.

Despite a lack of evidence reinforced by the courts, the election results were disputed, the President refused to concede, and we watched storm clouds of danger roll in as the transition to a new administration was hampered. Grappling with national events and the pandemic called forth new spiritual practices, deepened our connection with God, and cultivated a culture of collective support. As “stop the steal” rallies brought angry masses to our city’s streets, including white supremacist groups, an interfaith group of clergy from downtown churches organized for action and prayer, nurturing relationships and the shared values of our congregations. When Black Lives Matter banners were stolen and destroyed from three congregations, including two historical Black churches, the DC Clergy Collective responded. We gathered outdoors on a bitter day in December to pray together as Asbury United Methodist Church, under the leadership of the Rev. Dr. Ianther Mills, hung a new banner on their front lawn. Still, the rallies of those seeking to overturn the results of the democratic election cast an ominous shadow over our nation’s capital, reminding us that the work of justice is never accomplished. These trying times have required a robust faith on this leg of our spiritual journey together.

Sacred Moments in Community

On the first day of May, our beloved Ruth Shinn, giant of the church, died at the age of 97. A presumptive cause, according to her family, was the coronavirus. Ruth’s faithful leadership guided us through some of the most difficult and transformational times of our church’s history. The first woman to serve as Moderator, an advocate for women in the Labor Department, her hospitality at her home on the Bay—how blessed we are to count someone like Ruth as part of our living history, to have known and loved her. We gathered virtually from all around the country for a time of remembrance, telling stories and lighting candles that testified to how we carry Ruth’s light. Her legacy is that of a curious mind, a compassionate heart, and a playful spirit. On All Saints Sunday, the Rev. Karen Byrne noted how thrilled Ruth would have been to have her framed photograph next to that of Justice Ruth Bader Ginsberg.

Later in the year we learned of the death of the Rev. Maria Snyder, who attended First Church when she was stationed at the Pentagon as a military chaplain. According to the Rev. Barbara Gerlach, Maria was a strong advocate for the full legal rights and participation of women and LGBTQ service members at all ranks of the military.

This year we welcomed several new babies into our community: Jesse William Thayer, Xavi Bayard Saudek, and Arthur James Mills, beloved children of God. This trio of boys played baby Jesus in our nontraditional, outdoor Christmas pageant. What a blessing to welcome them into the life of our congregation! Seeing their faces in slideshows and witnessing them being held in the arms of their parents in worship on Zoom enlarged all our hearts.

We also welcomed ten new members virtually: Lois & Kurt Fischbeck, Michael Hopkins, Emily Laing & Allison Truhlar, Anthony Leonard, the Rev. David Lindsay, the Rev. Kaeley McEvoy, LaTayna Purnell, and Lindsey Swisher. LaTayna’s membership marked the first time we welcomed a new member from outside the region whose participation will be virtual. Rev. Sam and I were privileged to officiate in the virtual wedding ceremony in which Allison and Emily joined their lives in marriage. What joy! Our virtual

worship services also offered an opportunity to welcome those who had moved out of the region but always kept First Church close to their hearts. We invited extended family and friends to join us, knowing the connectivity and spiritual rootedness nurtured by our worship together was now something they could enjoy any Sunday.

Heartfelt Gratitude

As I reflect back over the past year, as our nation has endured an infectious pandemic as well as a pandemic of the soul-sickness rooted in racism, I give God thanks and praise for carrying us through it all. With God, our common life together was strengthened. With the presence of God's Spirit, our worship met the real needs of hearts scattered across the DC metro region and beyond. With the witness of the life of Christ, we were able to stand collectively to proclaim the sacred worth of Black lives and labor together for a world that dismantles the death-dealing disparities of systemic racism. None of this would have been possible without the life-giving love of our God and the mission we share together. This year has humbled us, but God has truly been our rock and our redeemer. I am so grateful.

I want to thank our church Council for their steady leadership in a year filled with events we never could have anticipated. They consistently met the moment by talking through and making difficult decisions. They did so with authenticity and true care for one another, never wavering in their belief that together we could still be a church worthy of our history as we walk into the future.

I am especially grateful this year to the near-miraculous work of our sound designers, Graham Marsh and Tom Sowers, and our Zoom moderators, Alyx Cheng and Allison Truhlar. The hours they contributed to making our worship flow happened behind the scenes. Without Graham, the meaningful music of Advent and Christmas would not have been possible. Tom's calm facilitation of our sound and video systems within the sanctuary enabled us to bring worship to you from our beloved sacred space. Alyx and Allison both sacrificed their own worship experience to enable you to connect to worship, managing pre-recorded files, learning to spot-light and sending us into break-out rooms for Zoom coffee hours. I give God thanks for each one of them.

I thank our staff. It is difficult to convey what was required of them in 2020: new learning, transitioning our ministries to virtual spaces, adapting to new leadership, and doing most of it by working from home. Ines worked tirelessly to keep our spaces clean and safe. Byron created new COVID protocol, ordered necessary supplies, and maintained essential relationships with groups that rent our space. Cindy transitioned many of the forms on which we rely to a virtual format, enabling us to share everything from worship folders and newsletters to new member forms. John learned the ins and outs of pre-recording music, reconvened the choir virtually, and encouraged them to record tracks that produced choir-led hymns. He curated and recorded special music all with an eye toward the season of worship. Rev. Sam created meaningful online communities among our Young Adult group, our youth, and our children. He empowered these groups to lead worship services that proved to be some of the most meaningful moments for our entire community. His kindhearted pastoral care made a tremendous difference in the lives of our members. It has been my absolute privilege to lead and co-labor alongside our staff team as we strive to forward the mission of First Church in unprecedented times.

Finally, this congregation thrived in adversity because of the competent, thoughtful leadership of our Moderator, Kim Darling. Even before my first day on the job, Kim sought to create a relationship with me characterized by support, collaboration, and accountability. So much of what I have done this year has been improved because of Kim's insights, patience, and insistence on a healthy process. To say Kim has gone above and beyond the call of duty is to understate the truth. Her leadership has been a Godsend to me, and to all of us. From the bottom of my heart, I offer my thanks. Please take the time to thank our Kim, our staff, and our leadership for all they have done.

Looking Ahead

In writing this report, our beloved Capitol was breached by an insurrection of violent white supremacists, endangering the lives of our elected leaders and desecrating a space we revere. Some extremists carried the symbols of our Christian faith—crosses, Bibles, and the name of Jesus. This is absolute heresy and idolatry of the highest order. The terrible disparity in the response of the police and National Guard which allowed this breach to take place has made us heartsick. That all of this was incited by a President in his final weeks of office has reminded the world that this is the culmination of years of bullying and fomenting violence. The Bible tells us that we reap what we sow, and our leaders have sown division, disparagement, and hatred for too long. Much work lies ahead—to give voice to a Christian faith rooted in justice and liberation, to dismantle systems of oppression, and to work collaboratively to press toward policies that support the most vulnerable. We will organize, we will pray, we will seek to root all that we do in the ways of Jesus—the one who came to us as a refugee, who healed the diseased, loved the untouchables and spoke truth to power.

In the year ahead, we anticipate regathering for in-person worship when it is safe. And yet, we will not simply resume old norms. 2020 has changed us in profound and necessary ways. We will integrate new learnings to offer a hybrid worship service that remains accessible and participatory to those cannot be with us in person. Commissions and Council will continue to offer virtual options to gather for the work of the church. Together, we will audit our ministries through the lens of racial justice to develop a plan for transformation. We will continue to grow in body and spirit.

I long to be with you in person. Ours is an incarnational faith in the God who came to us in the Word made flesh. I look forward to greeting each other with great joy, experiencing worship in the sanctuary, standing shoulder-to-shoulder in the work of justice. When you are ill, I want to visit you. When you face despair, I want to clasp hands to pray with you. I long to bless babies, baptize new members, celebrate weddings and be physically present in grief and loss. With God's grace, we will get there. In the meantime, may you know in your bones the holy truth of God with us, God for us, God in us. Thank you, First Church, for an achingly beautiful year. Ministry is truly about loving God's people, and the love I have found in you this year blesses me daily.

In Gratitude,
Amanda

DIRECTOR OF MUSIC ANNUAL REPORT 2020

John D. Horman, Director of Music

The only aspect of 2020 that could be termed “normal” was how it all began. January and February, commonly referred to in the liturgical calendar as “Ordinary Time” were like any other year. And then things became anything but ordinary. Rather than detail the transition from the ordinary to the atypical, I’d prefer in this report to simply describe what we found necessary to do in order to adapt and create an effective response to the pandemic.

In the middle of March, we welcomed Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss as pastor and head of staff at First Church. Her first Sunday to preach, ironically was the very first Sunday of the DC lockdown, with only a small worship team in the sanctuary. The congregation watched on Zoom as we executed worship from an empty room. Covid 19 fully struck and a total lockdown began. The sanctuary was no longer safe for face-to-face congregational worship. After a week or two of live streaming from the sanctuary, the worship team vacated the sanctuary, remotely streaming pre-recorded worship components in a “dropped” Zoom format.

From this point forward in my report I’d like to pass on to the reader what I have gleaned, valuable learnings from the process of adapting to a live streaming worship format in 2020.

Positive realizations:

- True creativity results when you are tested. (Example: the creation of a hand chime choir)
- The process of trial and error is under-rated as long as you don’t keep repeating the error.
- Knowing when to say “I don’t know how to do that” is an absolute necessity. I learned to do that, sometimes the hard way.
- Cooperative planning is the only way to survive. The church staff had to work as a team and we did.
- Accepting the inevitable is not a viable strategy. Anticipating potential problems - trying to either avoid them or mitigate them before they occur is essential to smooth worship execution.
- When you work on an assembly line, you must trust others on the line to do their part.
- You can’t please everyone; you must work to do the best you can and ignore unwarranted criticism. You were hired for your ability and expertise—trust in it.
- Creating music remotely is more about the people who participate than the product itself. I’ve always known this but the pandemic reinforced that belief.
- Using an online format allows for the musical participation of people who no longer live in the immediate vicinity of First Church. Connections are re-formed and relationships solidified.
- Contrary to what might be thought, creating worship under pandemic conditions takes more time and thought than face to face. I worked more than my assigned hours.
- You are never too old to learn new things and improve old skills. I began to take organ lessons in the fall to polish my technique and increase my repertoire. It was the right thing to do.

During the last year many, many people created the music heard in worship. With apologies beforehand for any I might have missed, here are the people you should thank.

Instrumentalists:

Bill Burns, horn
Scott Herman, trumpet
Alicia Herman, French horn
Abigail Cipparone, French horn
Jason Labrador, violin
Cindy Dobbs, piano
Anna Resch, piano
Stella Dilorio, piano
Ava Pakiam, violin
Mary Catherine Hayes, violin
Michael Hopkins, percussion
Cambria Van de Vaarst, harp
Tadashi Dodge, bass viol

Vocalists:

Moira Jones, soprano
Polly Gordan, soprano
Carol Malone, soprano
Marian Drake, mezzo soprano
The Marsh Family (Carolyn, John and Nora)
Alicia Herman, soprano
Judith Gray, alto
Justin Antos, tenor
Ron Yoder, tenor

Members of the First Church Choir:

Jean Alexander
Justin Antos
Diane Brenneman

Lucille Dickinson
Marian Drake
Polly Gordan
Judith Gray
Welling Hall
Mary Catherine Hayes
Cynthia Hobbs
Moira Jones
Randy Jones
Carol Malone
Carolyn Marsh
John Marsh
Nora Marsh
Dale Ostrander
Gail Sonnemann
Alisa Tanaka-Dodge
Priscilla Waters
Ron Yoder
Kristi Goodfellow

The First Church Hand Chime Choir

Polly Gordon
Moira Jones
Karen Byrne
Carol Malone
Diane Brenneman
John Horman
John Marsh
Nora Marsh
Cindy Dobbs

I wish to thank our two pastors, Amanda Hendler-Voss and Sam McFerran for their supportiveness, Byron Adams for his attentiveness to building details, and Cindy Dobbs for her infinite patience, abiding friendship and deadline leniencies. Also, I'd like to acknowledge the spirited participation of all members of the worship commission during this trying year. Last but not least: Graham, Allison, Tom, and Alyx all humanize the word "tech" and put it back in the word, "technology." They were always working to make things work. Thanks to all.

Respectfully submitted,
John Horman, Director of Music

BUILDING MANAGER ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Byron Adams, Building Manager

In 2020, the building generated \$101,690 in income, less than half of 2019's figure of \$222,191. FreshFarm moved out at the end of February and once we had completed renovations in their former space, COVID was upon us making it difficult to find a replacement tenant. Pathways did take over a small portion of the FreshFarm space and their rent rose accordingly. Our building rental calendar was full for the spring and several dates reserved for the fall as well. In the space of 36 hours on March 12 and 13, those reservations all cancelled. Facilities Commission had prepared for this possibility a few weeks before by agreeing that we would treat our building users gently in order to maintain our long-term relationships with them rather than grasping onto a few thousand dollars in reservation deposits.

We are hopeful that we will be able to find a tenant for the remaining flex space (about 1,600 square feet) by mid-year and that musical groups will begin making performance reservations for fall 2021. I received an inquiry from the Washington Men's Camerata for June 2022. I look forward to the time when our sanctuary is again a venue for live concerts.

Sexton

Ines Marques continues as our full-time sexton and does an amazing job keeping our building clean. During this unusual period, she has focused her efforts on major deep-cleaning projects that are difficult to undertake during busy rental periods. When you are finally able to return to the building, you will be amazed at how the limestone floors now glow like they did when we first moved in. Ines is very grateful for the church's commitment to maintain staff incomes through the pandemic. Of her extended family of eleven people in the area, she is the only one who has not lost their job or taken big cuts in hours.

Property Manager

We continue our relationship with Lincoln Property Company to maintain building systems. Justin and Osmar, engineers who work for Lincoln, make this place work. They're prompt, courteous, always smiling and always willing to go above and beyond what our contracts require them to do.

Major Repairs & Improvements

In 2019, we planned to spend a large chunk of money in 2020 on major repairs. These repairs were paid for out of our LPC and repair budget lines:

- \$11,700 to replace a window in the chapel lightbox that shattered and was not covered by insurance. This required a special lift twice, securing the shattered glass from falling to the sidewalk below, and custom-manufactured glass panel in terms of size and tint.
- \$7,807 to paint the walls of the Narthex and first floor elevator lobby, Second Floor Landing and North Corridor, Community Hall, and Chapel (including repairing a crack from building settlement). Calvin Medrano was hired to do the painting and he did a meticulous job!
- \$6,300 for modifications to the flex space to allow Pathways to occupy more space and to paint the remainder of the space for a potential new tenant.
- \$5,395 for boiler repairs.
- \$4,837 to replace the power-assist, outer, front door yet again.
- \$3,915 to replace one of the motors that operate the shades on the G Street Windows.

- \$2,345 to replace a failed in-floor door closer for one of the first floor, northwest corner sanctuary doors. Unfortunately, the failed closer was concreted in, thus necessitating chipping the edges of several limestone floor tiles to install the new one. We have not yet decided how to address making repairs to the flooring.
- \$1,400 for repairs to the ice machine.

Frieze

All of the panels from the frieze that were damaged in the 2019 break-in were sent to Bovano in Connecticut for restoration. They cleaned, restored, and repaired all the frieze panels, adjusted the skin tone and hair styles of the white people in one panel so they better depicted a more racially/ethnically diverse world view, and re-installed them in the Narthex and the Second Floor Landing. Words are not adequate to describe how stunning they look. The \$26,300 cost was covered by our UCC insurance policy.

COVID

In the process of addressing COVID concerns, we have clarified that:

- our air handlers use MERV-13 filters, the best filtration option short of HEPA,
- the exhaust fans for the bathrooms vent more than enough air to the outside to prevent air from the bathrooms to waft out into the building,
- the HVAC system pulls in an abundance of fresh, outside air into our interior spaces, and
- we need to review and update our HVAC replacement schedule. A project for which we need the expertise of a mechanical engineer. We are attempting to contract with one.

Church Staff

My heartfelt thanks to my colleagues here at the church. Their dedication, sense of humor, and calm in the face of the challenges of 2020 makes this place work. In particular, Ines is a delight and always has a smile, and Cindy's humor (snarky and kind), intelligence, efficiency, and kindness make a big difference to me and all who interact with her. I miss interacting with Cindy face-to-face!

Respectfully submitted,
Byron Adams, Building Manager

MODERATOR'S ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Kim Darling, Moderator

When someone is writing the Bicentennial History of First Church, and they get to the chapter on 2020, I hope they focus not on the hardships, but on the ways in which we lived into our covenant promises and, in doing so, gained new skills and a new appreciation for the value of our community. It has been one of the great privileges of my time at First Church to serve as moderator this year, and I have especially appreciated working with each member of Council and our staff. They helped make a job which at first glance seems overwhelming, both manageable and enjoyable.

Council's first meeting of 2020 was dedicated to receiving the Designated Minister Selection Team's recommendation that the church hire Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss. We heard from several members of the team, and then were able to meet and talk with Rev. Amanda. Council voted unanimously to hire Rev. Amanda with a start date of March 17, 2020. We held a second meeting in February where we handled the regular business of Council, but also discussed plans for preparing and welcoming our new minister. This included plans for a Congregational Meeting on February 23, 2020, at which the congregation unanimously and enthusiastically voted to contract with Rev. Amanda to be our Designated Senior Minister.

By the time Council convened for their March 3 meeting, it had become apparent that we needed to have some plans in place to help the church adapt its ways of gathering to the reality of the COVID-19 virus. We shared what we knew about the virus, identified areas of particular concern, and put in place plans to monitor various government agencies for guidance on when to close operations. We also started implementing plans to stream services and keep in contact with people who were especially likely to be isolated by the virus. As the next couple weeks and then months passed, it became clear how much we had underestimated the impact this virus would have on everyone's lives, and the functioning of our community.

The next day, I sent out an email to the community providing information about COVID-19 and outlining Council's conversation. It emphasized Council's commitment to always make decisions grounded in science, and our responsibility to protect the vulnerable among us while maintaining and strengthening our community. Every decision our congregation has made has been rooted in these precepts, including the decision by Council just a week later to stop holding in-person worship services for the remainder of the month of March. We also agreed at that time that our staff would be paid for the duration of the COVID-19 state of emergency even if they were unable to come to work due to illness or closure. While we never imagined we would be going into 2021 still under the state of emergency, this commitment to our staff has been regularly reaffirmed by both Council and the congregation.

It's important to note that on the day that decision went out to the congregation, March 12, 2020, Rev. Amanda had not even officially started as our Designated Senior Minister; yet, she had been in regular communication with me since the end of February, providing information of what churches on the West Coast were experiencing, asking questions about our preparations, and really encouraging us to plan for the worst. As woefully unprepared as we were, it would have been so much worse if not for her foresight and sense of pastoral responsibility to our congregation.

We held our first virtual service on March 22, and our first Zoom worship on March 29. There are many people who made this switch possible; I'm hopeful they will all be identified by name somewhere in this Annual Report. I don't dare try as I'm certain to miss a few. Instead, let me list some of the tasks that folks in our community have taken on to allow us all to worship and meet virtually:

- Setting up a church Zoom account, providing access to training for conveners, and monitoring use so that we have the level of support we need, but don't pay for services we don't need.
- Serving as tech buddies to help those of us who struggle with new technology.
- Providing ongoing technical support and guidance for virtual worship including helping improve the quality and safety of our services.

- Providing pre-recorded music to enhance our worship including recording and mixing choir voices so we don't feel like we're singing alone.
- Moving all of our written materials to digital downloads and forms.
- Improving and popularizing online giving.
- Enabling Virtual Coffee Hour and other social events to keep us connected.

Council held two April meetings because the number of items we needed to devote time to was too exhausting to manage in one meeting. Each commission spoke about the steps they were taking to enable the congregation to stay connected and informed. We provided input on how we thought the first month of virtual services were going and discussed ways to seek feedback from the congregation. We evaluated our personnel policies in light of changing legal requirements and the continued impact of the pandemic. We discussed the church's financial situation and developed a set of guidelines that we have remained committed to during this entire year including providing regular updates to the congregation and spending what is necessary to keep our community vibrant and serve our members and the wider community, but not more than is necessary. Council also received updates on the congregation's efforts to help erase medical debt.

By May we had started to settle into this new way of being together and were starting to seek out ways of enhancing worship, fellowship, and service. The staff began to prepare contingency plans for unplanned absences. We began discussing policies we might want to put in place once we are able to gather together in person. At the Spring Meeting, we had breakout sessions where members were led in discussions around virtual Sunday worship, the budget, and regathering. These conversations were summarized and sent out to the Congregation. We also formed two task forces – one to assess requests to use our building and one to discuss issues around the congregation using our building. And most excitedly, we received our first member via a virtual service, Anthony Leonard.

At the end of May, we were again rocked by another incident of fatal police violence against a Black child of God, George Floyd. As we watched our city be occupied by an armed presence large enough to invade a small country, we took action by bearing witness by occupying our street corners, participating in demonstrations, supporting our partners in the fight for racial justice, and reclaiming the Word of God as a statement on justice and the equal value of all human life and not as a prop whose contents can be discarded at will. We also continued our own education and growth through participating in Sacred Conversations on Racism and beginning our summer book read, *Between the World and Me*.

In June, based on the Congregational Regathering Task Force recommendation and feedback received both during the Spring Meeting and from staff, Council decided we would not gather for worship in the building until at least Labor Day. During June we also surveyed the congregation to receive feedback on how well each person's needs were being met by our virtual and limited in-person offerings and measure interest in a variety of programming that was being considered. We also asked people to provide any thoughts they might have around in-person regathering. The majority of those who responded said they felt it was unsafe and would likely not be safe to worship in person for some time. We held a nurture on issues related to regathering and continued to seek out congregational input through both formal and informal methods. Finally, June saw us welcome three new members, Allison Truhlar, Emily Laing and Michael Hopkins.

In July, the Congregation Regathering Task Force met again to review updated guidance from the CDC and other government agencies and faith groups. Based in part on the increasing evidence of church services as a vector of infections, but also out of a recognition that safely worshipping in person would require us to lock our front doors and exclude folks, the TF recommended the church not hold in-person worship for at least the remainder of 2020. The TF did promise to continue to monitor news and recommendations with the expectation that if something miraculous happened to greatly increase the safety of in-person worship, we would, with great rejoicing, revisit the decision. Council agreed with this decision and voted at its July meeting to continue to worship virtually through the remainder of 2020.

In August, the Personnel Committee developed staff leave policies that were better aligned with the reality of working during the pandemic. We formed a Church Governance Task Force to collect best practices. The Building Use TF produced guidelines for building users during this time and decided that until DC reached phase 3 of its reopening, they would continue to review all requests for building use. Council formed a Budget Committee to provide guidance to commissions and staff around budget requests, receive and evaluate those requests, and put together the asking budget for 2021. Council lost the much-appreciated contributions of Assistant Moderator, Garnell Yarbrough, as his health required stepping back from other responsibilities. At the end of the month, the church joined three new members, Lois Fishbeck, Kurt Fishbeck, and LaTayna Purnell, who has the honor of being our first all-virtual member. Kaeley McEvoy became a full member after several years as an associate member.

In September, Council discussed our various electronic communications and agreed to some basic guidelines for submissions to the Horn and the listserv. They also agreed with the recommendation from Rev. Amanda that the listserv be moved to a moderated status and asked Outreach and Membership to consider the pros and cons of maintaining two listservs. Many members of the congregation also began participating in Get Out the Vote campaigns, both postcard writing and phone banking. SAAC presented a draft policy statement on Social Action Advocacy that was reviewed with the goal of submitting to the congregation in time for the Fall Meeting. On Homecoming Sunday, we started streaming Sunday morning worship services live from the sanctuary.

In October, Council welcomed Melissa Ho as Assistant Moderator. We approved the Policy on Social Action Advocacy and an updated Christian Education Commission charter. Both were brought to the congregation for vote at the Fall Meeting. We discussed the Racial Justice Comprehensive Plan developed by Rev. Amanda and affirmed the importance of reestablishing the Antiracism Taskforce. We also began discussing the Antiracism Audit of Ministries to be conducted in 2021. Church members continued their Get Out the Vote activities, participated in a number of social and educational events, and continued to care for one another. Finally, in October we joined two new member – Lindsay Swisher and David Lindsey.

In November, the Regathering TF conducted a survey to assess the community's feelings on various issues; questions sought to assess when people might feel comfortable regathering for in-person worship and as well as determine what percentage of our population are or live with someone who is considered high risk for COVID. Only three of the 62 respondents said they would feel comfortable attending in-person worship immediately. The rest said they did not know when they would feel comfortable or would not feel comfortable until a vaccine was widely available. We began to firm up

plans for the Antiracism Audit including better naming the expected outcomes and outlining what tasks would take place each month.

Based on the rapidly increasing rates of COVID locally and nationwide and on feedback received from the Congregational Survey, in December, Council approved the Regathering TF recommendation that we continue to worship remotely at least through March 21, 2021. We also received a request from Sasha Bruce for assistance distributing PPE and to-go meals in front of our church once a week. Council approved this request, and members quickly signed up to help out. Council reviewed a draft document describing the rationale and components of the Antiracism Audit and agreed to a plan for informing and educating the congregation.

As I write this report in January 2021, I am a little bit stunned at the number of non-trivial decisions Council had to make this past year. I want you to know that each member of Council always approached these decisions with open minds and a commitment to making decisions that reflect our congregation's values and are in its best long-term interests. While I'm often the face of Council, it has always been and will always be a team effort. I thank each member for their dedication and hard work during this year and look forward to serving with each of them in other capacities. I also want to thank Rev. Karen Byrne for her service early in the year as our Supply Minister, and her efforts to help Rev. Amanda transition into the Senior Minister job. I want to again thank our staff for their efforts during another year of unexpected change. It's not easy; we recognize and appreciate all that you do to make it look easy. Most of all, I want to thank Rev. Amanda for all that she has done to support and encourage our congregation as well me personally during this year. There is not enough space for me to list all the ways in which she has served and ministered to each of us over this past year. I thank God and the search committee for bringing her to us.

During the year, Council remained committed to being as transparent as possible on the reasons behind our decisions. I've attached the churchwide emails that were sent out this year to keep the congregation informed. These provide insight into our reasoning.

I am truly grateful for each one of you and the ways in which we have all kept our covenant promise to walk together. There is no other faith community that I would rather go through these times with.

Kim Darling, Moderator, on behalf of Council

Garnell Yarbrough

Melissa Ho

Gail Sonnemann

David Greer

Dwight Davis

Alyx Cheng

Susan Anderson

Nora Marsh

John Mash

Ann Bushmiller

Diane Brenneman

John Smeltzer

Mark Jensen

March 3, 2020 Churchwide Letter. Over the past week, there has been a lot of conversation both in the church and in our communities about Covid-19 (also known as Novel Coronavirus). Tuesday night, Council spent the majority of its meeting talking about how we should be changing our ways of

gathering together in response to this virus. We shared facts about the virus, identified changes to worship and coffee hour, and began making a plan for identifying and caring for those most vulnerable in our community. In this letter, I will share with you the outcomes of our conversations.

Recently, I read an article titled "Coronavirus Fears Mean We Need More Communion, Not Less," written by Stephen Ko who is currently a minister at the New York Chinese Alliance Church, but who used to work for the CDC as a medical officer including during the Ebola outbreak. He identified several steps religious organizations could take including raising public health awareness, caring for the vulnerable, and finding ways to combat stigma and xenophobia. The quote that struck as the most instructive for how we are called to proceed is the following:

The church must lead in love rather than be manipulated by stigma. We are called to provide compassion instead of cowering in fear. Churches must trust sound theology, science and public health instead of succumbing to rumors and hysteria.

And I would add that we must always remember that while we are called to be responsible in the ways that we interact with one another, we are also called to always be in community with one another. The need to both protect the vulnerable while maintaining and strengthening our community is what has guided our conversations and decisions. If you have questions about any of this or ideas for how we can do better, please contact any member of Council.

FACTS ABOUT COVID-19

The World Health Organization has a Q&A on COVID-19 that includes information on how the virus is spread. I provide a small amount of that information below but encourage each of you to read the detailed information and monitor the website as scientists collect more data.

- The disease can spread from person to person through small droplets from the nose or mouth which are spread when a person with COVID-19 cough or exhales.
- These droplets land on objects and surfaces around the person. Other people then catch COVID-19 by touching these object or surfaces, then touching their eyes, nose or mouth.
- People can also catch COVID-19 if they breath in droplets from a person with COVID-19 who coughs out or exhales droplets.
- It is important to say more than 1 meter (3 feet) away from a person who is sick.
- The main way the disease spreads is through respiratory droplets expelled by someone who is coughing. The risk of catching COVID-19 from someone with no symptoms is very low.
- The most common symptoms of COVID-19 are fever, tiredness, and dry cough. These symptoms are usually mild and begin gradually.
- The time between catching the virus and beginning to have symptoms...range from 1-14 days, most commonly around five days.
- For more detailed information, start here: <https://www.who.int/news-room/q-a-detail/q-a-coronaviruses>

In addition, it's important to remember that we are currently in a low-risk location with respect to an outbreak at this time. This situation can and likely will change as time passes. Council will continue to

monitor the status locally and is committed to making additional changes as new information becomes available.

PERSONAL PRECAUTIONS TO TAKE

- Stay home if you are sick, even if it appears to just be a mild cold and especially if you are running a fever. Be symptom-free for at least 24 hours before going out again.
- Ask your doctor if you are in a vulnerable group and what additional steps they suggest you take to less your risk. If one of those steps is not attending worship, please let us know so that we don't worry and can arrange with you ways to maintain contact.
- Wash your hands with soap and water frequently and for at least 20 seconds.
- Sneeze or cough into the crook of your elbow or a tissue, then throw the tissue away and wash your hands.
- If you don't have access to soap and water, use hand sanitizer.
- Try to avoid touching your face.
- Maintain at least 3 feet between yourself and anyone who is coughing or sneezing.
- Prepare your household for the possible impact COVID-19 might have on our community by having extra non-perishable food items at home as well as an adequate supply of prescription and nonprescription medications.

WORSHIP PRECAUTIONS WE WILL PUT IN PLACE IMMEDIATELY

While we are currently in a low risk area, we believe that it is wise to begin putting in place changes to our ways of gathering to both minimize risk and increase comfort. The following are the steps that we will be taking starting this Sunday:

- Single-serve, prepackaged items at coffee hour. This means, in part, that the quantity of food available at coffee hour will likely be substantially less than you are accustomed to.
- For the reception on March 22nd, gloved servers will handle the plates and serve all food. If you are willing to be a server, please let Care of Parish know. This same procedure will be used for the pancake breakfast as well.
- If the local increases, we will re-evaluate the serving of food at church events.
- We will no longer be taking communion by intinction. We will wait until Rev. Amanda is on board to finalize plans for April's communion, but it is likely that we will also, temporarily, forego our customary communion circle.
- We ask that in lieu of shaking hands or hugging during the sharing of the peace, we smile at one another and verbally pass the peace.
- Ushers will wash their hands before handing out bulletins and hymnals.
- Collection plates will be place in the back of the church and all will be encouraged to place their collection there as they exit the sanctuary. We will likely follow a slightly different procedure for Second Sunday offerings.
- Hand sanitizer has been placed around the church, and people are encouraged to use it.

- Byron and Ines have instituted additional cleaning procedures to decrease the risk of passive transmission. Byron and facilities will work together to provide renters information on steps they can take to decrease risk and to ensure that each party is clear on who is responsible for what type of cleaning.
- An insert will be placed in the bulletin that will provide some basic information about COVID-19.
- Outreach and Membership and Facilities will work together to begin the process of making our services available online. This is likely to be a phased project – first a podcast-type recording made available on our website and eventually working up to streaming of audio and video.
- Care of Parish, Social Action and Awareness, and Outreach and Membership will all work together to identify individuals who are at risk of being isolated during this time or who might require additional assistance. We are calling this the Church Buddy Program. More details are below.

We will continue to monitor best practices for churches provided by both our own denomination and others, and will likely update this list as we learn more. We will also monitor OPM and DC Health and Human Services websites for guidance around increase risk of gathering. If you have suggestions or questions, please contact any member of Council.

CHURCH BUDDY PROGRAM

We are a congregation that is built on community. It is essential that we all strive to maintain and strengthen our community, especially during times of stress and crisis. Council is especially concerned with how we maintain contact with individuals who are vulnerable both to complications from the virus and to being isolated because of the virus. To help with this, we are instituting the Church Buddy Program.

We will be identifying individuals that would need additional support in the event the DC area becomes a higher risk location. They might need support because they live alone, have limited resources, and/or have no family in the area. They might be the primary caregiver in a household and might need support if they or the person they care for becomes ill. They might need a phone call instead of what has become our customary email. They might need to have regular check-ins because if they became sick, it might be several days before anyone noticed. They might be in DC temporarily and not have all the connections that some more established residents might have.

Ann Bushmiller will be the “keeper of the list” as Care of Parish, Social Action and Awareness, and Outreach and Membership seek to compile the list of members and friends who need special care during this time. We encourage you to self-identify. If you would like to be placed on the Church Buddy Program list, please let Ann know.

CONCLUSION

This is a lot of information. It can feel overwhelming. My goal is not to overwhelm but to help us each be informed. The Rev. Traci Blackmon recently wrote, “When we are prepared, we are in a better position to help others.” It is in that spirit that Council has developed these plans and that I communicate them with you. Please contact me or any other member of Council directly should you have any questions or suggestions.

March 12, 2020 Churchwide Letter. As COVID-19 becomes more widespread, our focus shifts to finding ways to protect our community while still providing critical services to those in need. Council and staff have agreed that it is in our community's best interest to NOT hold services for the remainder of March. We will work over the next several days to improve our ways of connecting in the absence of a regular worship service, especially with those who do not have regular internet access.

Additional actions that we are taking:

1. We've agreed that all staff will be paid for the duration of the COVID-19 state of emergency even if they are unable to come to work due to illness or closure. Personnel is working with staff and council to put in place accommodations based on each employee's individual situation.
2. As of now, the office will remain open for at least part of each week. Cindy will be working as much as possible from home to minimize risk to both her and her husband.
3. The Welcoming Reception scheduled for March 22 and the cluster groups scheduled for the weekend of March 28-29 are being postponed until later in the spring. Once the state of emergency has been lifted, we will identify alternative dates for our celebrations.
4. Facilities and Outreach and Membership are working with Byron to stream our services. The goal is to be able to stream Rev. Amanda's initial sermon on 22 March so that all can participate.
5. Outreach and Membership, Care of Parish and SAAC are working together to identify all who should be placed on our Church Buddy List. If you would like to be placed on this list or know someone in our community who might benefit from a little extra support during this time, please let Ann Bushmiller (abushmiller@yahoo.com) know. If you're unsure if you should put your name on this list, please do it. During this time, we must err on the side of caution, and that means reaching out now if even the slightest possibility you might need extra support exists.
6. We anticipate needing people to provide regular contact and possibly run errands for individuals on the Church Buddy List. Please think if you able to do this and watch for an email from Outreach and Membership about specific ways you can help.
7. We encourage everyone to consider ways that you can give electronically. There is a link at the top of our website that will take you to an online giving platform. Most banks will allow you to arrange for electronic giving. We also have the ability to accept pledges via Paypal. If you need help with any of this, please contact any member of finance.

Finally, I encourage each of you to do what you must to care for yourself and those close to you. Each of you is a valued member of this community, and I would not want to move forward without you.

May Article for Horn. As we reach the end of our second month meeting virtually instead of in person, I wanted to take this opportunity to update you on the state of the Church's finances as well as decisions Council has made in consultation with the "financial" wing of Church's leadership. In our 2020 budget, a little over 30% of our income was expected to come from building rentals. Because of the shelter-in-place order, we are estimating that more than half of that income will not be coming in. The table below presents very rough budget estimates for the next 3 years. These estimates assume that the pandemic will keep our rental income severely depressed through mid-2021, that pledge income will remain constant, and that expenses will also remain constant. They also assume that we'll be able to find a

renter for the Flex Space by July 2020, a critical assumption. That space is ready to go, so if you know of an organization that might be looking for rental space, please have them contact our Building Manager, Byron Adams. As of now, we've not attempted to fine-tune the expense estimates as so much is still unknown. I believe these numbers represent a fairly conservative estimate of where we might expect to be at the end of 2022. One of our assistant treasurers, Lucille Dickinson, will update these estimates regularly, and we will make that information known to the congregation as it changes.

	2020 Current Budget	2020 Covid Budget Rough Estimate	2021 Budget Rough Estimate	2022 Budget Rough Estimate
Offerings	304,000	295,000	295,000	295,000
Lease Agreements	109,108	91,149	113,357	113,357
Other Bldg Income	120,702	28,359	60,406	120,700
Endowment transfers	179,665	179,665	140,000	140,000
Other Income	29,214	17,548	12,547	12,547
Total Income	742,689	611,721	621,310	681,604
Benevolences	50,720	50,720	50,720	50,720
Capital	71,485	71,485	47,485	47,485
Facilities	174,152	168,160	169,402	174,152
Office Expenses	18,200	18,200	18,200	18,200
Staff	373,132	373,132	400,860	408,644
Parish Programs	60,704	52,084	43,204	48,304
Total Expenses	748,393	733,781	729,871	747,505
Deficit	(5,705)	(122,060)	(108,561)	(65,900)

While these numbers are indeed sobering, we have good news as well. We are extremely fortunate to be in a strong financial position that will enable us to weather this time. We currently have \$650,000 in assets that are not part of our endowment. These assets are in part the result of accumulated surpluses over the last several years and in part due to generous bequests we received at the end of last year from the estates of Marlene Ross and Bruce Hanson and which we decided to hold pending future decisions. In addition, our commitment to careful stewardship of the Endowment over the past decade means that we have \$4,672,732 as of March 31, 2020 that we can also draw upon in needed. The value of our endowment has decreased by 7.7% this year (as of April 24), though if you look at it in comparison to the S&P 500, whose value has decreased by 12.2% over the same time frame, it compares well.

With this picture in mind and the knowledge that we have a responsibility to those who came before us and allowed us to be in this position as well as those who will come after us, Council has made a few commitments.

- We will always ask ourselves if an expenditure is both in line with our values and will contribute to strengthening our church and serving those in need.
- We are committed to caring for and continuing to pay our staff including (and perhaps most importantly) our sexton.
- We are committed to spending what is necessary in order for our community to be vibrant and to serve our members and the wider community in ways that make sense to us even though we recognize that means we'll end the budget year with more spending than income.
- We will provide regular updates to the congregation as new information becomes available, and we invite all feedback believing that hearing all voices is critical to living into our vision of ourselves as a community.

If you have questions about any of these items, please feel free to contact me or any member of Council. We hope to provide an opportunity for direct feedback at the Spring Congregational Meeting, May 17, 2020 at noon via Zoom.

I also want to encourage each of you to continue to reach out if you need help in any way. The Church Buddy Program continues to match people and families up to provide regular contact. Our ministerial staff is always available if you need additional support. Commissions and affinity groups continue to meet. Rev. Amanda will soon be starting listening sessions to help guide our next steps as a community. If you find that your need for connection is not being met, please feel free to reach out to me or any member of Council, and we'll help find or create the opportunity you need.

Finally, I want to encourage you all to continue to show up for our communal worship. Every Sunday morning during the Passing of the Peace, my family scrolls through the faces and names on Zoom. We find great comfort and joy in seeing all of these familiar people. Your presence matters in ways you may never know.

July 10, 2020 Churchwide Letter. This week, Council decided that we will continue to worship virtually through the remainder of 2020. This was not a decision we made lightly, and I hope to lay out our reasons as well as some of our plans for the next several months. My heart is heavy as I write this letter. So much about these times call me to be with you in body as well as is spirit, but instead we find ourselves in a place where we must be creative and find new ways of supporting each other as we seek God's kingdom on this earth. I encourage each of you to reach out to me directly if you have any questions or concerns or if this decision is weighing particularly heavy on you. I also encourage you to continue to see and grab hold of the opportunities that this time is bringing us, and to share any ideas you have for programming with the appropriate commission or with Council. This time is calling us to find new ways to connect and build community. If the phrase for the last year has been "Just Show Up," I believe the phrase for this time is "Let's Try It!"

Council tasked the Congregation Regathering Task Force to look at the issues involved in worshipping in-person in the sanctuary. That task force has shared information and discussed the ramifications of that information on worship regularly since the Spring Congregational Meeting in May. Most of that information is probably familiar to you. It all points to church services as being a key place where community spread occurs. Church services bring together groups of unrelated individuals in a small space for more than a few minutes, some of whom are likely asymptomatic. And while I like to think First

Church could do this in a “safe” way, there are enough stories of churches that thought they were doing everything right, only to discover that there is no safe way for this type of gathering to take place – only more safe and less safe. The question for the Task Force and Council then became, is it worth the risk?

To assess that, the Task Force collected input from members of our community including Staff. Most of the input they received indicated a real hesitancy to resume in-person worship. When asked, people mentioned fear for their own safety or that of their families, fear for the safety of high-risk individuals who may feel compelled to return to in-person worship, and concern about how we could be both welcoming and safe. I want to discuss this last reason a bit more in depth.

As the Task Force and Staff discussed in-person worship, they laid out the following safety protocols:

- Everyone would need to be masked.
- Attendance taking to facilitate contact tracing.
- No singing, responsive reading or prayers, communion, or coffee hour
- One way in and one way out; no lingering in the narthex.
- A maximum of 50-60 people per service in order to maintain distancing of at least six feet.
- Ushers at the door to enforce both mask wearing and attendance limitations.

While many were willing to accept the first 5 protocols, the last one gave everyone pause as we imagined a variety of scenarios – a visitor refuses to wear a mask; we reach our limit, and there are still people outside our door wanting to come in; someone removes their mask during the service; someone refuses to leave immediately after service. Who would be expected to enforce the rules, and how would they do it in a way that allowed us to remain consistent to our values? In an email I received following our regathering nurture, one of our members said it best, “I think that if in person hybrid worship requires us to exclude or further marginalize the already marginalized, it is our responsibility as Christians to show restraint and remain online.”

These few paragraphs are only a flavor of the conversations we’ve had over the last few months about this issue. If you have questions, would like more detail, or would just like to have a conversation about this, please reach out to me.

So now what? We intend to start streaming from the sanctuary on Homecoming Sunday and continue to stream each Sunday unless we are worshipping jointly with other congregations or have a guest preacher who is either not local or for whom preaching in the sanctuary presents too big of a risk. Rev. Amanda has lined up several guest preachers over the remainder of the year starting with the Rev. Dr. Ron Hopson on July 26th. One of the best parts of this virtual world is if you have plans for that morning, you can always catch him later on YouTube!

One reason Council was moved to make this decision now instead of waiting another month or two is the very real desire on the part of staff and those involved in planning and executing worship to have this issue settled for a time so they can turn their incredible talents and imagination to what virtual worship will look like during the Fall and Advent. While this hot and humid day makes Advent seem a world away, the fact is that we are already planning for that season of our church calendar. Deciding

now that the Advent Season will not include in-person worship frees the staff from having to plan two sets of opportunities.

Council has asked the Task Force to continue monitoring updates about the pandemic, especially as that news relates to church gatherings. The Fall Congregational Meeting will provide a natural spot on our calendar to collect additional input from the community and provide an update as we start to look towards 2021.

Finally, I want to thank each one of you for the ways, big and small, that you have continued to support First Church. I cannot say enough how excited my family gets when they see familiar faces on Sunday morning Zoom church, or how much it means to me personally to receive an email or phone call. I'm extremely grateful for the way our community continues to grow and strengthen. May we continue to walk together.

September 13, 2020 Churchwide Email. As we move from summer to fall, it seemed like an appropriate time to provide some updates on Council's activities over the last couple months. Most importantly, Council approved the nomination of Melissa Ho to fill in the remainder of Garnell Yarbrough's term as Assistant Moderator. I feel extremely fortunate that Melissa has agreed to serve the church in this capacity. I count Melissa as a friend whose support and advice I can always rely on. She has the ability to get to the heart of the matter being discussed while still recognizing the very real feelings people might be having. Melissa will not be able to continue next year as Moderator due to family and work commitments, so Council is especially grateful for her willingness to serve at this time.

Council will be appointing a Nominating Committee next month. The Nominating Committee is the group tasked with identifying volunteers to serve on commissions as well as in other positions like representing the church in various groups. Melissa will be heading up the Nominating Committee but will need help. If you are interested in serving on the Nominating Committee, please contact Melissa (zamomho@gmail.com) or myself (kdarling@gmail.com).

Council appointed a Budget Committee to work with commissions and staff in generating the 2021 asking budget. This committee is currently working hard to collect and compile budget requests. Members of the Budget Committee are Kim Darling, Lucille Dickinson, Nora Marsh, Scott Day, Meg Maguire, and John Smeltzer. We have asked folks to assume 6 months virtual and 6 months in-person worship for budget planning purposes only. No decisions have been made for in-person worship for 2021. I anticipate the Congregational Regathering Task Force will meet again in November to assess the situation and make a recommendation for the first part of 2021.

Please mark November 1 on your calendar. We will be having our Fall Congregational Meeting that day after church, and it is important that all who are able attend.

Finally, I just want to say thank you to each one of you for your continued commitment to this community and to the wider communities in which each of us live. By all objective measures, and by the subjective ones that matter so much more, the First Church community is not just muddling through these times, but is truly thriving as we continue to walk the path that is being laid before us. We continue to build relationships within the congregation and find ways to serve the wider community by

fighting for racial and economic justice, encouraging and enabling people to vote, and meeting the immediate needs of others. I continually count my membership in this congregation as one of the great blessings of my life.

December 7, 2020 Churchwide Letter. I wanted to provide an update on a few items Council has been dealing with over the last couple months. First, thank you all for participating in the Regathering Survey last month. We had 62 respondents. Some key take-aways include that over half of respondents said that they or someone in their household were high risk. Only 3 of the 62 said they would feel comfortable attending in-person worship now. More than two-thirds said they either did not know when they would feel comfortable or that they would only feel comfortable when there is a widely available vaccine. This, coupled with the increased safety measures DC has put in place over the last few weeks, led the Congregational Regathering Task Force to recommend to Council that we continue to not hold in-person worship through 21 March 2021. Council passed this motion at their December meeting. As before, this is not meant as a forecast of the future, but is just meant to set a date for planning purposes. The task force will meet again in February to discuss the remainder of the spring.

The Nominating Committee is currently working on staffing commissions for 2021. If you are interested in serving on any of our commissions or would just like information about their areas of responsibility, please contact me, Melissa Ho, or Nan McConnell. I've found belonging to a commission to be a great way to get to know other members of the congregation. We are also looking for a new Assistant Treasurer to help with some of the bookkeeping of the church. If you have skills in this area and would like to help our treasurer team, please let me know.

Council has spent part of its last two meetings discussing plans for conducting an Anti-Racism Audit of our Ministries. We intend to use a tool first developed by the Central Atlantic Conference in 2006 to help congregations assess their policies, practices, and procedures through an anti-racism lens. While this self-assessment tool is currently being reviewed and possibly revised by the Conference, Council believes that the current version gives an excellent sense of the type of questions we will be asked to ponder as well assess our ministries and set long- and short-term goals to help us walk down the path of becoming a more multi-racial multi-cultural church. The link below should take you to a copy of the current audit tool if you would like more information.

<https://drive.google.com/file/d/1v1jwChFYEmCbDddHdG1dCIDUtHXw4ygo/view?usp=sharing>

If you have any questions or comments about any of these items or anything else, please don't hesitate to contact me. I hope and pray that each of you are able both find light and be light to others in this Advent season by re-imagining old traditions in a new way. We are looking forward to singing familiar carols and lighting candles from our home on Christmas Eve, and hope to see each of your faces on our screen.

CLERK'S ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Membership total January 1, 2021: 202

*Membership Total after January 26, 2020 Annual Meeting: 194

Membership total January 1, 2020: 228

Births: (3)

Jesse William Thayer

Xavi Bayard Saudek

Arthur James Mills

Baptisms: (0)

Added to the Book of Life: (2)

Ruth Shinn

Maria Snyder

New Full Members: (10)

Anthony Leonard

Michael Hopkins

Emily Lang

Alison Truhlar

Lois Fishbeck

Kurt Fishbeck

Kaely McEvoy

LaTayna Purnell

Lindsey Swisher

David Lindsey

New Associate Members: (0)

Requested to be Dropped: (0)

Requested Conversion to Friend: (0)

Requested Letter of Transfer to Other Congregation: (0)

*During 2019 the Outreach and Membership Commission (O&M) contacted members who had not been active in recent years. Based on the response or lack thereof, 35 members were proposed by O&M to be moved to inactive, friend, or dropped. The congregation approved this adjustment at the January 26, 2020 annual meeting. Offsetting this drop of 35 was an increase of one approved on January 26, 2020, when Robert Mann-Thompson was returned to active membership at his request.

Prepared by Gail Sonnemann, Clerk

FINANCE COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Members: Susan Anderson, Council Liaison; Lucille Dickinson (volunteer); Polly Gordon; David Greer, Treasurer; Andy Raver, Chair

The Finance Commission is responsible for the financial stewardship of the church and assists the treasurer in monitoring the Church's income and expenses. The Commission is incredibly grateful to Treasurer David Greer and the team of Assistant Treasurers – Susan Anderson, Lucille Dickinson, and Nora Marsh. They collaborate so well to keep things running smoothly and keep the Commission/Council informed and focused. We are fortunate to have such a team of experts.

As was the case with everyone this year, the onset of the COVID-19 pandemic caused the Finance Commission to adapt to new circumstances. Key highlights and contributions include:

- **Budget Planning:** Although the Church has a detailed 2020 budget as usual – and is in the process of approving a detailed asking budget for 2021 – we prepared 3-year plans primarily focused on the income side, especially the impacts to our building income. First Church is fortunate to have been conservative in the last several years and to have been blessed by gifts and bequests which will help us through this period. The commission deeply thanks Lucille Dickinson for her tireless effort in creating budget projections and guiding our discussions.
- **Banking:** The bequests and other “rainy day” funds put us near or above FDIC limits for our primary bank accounts. The Finance Commission took this as an opportunity to realize a goal for which the Housing Task Force had advocated in 2018. We opened a new bank account at City First Bank, which engages in values-driven lending back into communities that need the flow of capital to grow and thrive.
- **Online Giving:** While we have had an online presence in the past, the pandemic presented a need to make things easier for people wishing to donate, and we needed to communicate clearly to people who may not have used these tools in the past. We are thankful to the many members who have embraced these tools so readily – and we are even more grateful when you give directly from your bank accounts (through Vanco or Paypal) which allows the church to avoid paying transaction fees! The commission is thankful to the treasurer team for exploring and communicating about these options, to Alyx Cheng for incorporating these giving options into our website, and to Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss and Rev. Sam McFerran for continuing to find new ways to make giving meaningful.
- **2021 budget:** Recognizing the challenges of 2020 and the lack of resources on the Finance Commission, Council created a Budget Committee to focus on the detailed expense side of the 2021 budget. The Finance Commission is thankful to Council for making this happen and to the Budget Committee of Kim Darling, Scott Day, Lucille Dickinson, Nora Marsh, Meg Maguire, and John Smeltzer. The expense side of the budget was focused on three goals: (1) Continue walking on the path to becoming a multi-racial and multi-cultural church, (2) Strengthen our church community, and (3) Develop consensus about which social justice issues we have the will and resources to address.

Our yearly Stewardship campaign was modeled after our successful campaign from 2019, and we were so thankful to again have Polly Gordon spearheading the effort for the Commission. We sent frequent emails that hopefully educated, amused, and moved people to seriously think about their pledges to the church. The Commission thanks Jean Alexander, Kristy Mills, Peg Lorenz, Nick McConnell, Meg Maguire, Nora Marsh, and Priscilla Waters for sharing their thoughts and experiences about pledging. We also thank David Greer and Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss for composing such a beautiful stewardship letter about wonder and gratitude and the ways in which stewardship sustains and nourishes us.

The Finance Commission is grateful to the First Church congregation and friends who support us, not only financially but with your time, talents and prayers. Thank you!

Respectfully submitted,

Susan Anderson

Lucille Dickinson

Polly Gordon

David Greer

Andy Raver

INVESTMENT COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Members: Ann Bushmiller, David Greer (Treasurer), Andy Raver (Finance), Peter Tracey; Karen Pence and Lucille Dickinson, advisors

The church's investments increased by a strong 13.2 percent in 2020. This performance reflects the uneven national recovery since March when the pandemic forced widespread closures, and its beneficial effects for the stock market. The portfolio's domestic stocks rose almost 20 percent, its international stocks rose 13 percent, its bond holdings rose 5 to 8 percent, and its inflation hedge rose 5 percent. As a result, at the end of 2020, the total investments stood at \$6,030,772, with \$465,759 allocated to the capital reserve and \$5,565,013 allocated to the core endowment.

To ensure that the church's core endowment stays in line with inflation, we compute each year a benchmark figure adjusted for inflation. Our preferred benchmark grows the core endowment by 0.5 percentage points above inflation to give the church a cushion in the event of years in which the endowment does not perform as well as in 2020. That preferred benchmark was \$4,797,813, so the core endowment remains a very comfortable \$767,200 above the benchmark.

The investment commission sold a total of \$150,000 in the third quarter to meet the endowment's contribution to the operating budget. This sale was accompanied by a reallocation to rebalance the church's investments in line with its guidelines -- \$200,000 of the U.S stock index was sold (as the U.S. stock market had outperformed the other assets at that point in the year), \$50,000 of the social index fund was sold, and \$100,000 added to the international stock fund.

At the end of the year, the investment portfolio was broadly allocated in line with its targets but was still overweight in domestic stocks as a result of the strong stock-market gains. Rebalancing of our investment portfolio would be called for in 2021.

TABLE 1

PORTFOLIO ALLOCATION	Target	Actual 12/31/2020
Cash	5.0%	2.2%
Bonds	35.0%	34%
Stocks	55.0%	60%
<i>Total Domestic</i>	<i>37.0%</i>	<i>41%</i>
<i>Domestic, Broad</i>	<i>33.3%</i>	<i>36%</i>
<i>Domestic, Socially Responsible</i>	<i>3.7%</i>	<i>5%</i>
<i>International</i>	<i>18.0%</i>	<i>19%</i>
Inflation Hedge	5.0%	4%
Total	100.0%	100.0%

TABLE 2 SELECTED ASPECTS OF THE BALANCE SHEET

VANGUARD	Balance 12/31/2020	Rate of Return, 2020
Total U.S. Stock Market Index	\$ 2,194,370	19.4%
Total International Stock Index	\$ 1,140,598	13.1%
Total Bond Market Index	\$ 1,263,010	8.0%
Total International Bond Index	\$ 505,050	4.5%
Intermediate-Term Investment-Grade Securities	\$ 266,842	10.7%
Short-Term Inflation-Protected Securities	\$ 253,932	5.0%
Social Index Fund (domestic stocks)	\$ 272,407	20.2%
CASH		
Capital One 360 Acct	\$ 122,444	0.6%
SunTrust	\$ 12,118	0%
TOTAL		
Overall Investments	\$ 6,030,772	13.2%
Core Endowment	\$ 5,896,209	
Capital Reserve	\$ 465,759	
Benchmarks for Core Endowment		
Target balance: growing at inflation	\$ 4,635,715	
Target balance: 0.5 ppt above inflation	\$ 4,797,813	

FACILITIES COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT 2020

First Church is fortunate to have a beautiful building in the heart of downtown DC that—in non-pandemic times—gives us space to worship, a source of income, and a place to host events and meetings for like-minded organizations and cultural resources. Maintaining this building is an important

mission for its ongoing usefulness as well as for the future stability of our community. The Facilities Commission has continued to meet virtually during the pandemic to discuss building-related issues and needs for the safety of our church's staff.

Coronavirus Response

Maintaining a healthy working environment for church staff and occasional visitors has been a top concern for the Facilities Commission and our Building Manager, Byron Adams. In March, Byron took measures to provide the hand sanitizer stations, enhanced cleaning, and recommended air quality, following guidance from the CDC and other trusted organizations. Facilities Commission member Anisa Heming pulled on her own experience advising school districts on air quality concerns to confirm Byron's findings and suggest additional measures. Byron consulted with engineers to confirm outdoor air delivery in occupied spaces and confirm correct air pressure in bathrooms to ensure that exhaust fans were working correctly. We are fortunate to have a new building that was designed to provide excellent air quality from the outset.

Building Repairs

The Facilities Commission consulted with Byron Adams on several building repairs this year, including the replacement of a damaged window in the chapel and repair of the power assist for the outer door to the church lobby. Over the summer, walls were given a fresh coat of paint to cover wear and tear from the past several years. Following up from vandalism to the church in 2019, the damaged frieze that used to be mounted to the wall outside of the childcare suite was restored and reinstalled in the second floor lobby space; the Commission consulted on the mounting and placement of this frieze.

For more information about specific repairs to the building, please see the monthly Building Managers Report, prepared by Byron Adams.

Building Occasional Use Rentals

In a typical year, First Church is fortunate to get rental income for the use of our space by choirs, congregations, and organizations. Since March, events and rentals have been cancelled, and this income stream to support our mission has been greatly diminished. Council set up a working group to make decisions about the use of church space for outside groups, and a few rental requests for small groups (mainly for recording purposes) were approved in the fall.

Long-term Space Rentals

At the end of February, the larger office space on the north side of the church was vacated by Fresh Farm, and the space was refreshed to be ready for new renters. Unfortunately, this timing aligned with the start of the pandemic, and the church has been unable to find an organization to lease this space since. This vacancy is a concern, as the rental income is needed to support the work of First Church.

A/V Coordination

In a typical year, the Facilities Commission would be responsible for recruiting and coordinating volunteers to run the sound board for church service each Sunday. Since March, services have either been run from home or by church staff and contractors in the sanctuary. The Worship Commission has

done a stellar job coordinating this transition. In July, in consultation with the Commission, Byron renegotiated the contract with sound technician Tom Sowers to allow Tom to spend more time helping the church stream services and dedicate additional time to maintenance and updating sound board capabilities and ease of operation.

Anisa Heming, chair

CARE OF PARISH COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT 2020

As I read the minutes of our meetings this year, I am struck by the way the virus struck so suddenly and early in the year. The main agenda items for our first Care of Parish meeting in 2020 were planning a reception for our incoming minister and our Easter pancake breakfast, both of which never happened. It was a year of pivoting, cancellations, and brainstorming about how to keep our church family connected.

Mike Zawada coordinated our card ministry and an Easter pancake recipe-sharing. Throughout the year, the card ministry reached out to our elder members, youth, graduating seniors, medical care providers, and those in our parish who were sick with the virus and otherwise. Many participated in the card ministry throughout the year.

Reverend Amanda coordinated with our volunteer Zoom moderators (whom we thank profusely) to get coffee hour online in May and we developed topics for conversation-starters for several of those Sundays. Participation in these virtual coffee hours averaged 20 to 30 people on those Sundays in three to four separate "rooms" on Zoom.

Kristy chaired our group and recorded the minutes. On top of becoming a mother again, she was able to organize two successful, community-building events: a virtual Murder Mystery night in August and a virtual Scattegories game in November. Both were well attended and we received positive feedback.

Amanda started a weekly prayer group soon after her arrival in March, which went on for several months. Amanda created three small groups in July to meet on a regular basis (monthly and weekly). There were more than 30 people involved and some of the groups are continuing.

Amanda organized the distribution of Advent table tents to the entire congregation, which had prayers and readings for each day of Advent. It was a wonderful way for us to pray, light candles, and share practices throughout the season. Amanda also created a video to show how to make an advent wreath. A number of parishioners participated and they were so gorgeously displayed by those who led Advent candle liturgies.

The meditation group, which has been meeting for years in the chapel on Wednesdays from 12:15pm to 12:45pm, had to be cancelled for in-person meeting once the church shut down. After a number of months, Amanda and Nora brought Wednesday meditation back in September via Zoom. We haven't missed a week since then and our attendance has consistently been between 7 and 12 participants. A number of people in our congregation were able to participate because it didn't require a trip to the church.

With the help of Abigail Cipparone (a COP volunteer), Kristy organized a holiday cookie exchange and 17 families participated.

Nora coordinated the 2020 and 2021 budget submissions from Care of Parish. Our costs decreased substantially in 2020 and 2021, primarily due to the drop in the need for coffee hour supplies.

Also notable was the care those in our community provided to each other informally. Kristy will attest to how touching and helpful this care is, having received meals, cookies, notes in the mail, etc., after the birth of Arthur and during an episode with COVID. COVID made 2020 a challenging year, requiring us to rethink how we keep the congregation connected. We are proud of our efforts and have developed good, new ideas that we hope to continue to use in the future even after COVID is behind us. Many thanks to all those who supported Care of Parish during this difficult year.

Nora Marsh for Care of Parish

CHRISTIAN EDUCATION COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Members: Mark Jensen (2020), Joey Meyer (2020), Elise Villemez (2020), Alisa Tanaka-Dodge (2021), Anna Kiss (f). In one way, 2020 was a year that we began and ended strong and together. While I am not surprised in that conclusion because of the health of the community, I am relieved.

In 2020, the pandemic required us to find new ways to be church. Whether it was with Zoom worship or Sunday school, outdoor gatherings with masks on, or constant text messages to “check in” on one another, we had to show that in the very truest sense of the world, the church is not the building but the people.

We pivoted away from the church in mid-March. For the rest of the year, Sunday School, Bible Workbench, nurtures all went remote. With that came a sense of loss. There was a loss in being physically together or watching the children sprint up the stairs, racing to the CE Suite. There was a loss for Sunday School teachers who no longer had opportunities to teach. We also recognized that the Zoom offerings were not going to work for everyone. Children were on Zoom overload in schools (which had gone virtual), and many children did not need just one more structured time in front of a screen. Through Faith Formation, we had to meet people where they were—understanding both the demands on children and youth, as well as parents who were now both working from home, as well as monitoring the childcare or schooling of their children in the same room.

In the last two months of the year, we saw great proof of strength of our community. Rev. Dr. Ron Hopson led an amazing series of nurtures about how do we understand the words of the prophets in 2021. In December, Rev. Barbara Gerlach hosted an Advent nurture series where we heard people share poignantly stories of seeking and providing comfort during times of challenge. The year ended with a joyful pageant where more than 30 children and youth told the story of Christ’s birth and how the arrival of God’s love among us is more relevant and necessary than ever. It also helped having three adorable baby Jesus’s in Jesse, Xavi and Arthur!

We pray that 2021 will be a time when we will all receive the vaccine from the pandemic and that our nation and the world will live out values of compassion for one another and for the world. We are grateful for God's abiding presence that has cared for us during these trying times.

Below is a list of some of the activities Christian Education was involved with in 2020.

Children's Ministries

- Spring Sunday School – three gatherings per week on Zoom
- Summer Sunday School – twice per week on Zoom
- Fall and Winter Sunday School – one per week (since we moved worship to the Sanctuary)
- Family Fall Outdoor Gathering at Anacostia Park
- A Zoom Christmas Pageant with outdoor scenes filmed at Garfield Park

Youth Ministries

- MLK Weekend retreat/service project at "The Center" in Baltimore (January 18-20), where we learned about crossing boundaries. Seven youth and three Youth leaders participated. The youth conducted successful deluxe beverage fundraisers during the January 5 and 12 coffee hours in the narthex to support this trip.
- Weekly Youth Group meetings on Zoom from March through August, co-taught with Troy Bent, exploring issues of social justice with guest speakers.
- Fall Youth weekly "Sunday nights for Justice Journey" class co-taught by Kate Foster Connors and McKenna Lewellen of The Center Baltimore on Zoom. We explored issues of mission and crossing boundaries in our neighborhood and cities and also viewed the *John Lewis: Good Trouble* documentary.
- Youth Canoe Gathering on September 12 at Patuxent River Park in Maryland
- Outdoor service project on November 7 with Seabury Resources for the Aging

Young Adult Ministries

- Weekly Monday Gatherings since March
- Young Adult Get-Out-The-Vote initiative (1100 postcards mailed)
- Young Adult hikes at Roosevelt Island and the Tidal Basin
- A spring and fall Service led by the Young Adults

Nurtures

- Two summer nurtures where church members reflect upon the summer worship theme: "Unraveled"
- Jasmine Martier of Simply Smiles shared the challenges and opportunities facing the Cheyenne River Reservation on Labor in the Pulpit Sunday
- Four-week series, "Prophets for Perilous Times," led by Rev. Dr. Ron Hopson.
- Advent Nurture Series led by Rev. Barbara Gerlach
- Lenten Nurture Series led by Rev. Barbara Gerlach

Adult Faith Formation

- Weekly Bible Workbench
- Monthly Theology Reading Club

SOCIAL ACTION AND AWARENESS COMMISSION (SAAC) ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Members

Lucille Dickinson (chair)
John Smeltzer (rep to Council)
Jamey Moore
Rev. Jason Carson Wilson
Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss, Designated Senior Minister

Other participants

Susan Saudek (chair, Sanctuary Committee)
Priscilla Waters (Drop-In Center volunteer)
Gail Sonnemann (rep to WIN)
Meg Maguire (housing advocate)
Lois and Kurt Fischbeck (volunteers)
Olivia Hoynes (volunteer)
Brandaun Dean (volunteer)

The United Church of Christ's Mission statement:

United in Spirit and inspired by God's grace, we welcome all, love all, and seek justice for all.

As I compile this annual report, it has been two days since the Capitol building was assaulted and overrun by a far-right mob incited by the President to disrupt the work of Congress and prevent it from counting electoral votes. It is yet another painful reminder of the overwhelming importance of the church's ongoing work for justice.

Lucille Dickinson, chair

The First Church Congregation worked in 2020 to "seek justice for all" in part through the Social Action and Awareness Commission (SAAC).

SAAC managed the Second Sunday offerings and two special offerings, which collected a total of \$17,896.25 in 2020.

Month	Organization	Total Collected
January	Seabury Age in Place; Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ)	\$ 788.00
February	Thrive DC	\$ 937.25

March	UCC's One Great Hour of Sharing	\$1,714.00
April	RIP Medical Debt	\$3,393.00
May	Colombia, Youth Ecological Protectors	\$1,221.00
June	Shaw Community Center	\$1,387.00
July	Black Lives Matter - DC	\$1,065.00
August	Congregation Action Network	\$ 560.00
September	Faith UCC Free Mobile Food Market	\$ 940.00
October	UCC's Neighbors in Need	\$ 1,485.00
November	UCC's Strengthen the Church	\$ 545.00
December	UCC's Christmas Fund	\$ 1,260.00
Christmas Eve	Olaiya's Cradle	\$ 951.00
Special offering	Turkey giveaway, Faith UCC free mobile food market	\$1,650.00

In addition to these offerings, the 2020 budget included benevolences:

- \$29,000 - Our Church's Wider Mission
- \$1,000 – Downtown Cluster of Congregations
- \$6,210 – Potomac Association
- \$1,750 – Washington Interfaith Network

Between the offerings and the benevolences, First Church spent a total of \$55,856 on these donations in 2020, approximately 8% of the church's total spending in 2020.

As 2021 begins, SAAC plans a Second Sunday offering in January for Showing Up for Racial Justice (SURJ) and one in February for Seabury Aging in Place and ThriveDC.

Olive Oil Ministry

For the third year, SAAC joined an interdenominational network of churches headed by the Middle East Committee of Westmoreland Congregational UCC, to sell olive oil imported directly from an organic farm near Bethlehem named "Tent of Nations." This farm has been owned by the Palestinian Christian Nassar family, since 1916. The farm uses funds to plant and replant trees and build bridges between neighboring Jewish and Muslim communities. Many international organizations and individuals back the Tent of Nations in their struggle for justice, and to maintain the presence of a Christian Palestinian family on land in the West Bank, considering their presence as a symbol of Palestinian independence and culture.

There were two opportunities for giving via this program. In June olive oil was offered for purchase to support entities in Palestine confronting the COVID-19 pandemic crisis. Then in December the third

holiday sale of olive oil and other products from Palestine took place. The proceeds in June were \$1,051, and \$2,247 in December.

Many thanks to John Smeltzer, Karen Byrne, and Susan Saudek for their efforts to make both these sales successful.

Advocacy policy

In May 2017, the congregation approved a Statement on Being a Sanctuary Congregation, so we could become more actively involved in the social justice movement to provide support for undocumented immigrants. The statement recommended creating a committee to coordinate the congregation's efforts, and taking specific types of actions, including to "[d]irectly lobby local, state, and federal governments to enact equitable immigration policies and law that are fairly enforced with humanity and compassion..." But the statement did not specify whether the Sanctuary Committee, SAAC, or Council had authority to draft or endorse advocacy letters or statements on behalf of the church as a whole. In the spring of 2020, the Sanctuary Committee recommended that the church endorse a letter—prepared by a partner in the sanctuary movement—to urge the D.C. Mayor to provide specified support to immigrant legal services. That recommendation was forwarded by SAAC to Council and ultimately approved, but not in time to join the other signatories on the letter. This experience led SAAC and Council to consider whether we should develop procedures that would allow the church to work more nimbly with our partners in the sanctuary movement and other advocacy issues.

This effort resulted in the creation of a "Policy on Social Action Advocacy" (Advocacy Policy), which was approved by the congregation on November 1, 2020. The Advocacy Policy (set out below) clarifies that the senior minister or any person delegated by the senior minister may write or endorse an advocacy letter (e.g., letter to the mayor, city council, etc.) on behalf of the church, when consistent with the letter and spirit of a specific social action platform that has been approved by the congregation. The policy ensures that the entire congregation will participate in determining the social-action agenda for the church, provides the means for church representatives to work nimbly with ecumenical and other organizational partners toward the social justice goals endorsed by the congregation, and provides for transparency in such efforts. Just before the congregation adopted the Advocacy Policy, the Rev. Amanda endorsed a letter, on behalf of the church, in support of a 2020 proposal to solidify and strengthen pro-immigrant legislation that the DC Council had enacted on a temporary basis in 2019. That letter was approved by SAAC and the Council under the spirit of the then-proposed Advocacy Policy. We hope and expect that the Advocacy Policy will better facilitate similar efforts by the church to live out the goals of the Sanctuary Statement. In late 2020, SAAC began the process of developing a proposed statement on racial justice that would facilitate similar advocacy work to combat systemic racism.

The Advocacy Policy is not designed to address the ordinary life of the church, the content of our worship services, or the messages from the pulpit. Nor does the Advocacy policy address the freedom of our ministers or members, as individuals, to speak and work outside the church on any public policy matters. The Advocacy Policy acknowledges that social justice issues can be complicated and that our members have different priorities. The sole purpose of the Advocacy Policy is to facilitate our ability to

speak collectively to our elected officials and other public institutions when we feel called to do so as a congregation on matters that are of the deepest importance to our faith.

Effects of the pandemic closures starting in March

Several expected SAAC and related activities were curtailed or changed:

- The Poor People's Campaign changed its June 20 march, National Call for a Moral Revival, to a virtual event, so the church did not serve as a hospitality center. SAAC instead advertised the virtual event.
- The Drop-In Center (DIC) for Homeless Youth ceased in-person operations in mid-March. The usual Thanksgiving dinner did not occur, but on December 7, the DIC started an outdoor meals-to-go program each Monday evening. See more below.
- The Pride march was postponed, so our usual participation was cancelled.
- Shaw Community Center closed, so our usual volunteer opportunities were cancelled.

The closures due to the pandemic led to Zoom meetings for all of us, and to new ways of giving/volunteering during pandemic. In April SAAC publicized to the listserv ways to help or partner with organizations like Sasha Bruce Youthwork, our partner in the DIC; Seabury Resources for Aging; Table Church, one of the shared users in our space which was recruiting volunteers; Washington Interfaith Network; Congregation Action Network; and others.

The 2020 election

The UCC's Faith & Democracy 2020 campaign was designed to ensure that people respond to the 2020 census and vote. First Church members partnered with WIN and the UCC's Central Atlantic Conference in post-carding and other efforts. Many thanks to Gail Sonnemann, Diane Brenneman, Jason Carson Wilson, Andrew Hamilton, Meg Maguire, Susan Goodman, Nora Marsh, Susan Anderson, Heather Goetsch, Allison Truhlar, Lois Fischbeck, and Nan McConnell.

Anti-Racism Task Force

Members: Diane Brenneman, Rev. Karen Byrne, Rev. Jason Carson Wilson, Kim Darling, Lucille Dickinson, Rev. Laura Johnson, Jessica Prentice, LaTayna Purnell, Janneke Ratcliffe, Gail Sonnemann, Priscilla Waters

The Anti-Racism Task Force eagerly looked forward to the arrival of Rev. Amanda for her leadership in dismantling racism. She started in mid-March and had her hands full as the church went virtual. As a result, after a listening session on anti-racism efforts in May, it was November before the Anti-Racism Task Force met. Rev. Amanda has developed and with input from the task force continues to refine a comprehensive plan to dismantle racism. (See the end of this report for the plan.)

While the task force met for the first time in November, several notable events consistent with the plan were advertised or took place in First Church throughout the year:

- On May 31, a live viewing of Trinity UCC's Rev. Dr. Otis Moss's cinematic sermon, *The Cross and the Lynching Tree: A Requiem for Ahmoud Arbery* followed by a panel discussion with four thought

leaders, racial justice advocates and UCC pastors on how the Christian church can be actively involved in dismantling racism.

- Demonstrations over summer at the corner of 10th and G, and along 16th Street with other DC churches.
- On Juneteenth, churches in the Central Atlantic Conference took a stand against racism. At First Church we gathered at 4 pm with Rev. Amanda in protest at 10th and G, kneeling for the 8 minutes and 46 seconds that the Minneapolis police officer knelt on the neck of George Floyd and killed him, and ringing bells. Earlier in the day was a webinar from the national UCC.
- July Second Sunday offering for Black Lives Matter DC.
- Several members of First Church participated in the summer and fall in six- or seven-week UCC Institute, Sacred Conversations on Ending Racism. From the UCC website: *[SC2ER] includes restorative racial justice resources as a corrective to the historical and contemporary harm, injury, and trauma enacted upon non-European descendants. The ongoing impact of racism and xenophobia in contemporary society requires Christians to commit to a journey of restoration and repair among God's people impacted by individual and systemic oppression and marginalization. SC2ER features resources and spiritual practices from people groups marginalized by white skin supremacy education perpetuated within the Christian Church and society.*
- In the fall, Rev. Amanda and Rev. Kris Watson co-led two 90-minute sessions on dismantling racism.
- A six-week white privilege discussion series was held in the fall, led by Rev. Karen Byrne and Rev. Laura Johnson.
- Rev. Dr. Ron Hopson facilitated a discussion of the People of Color affinity group.
- We heard from several guest preachers of color: Rev. Vaisha Hasan, Rev. Dr. Donique McIntosh, Rev. Dr. Carolyn Boyd, Rev. Dr. Ron Hopson, and Lynaya Morris. Ron Hopson's four-week nurture series, entitled *The Prophets for Perilous Times*, was timely and educational.
- We shared two Wednesday prayer services with members of People's Congregational UCC as we continue to strengthen our relationship with them.
- At the end of 2020 the Anti-Racism Task Force recommended, and SAAC and Council agreed, that two large BLM banners would be purchased and hung inside the windows along 10th Street and G Street, to publicize the church's commitment and in solidarity with the churches whose banners were destroyed in mid-December by far-right groups demonstrating in downtown DC.

Sanctuary Committee

Members: Susan Saudek, chair, Peter Tracey, Jamey Moore, Cynthia Hobbs

The Sanctuary Committee solidified its relationship with Congregation Action Network (CAN) by officially joining as a member.

- As part of the CAN network we participated in the successful deportation defense campaign in support of Binsar Siahaan

- We joined the successful efforts of Sanctuary DMV to release Rosa Rodriguez from sanctuary at Cedar Lane UU and reunite her with her children in Maryland.
- We continued work in Maryland to protect immigrant neighbors and support TPS recipients in our congregations.
- We joined the ICE Out of DC coalition and successfully pushed for a bill in the City Council that strengthened the DC Sanctuary Values Act. The Act affirms that there will be NO DC police collaboration with ICE including inside the city jail and youth detention facilities. The Council passed the bill unanimously and the Mayor signed it.
- We worked with a coalition of justice non-profits to secure \$9,000,000 Covid-19 relief funds for excluded workers including undocumented city residents.
- We worked with United We Dream on their DACA campaign.
- We engaged the congregation by posting regular updates and invitations to action. One fun engagement tool we introduced was IMMIGRANT FOOD and IMMIGRANT ENGAGEMENT MENU.
- We are thrilled to have the active support of our new minister Amanda Hendler-Voss who in her short tenure with us has signed on to advocacy letters, met with ministers in the DMV to start developing relationships and has used the pulpit to elevate the plight of asylum seekers in our country and has offered ways our congregation can take an active part in policy change.

Drop-In Center for Homeless Youth

Trained Volunteers

Jean Alexander

JD Okorie-Dunn

Nan McConnell

Priscilla Waters

Rev. Jason Carson-Wilson

Polly Gordon

Olivia Hoynes

Natasha Riveron

Garnell Yarbrough

Kim Darling

Andrew Hamilton

Gail Sonnemann

Alexander Cheng

Alison Stanger

Carolyn Marsh

Marian Drake

Janneke Ratcliffe

Faith Brightbill

Diane Brenneman

Meg Maguire

Katherine Antos

Matthew LaGamma

Mary Meyer

Rev. Barbara Gerlach

Alisa Tanaka-Dodge

Tadashi Dodge

Samantha Warren

Tory Christensen

In the beginning of 2020 First Church continued to host the Downtown Drop-In Center for Homeless Youth in our Narthex and Living Room, on both Monday and Wednesday evenings. The Center is operated jointly with Sasha Bruce Youthwork, and their partner organizations, such as StandUp for Kids. More than 15 First Church members and friends rotated through weekly to volunteer at the Center.

Volunteers and Sasha Bruce staff welcomed young guests on Monday nights, from 6:00 PM to 9:00 PM, with pizza, games, and movies. The DIC for Homeless Youth at First Church provided a relaxed,

supportive space where guests could socialize with each other and receive informal counselling from Sasha Bruce social workers. Weekly DIC attendance averaged 50-60 guests. The DIC offered food, board games, and special programming such as spoken word, yoga, and art therapy. POWER, Sasha Bruce's youth sexual health program, provided HIV testing. Case management was available to guests to assist them in addressing needs related to physical and mental health, education and, ultimately, housing.

The COVID-19 pandemic cruelly forced First Church to close the DIC in March. On December 7, Sasha Bruce and First Church started experimenting with handing out basic food, water, masks and supplies on Monday nights outside the church. So far we have averaged fewer than 10 visitors each night, but are learning and hoping we can find ways to help Sasha Bruce help more homeless youth in these complicated and scary times. We are all looking forward to resuming and reopening fully once circumstances allow.

Washington Interfaith Network

First Church decided to fully fund WIN dues in 2021 as an effective way to leverage power for good in the city (for an increase to \$2,500 from \$1,750). First Church individuals participated in housing justice actions, notably the groundbreaking for long-awaited Temple Courts housing development and social media advocacy for affordable housing on Reservation 13. In 2020 WIN also negotiated support from Pepco and Excelon leadership for new jobs and green building initiatives.

Thanks to Gail Sonnemann, Meg Maguire, Dale Ostrander, David Greer, and Fredda Sparks for their participation in various WIN events.

Downtown Cluster of Congregations

We celebrate and respect our long relationship with the Cluster. Our priorities for where to devote time and money are changing, however. First Congregational Church plans to leave the Downtown Cluster of Congregations in 2022. We will send a half portion of dues for 2021, and Fredda Sparks will continue to attend meetings throughout the year.

The Downtown Cluster of Congregations (DCC) was founded in 1972. It started with a handful of congregations, grew to 50-60, and currently lists 35 member congregations on its website. Terry Lynch, Executive Director of DCC since 1990, was a leader in the 1990s with John Mack in fighting for a living downtown (when the basketball arena was being planned and built). We appreciate all his work, and his encouragement of our redevelopment in 2007-2011 and help with finding a new site for the Dinner Program for Homeless Women in 2009.

Since 1972 when the DCC began, WIN was founded (around 1995) as well as the Downtown Services Center (initially at First Church and now NY Avenue Presbyterian). While we plan to reduce our donation to DCC from \$1,000 to \$500 in 2021, we are increasing our contribution to WIN in 2021 from \$1,750 to \$2,500.

Home for All Advocacy Task Force

Members: Meg Maguire, chair, David Greer, Robert Burns, Janneke Ratcliffe, Peter Byrne, Priscilla Waters, Dana Bartolomei, and Sharlene Castle, and Serena Wiltshire of Cleveland Park UCC.

The Home for All Advocacy Task Force was commissioned by the Council in October 2016 to respond to the urgent need for affordable housing through advocacy and hands-on engagement. The task force was approved for two years.

In 2020, Meg Maguire, chair, wrote to the task force members with a recap of accomplishments and a vision for the future of the housing advocacy in the church.

- Efforts to get First Church to make some housing-related investment paid off with the transfer of \$248,000 into a City First Bank that invests in affordable housing. SAAC, Finance and Council responded positively to our rationale and made this investment with a portion of the bequests received in late 2019.
- Second, we have renewed an opportunity to be involved with advocacy for affordable housing along with other churches. WIN is staffed and therefore in a good position to mobilize people in a way we can never hope to do. The organization has greatly increased its engagement in housing during the past two years. The church's 2021 asking budget requests an increase in our dues to WIN, thus meeting our long-standing commitment to pay our fair share.
- Third, SAAC, the social action umbrella, is open to various issue advocacy on the part of our Designated Senior Minister and has developed guidelines for that process. The church can still plan nurtures on housing issues as long as there is interest. And should further social action funds become available, SAAC represents an opportunity to make the case for expanding our commitment to housing which is difficult right now due to limited bandwidth, task force members' other time commitments (often in the housing field), and the closures due to the pandemic.

As a result, the Home for All Advocacy Task Force was dissolved in 2020 and its concerns for affordable housing in DC are transferred to SAAC and honored through our church's participation in WIN.

Policy on Social-Action Advocacy, approved by the congregation November 1, 2020

Introduction

1. We desire as a church to live out our faith through witness and action; to advocate for the oppressed, impoverished, or forgotten people; and to be an instrument of justice. In furtherance of these goals, we desire to partner with other churches and ecumenical organizations striving for social justice, to be an active participant in the work of these organizations, and to have the ability to promptly lend our church's voice to calls for social justice and policy reform, as circumstances dictate.
2. We are also a church of many members who strongly value independent thought and diversity of opinion. We are bound together not by any religious or political creed or dogma, but only by the covenant we make with each other to travel together on a path of discernment.

3. We understand that there are many different social justice needs, many different ways of meeting these needs, and many different public policy priorities among our members. Whenever speaking as a church, we strive to express our deepest principles and greatest commonalities, while being open to and discussion and differing voices on the particulars of any issue.

Policy

4. The church, by vote of the congregation at a duly called congregational meeting, may adopt social action platforms on matters central to our faith, and may partner with other churches and ecumenical organizations to lobby and advocate for policy reforms consistent with these platforms. Policy platforms may authorize the Social Action and Awareness Commission (SAAC) or an ad hoc committee assigned to SAAC, together with the ministers and staff of the church, to work on behalf of the church and with partner churches and organizations in support of the platform, including through advocacy and outreach and fundraising. Any ad hoc committee created for such purpose shall report to SAAC. SAAC shall maintain a copy of all social action platforms subject to this policy as an addendum to this policy.
5. The senior minister of the church or any member of the staff or congregation so delegated by the senior minister may write or endorse, in the name of the church, any advocacy letter, editorial, or similar statement, including any letter prepared by a partner church or ecumenical organization that is consistent with and within the letter and spirit of a social-action platform of the church. Wherever reasonably possible, the writer or endorser of an advocacy letter or document within this policy will share the writing with SAAC before publication or endorsement, to enable SAAC to provide recommendations, comments, or concerns. As time and circumstances allow, any document originating from the church ordinarily should undergo a peer review process involving all relevant commissions or committees.
6. The senior minister of the church or any assistant minister so delegated by the senior pastor may likewise speak on behalf of the church at any public forum, rally, or similar event and may participate in any media interview, if such participation is consistent with a social-action platform of the church and the speaker adheres to the letter and spirit of the platform.
7. The senior minister and assistant ministers of the church may write or join advocacy letters, editorials, or similar statements on their own behalf, and may participate in public policy forums and events on their own behalf and may identify their association with the church in so doing. If the writing or statement is not covered by paragraph 5 or 6, the minister shall take care to be clear that she or he is speaking or participating personally and not on behalf of the church.
8. SAAC shall make available, to all members of the church, all advocacy letters, editorials, or other recorded statements made on behalf of the church under paragraphs 5 or 6, by posting statements on a bulletin board in the narthex and by posting statements or links on the church's web site. SAAC shall also endeavor to publicize or publish such statements in Gabriel's Horn or the church's weekly newsletter. SAAC shall encourage education, awareness, and discussion on

any issues discussed in advocacy statements, by providing or directing members to further sources of information and by providing a mechanism for member comment or feedback.

9. The church shall not engage in any partisan political activity.
10. When engaging in any activities under this policy, the ministers and lay leaders of the church shall be *uncompromising* in their pursuit of social justice, *uncompromising* in their welcome of and attentiveness to members with different viewpoints, and *uncompromising* in their embrace of the creative tension that results from these goals.

Comprehensive Plan to Dismantle Racism, Fall 2020

Introduction: As we understand racism to be personal, systemic, and institutional, this comprehensive plan seeks to work on multiple levels to dismantle racism within our hearts, our ways of being church, and—in partnership—in the wider world. As we lay out a comprehensive approach we simultaneously work on multiple levels, trusting the synergy of the Spirit to deepen our inner work as we attend to our outer structures and to deepen our outer work as we advance our understanding and inner practices, all in relationship with the community of faith at First Church. We will continue to ask the questions: What are our priorities? What is sustainable? How do we set the course to do this work over the long haul?

Anti-Racism Task Force: The group to guide our congregation through this comprehensive plan includes Diane Brenneman, Rev. Karen Byrne, Rev. Jason Carson Wilson, Kim Darling, Lucille Dickinson, Rev. Laura Johnson, Jessica Prentice, LaTanya Purnell, Janneke Ratcliffe, Gail Sonnemann, and Priscilla Waters. This task force will meet quarterly, beginning in November 2020.

“Data suggests that both churches and seminaries remain predominantly white and lag behind the general population in terms of racial diversity. Indeed, the concern for ‘inclusion’ within churches and theological schools seldom focuses on systemic institutional change aimed at decentering white privilege and dismantling white supremacy. Rather, ‘hospitality’ is lifted up as an essential Christian attitude, thereby enabling whiteness to remain the center of power that ‘welcomes’ others into the space, but on its own terms.” --Elaine A. Robinson

“Christ in liberating the wretched of the earth also liberates those responsible for the wretchedness. The oppressor is also freed of his particular demons. Black Power shouting Yes to black humanness and No to white oppression is exorcizing demons on both sides of the conflict.” --James Cone

The plan includes efforts to foster interior, internal, and external transformation. Many events in 2020:

1. Interior (Our sense of self, our spirituality and understanding of God, and inter-personal relationships)
 - A. Congregation-wide sacred conversations on racism and strategies to respond to the oppression of white supremacy.
 - B. Affinity group learning, healing, and conversation.
 - C. Bible Study/Christian Education.

2. Internal (practices, policies, and structures of First Church)
 - A. Racial Justice Audit of ministries, early 2021.
 - B. Preachers of color and culture with possible sermon talk-backs
 - C. Anti-Racism Policy Statement for Advocacy (in drafting by a sub-group of the Anti-Racism Task Force)
 - D. Governance Structures: How do we re-think this? How do we invite folks into the work while not overwhelming them in a time that is more stressful for our Black members, for example? What are best practices?

3. External (Wider Community, Denomination, City, Nation, World)
 - A. Denomination
 1. Sacred Conversation Institutes
 2. Exploring reparations with sibling churches
 3. Deepening relationships w/ historically Black UCC churches in Association, Conference
 - B. Stand for Justice during Racial Reckoning
 - C. Drop-In Center
 - D. Pilgrimage Opportunities
 - E. Deepening relationships with partner organizations. For example, MLK Library, Howard University, Congregation Action Network

OUTREACH AND MEMBERSHIP COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT 2020

Goals: To make visitors and new members feel welcomed and fully informed about our First Church community; to work with other commissions to publicize the church and its many opportunities to the wider community.

Commission Members

Ann Bushmiller, Council Representative

Marian Drake

Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss

Matt LaGamma

Patrick LaGamma

Meg Maguire

Priscilla Waters

The Challenge in 2020

How can we grow church membership and strengthen ties with current members when everyone is isolated in their homes during a pandemic? This is the question the Outreach and Membership (O & M) Commission confronted during a year when our only contact with visitors and members since mid-March has been via Zoom. And yet...

Our gifted new minister, Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss, began her ministry at First Church undaunted by this challenge. Within a few weeks of her arrival, the church began electronic worship services with substantial and steady attendance throughout the year.

New Members

We welcomed 10 new members into our community:

- Kurt and Lois Fischbeck
- Michael Hopkins
- Emily Laing and Allison Truhlar
- Anthony Leonard
- Rev. David Lindsey
- Rev. Kaeley McEvoy – Membership changed from associate member to full member
- LaTayna Purnell
- Lindsay Swisher

We sent each new member a copy of 150th Anniversary publication, *Building the Beloved Community*; and, when we resume meeting in person, we will give them a First Church coffee mug. In addition, we held two virtual Inquirers' Gatherings to distribute information about the church and our denomination, and to answer participants' questions.

Far-Flung Current and Former Members

Zoom has proven to be a great connector of people from all over the world. Jody Bourgeois joined us from Siberia; Mary Hayes from Costa Rica; Randy Jones from Mexico; Katy Koza from Chicago; Welling Hall from Indiana; and extended family members from far and wide. New member LaTayna Purnell, a friend of Rev. Amanda, joined from Houston where she lives with her wife and two sons. And even through bouts of Covid-19, sick members were able to connect during their isolation.

Visitors

Both occasional and frequent visitors also joined us for worship. Grandparents from near and far attended the children's Christmas pageant.

With Cindy Dobbs' help, we set up an online visitor card linked to the worship folder for visitors to fill in if they wanted more information about the church.

Attendance

In the absence of face-to-face contact, we wanted some idea of who attends services. With help from our Church Administrator, we developed a Google doc attendance sheet and took turns filling it in. Typically, 75 "screens" attend services with many representing entire families. So we can safely say that the total number of worshippers on a typical Sunday is 100+.

Buddy System

In response to concerns that members would be isolated and feel alone during the early stages of the pandemic, we worked with Council to create a "buddy system" for any member wishing to pair up with

another member to share their concerns and feelings. While there was some initial interest, few members took advantage of this offering. Subsequently, Council gave congregants an opportunity to participate in either a monthly or quarterly conversation group – an approach that has appealed to many members who find ongoing group sharing a wonderful way to deepen their relationships.

Website

With wonderful help from Alyx Cheng, we made significant updates to the home page of the church website. In 2021, we will make additional changes to the remainder of website content.

Short video on First Church history

To accommodate the annual “church walk” sponsored by the Interfaith Council of Metropolitan Washington (this year a virtual walk), Hannah Long-Higgins and Meg Maguire produced a five-minute video on First Church history shared with the Council and to be posted on our web site.

We give thanks for the time our Commission members have spent continuing to build the beloved community at First Church.

Respectfully submitted,
Meg Maguire, Co-chair

WORSHIP COMMISSION ANNUAL REPORT 2020

The members of the Worship Commission in 2020 were Peter Byrne (chair), Diane Brenneman (council rep), Abigail Cipparoni, and Laura Johnson. At the end of the year, the Commission approved the following description of its work for publication on the Church website:

Worship Commission supports clergy and staff in creating weekly and special worship services, and provides useful feedback on the congregational experience of worship. Commission members assist in long-range worship planning; facilitate participation by all members in worship roles; plan periodic spiritual retreats for the congregation; recruit and schedule ushers; set-up, decorate, and clean-up for worship and Communion; and assist with design and hanging of banners. Participation on the worship commission also educates a rotating set of congregants about how the knowledge, talents, and efforts of many come together to create spiritually enriching worship.

The functions of Church commissions evolve in different circumstances, and we felt that this was an accurate account of what we actually do now.

Of course, this year has been extraordinary. The covid-19 pandemic has required a massive degree of innovation in worship. Our designated Senior Minister, Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss, arrived in early March. The first worship service she led, on March 22, was the first service that was entirely virtual on Zoom. At the first Commission meeting with Rev. Amanda, we noted that moving to an all online worship suspends many of the roles of the Worship Commission, such as setting up the sanctuary and recruiting ushers. Rev. Amanda said that she hoped that the Commission would act as a sounding board for worship planning and a means for community feedback on the quality of the worship experience.

Worship innovations were led by her, by Director of Music John Horman, and by Rev. Sam McFerran. The Commission has fulfilled the role of offering feedback and advice. We discussed and approved the summer worship theme of *Unraveling* and the Advent theme of *Hygge: The Art of Comfort & Coziness*. The Commission also held an all-church, open worship planning meeting on Zoom in September.

Commission members must state directly and earnestly our admiration and gratitude for the care and skill with which the clergy and staff have created worship services online that have sustained participants during many difficult months. Prior to the pandemic, the Church did not even stream live services, but only produced compact discs for those unable to attend in person. So many technical challenges had to be surmounted. Alyx Cheng and Allison Truhlar served indispensably as Zoom moderators. Tom Sowers served as a sound consultant. Graham Marsh produced ensemble choir recordings from the individual recordings created by individual choir members and musicians. John Horman found engaging new ways to present hymn-singing and record soloists, including himself. John also contributed to a successful Christmas Lessons and Carols entirely on Zoom. Rev. Sam created recorded children's moments and offering messages that were warm and real. He also managed to produce a delightful Christmas Pageant, filming the kids outside and in small groups. Rev. Amanda delivered powerful sermons over the air and recruited an impressive array of guest preachers. She engaged energetically and creatively with leading online worship.

Altogether, the clergy and staff performed nearly miraculous feats of extending the worship experience to the online platforms. Our sense is that the entire congregation deeply appreciates this remarkable accomplishment, as much as they look forward to returning to the sanctuary. We believe that worship services should continue to be streamed after we can participate again in person and that we nurture our distant participants who cannot attend physically.

When services returned to the sanctuary in November, Worship Commission members resumed setting up the sanctuary space with cloths, candles, banners, and plants. We received valuable help from Chris Byrne with changing banners. Byron Adams purchased a new reusable Christmas tree at the request of the Commission. The Commission has tried to manage a group assessment and organization of the worship closet, but the pandemic and disruptions due to political demonstrations frustrated our efforts. This will need to be a priority for the new Commission and members rolling off can offer assistance in the transition. The Commission also will continue to welcome volunteers for specific tasks who prefer not to serve as full members.

The Commission also expresses gratitude to the Rev. Karen Byrne, who served as Minister for the seven months preceding Rev. Amanda's arrival. Karen provided a steady assistance to the short-handed staff and her warm preaching and worship leadership to the congregation. One innovation that she introduced but which the pandemic cut off but which bears further consideration was post-worship conversations with preachers. The Commission also express thanks to Rev. Barbara Gerlach for the moving nurtures that she organized and led on Zoom during Advent. We also hope that spiritual retreats can resume when the pandemic ends.

Peter Byrne, chair

NOMINEES FOR 2021

COUNCIL/OFFICERS	2020	2021
Moderator	Kim Darling	John Smeltzer
Assistant Moderator	Garnell Yarbrough/Melissa Ho	Susan Anderson
Treasurer	David Greer (2021)	David Greer (2021)
Clerk	Gail Sonnemann (2020)	Diane Brenneman (2022)
At Large	Alyx Cheng (2021)	Alyx Cheng (2021)
	Dwight Davis (2020)	Jessica Prentice (2022)
COP rep	Nora Marsh	
CE rep	Mark Jensen	
Facilities rep	John Marsh	
Finance rep	Susan Anderson	
O&M rep	Ann Bushmiller	
SAAC rep	John Smeltzer	
Worship rep	Diane Brenneman	
Assistant Treasurers	Karen Pence	Karen Pence
	Nora Marsh	Nora Marsh
	Susan Anderson	Polly Gordon
	Lucille Dickinson	Lucille Dickinson
Care of Parish	Nora Marsh (2021)	Nora Marsh (2021)
	Carol Malone (2021)	Carol Malone (2021)
	Kristy Goodfellow Mills (2021)	Kristy Goodfellow Mills (2021)
	Mike Zawada (2020)	Mark Jensen (2022)
		Caroline Marsh (2022)
		Polly Gordon - volunteer
Christian Education	Mark Jensen (2020)	Alisa Tanaka-Dodge (2021)
	Joey Meyer (2020)	Anna Kiss (2021)
	Elise Villemez (2020)	LaTayna Purnell (2022)
	Alisa Tanaka-Dodge (2021)	Ann Bushmiller (2022)
	Anna Kiss (2021)	Andrew Hamilton (2022)
Facilities	Anisa Heming (2020)	Moira Jones (2021)
	John Marsh (2020)	Marian Drake (2022)

	Carolyn Marsh (2020)	Peter Tracey (2022)
	Moira Jones (2021)	Kim Darling (2022)
	Tony Saudek (2021)	
		Anisa Heming - volunteer
Finance	Andy Raver (2021)	Chris Barr (2022)
	Susan Anderson (2021)	Allison Truhlar (2022)
	Polly Gordon (2020)	Nan McConnell (2022)
		John Marsh (2022)
		Jean Alexander - volunteer
Investment	(Fin rep)	
	Nora Marsh (as Treasurer)	
	Ann Bushmiller	Ann Bushmiller
	Peter Tracey	Peter Tracey
	Karen Pence	Karen Pence
Outreach & Membership	Priscilla Waters (2021)	Priscilla Waters (2021)
	Marian Drake (2020)	Patrick Darling-LaGamma (2021)
	Meg Maguire (2021)	Meg Maguire (2021)
	Patrick Darling-LaGamma (2021)	Mike Zawada (2022)
	Ann Bushmiller (2020)	Ellen Bushmiller (2022)
	Dale Ostrander, volunteer	Dale Ostrander, volunteer
	Matthew LaGamma, volunteer	Matthew LaGamma, volunteer
Social Action & Awareness	Lucille Dickinson (2021)	Jason Carson Wilson (2022)
	Jamey Moore (2021)	Jamey Moore (2021)
	John Smeltzer (2020)	Gail Sonnemann (2022)
	Sharlene Castle (2020)	JD Okorie-Dunn (2022)
	Grandon Purnell (2020)	Michael Hopkins (2022)
		Janneke Ratcliffe (2022)
Worship	Peter Byrne (2020)	Abigail Cipparone (2021)
	Sophie Jones (2020)	Laura Johnson (2021)
	Laura Johnson (2021)	Lucille Dickinson (2022)
	Diane Brenneman (2020)	Mary Hayes (2022)
	Abigail Cipparone (2021)	Chris Byrne (2022)

Other Positions		
Archivist	Judith Gray	Judith Gray
Representatives		
Downtown Cluster	Fredda Sparks	Fredda Sparks
CAC and Potomac Association	Karen Byrne, JD Okorie-Dunn, Pojen Lee	
CAC under 30	OPEN	
Penn Quarter	OPEN	
WIN	Meg Maguire/Gail Sonnemann	Gail Sonnemann
Shaw Community	Dale Ostrander	Dale Ostrander
Potomac Association LGBT Task Force	Jamey Moore	Jamey Moore
Personnel (Council appointment)	Priscilla Waters	Ellen Bushmiller
	Lucille Dickinson	Kimberly Darling
	Ellen Bushmiller	Lucille Dickinson
	JD Okorie-Dunn	Priscilla Waters
	Janneke Ratcliffe	
Nominating Committee	Andy Raver	Melissa Ho
	Lucille Dickinson	Nan McConnell
	Kim Darling	

THIS YEAR'S THANKS GO TO:

Council

Officers

Moderator	Kim Darling
Assistant Moderator	Garnell Yarbrough/ Melissa Ho
Treasurer	David Greer
Clerk	Gail Sonnemann

At-large members

Alyx Cheng
Dwight Davis

Commission Representatives

Care of Parish	Nora Marsh
Christian Education	Mark Jensen
Facilities	John Marsh
Finance	Susan Anderson
Outreach & Membership	Ann Bushmiller
Social Action	John Smeltzer
Worship	Dianne Brenneman

Assistant Treasurers

Lucille Dickinson
Karen Pence
Nora Marsh
Susan Anderson

Designated Minister Relations Committee

Kim Darling (as Moderator)
Garnell Yarbrough/Melissa Ho (Assistant Moderator)
Nan McConnell (as Immediate Past Moderator)
Lucille Dickinson (Personnel)
David Greer
Katherine Antos
Hannah Long-Higgins

Nominating Committee

Melissa Ho
Nan McConnell

Personnel Committee

Lucille Dickinson
Priscilla Waters
Ellen Bushmiller
J.D. Okorie-Dunn
Janneke Ratcliffe

Facility Use Task Force

Nan McConnell, chair
Byron Adams, staff
Anisa Heming, Facilities
Diane Brenneman, Council
Lucille Dickinson, Finance

Congregation Regathering Task Force

Kim Darling, chair
Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss, staff
Rev. Karen Byrne
David Greer
Garnell Yarbrough
Melissa Ho

Care of Parish Commission

Kristy Goodfellow Mills, chair
Mike Zawada
Nora Marsh
Carol Malone

Christian Education Commission

Mark Jensen, chair
Joey Meyer
Anna Kiss
Elise Villemez, chair
Alisa Tanaka-Dodge
Rev. Sam McFerran, staff

Christian Education Volunteers

Susan Anderson
Katherine Antos
Chris Barr
Troy Bent

Ann Bushmiller
Rev. Karen Byrne
Tory Christensen
Marian Drake
Rev. Barbara Gerlach
Andrew Hamilton
Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss
Rev. Ron Hopson
Melissa Ho
John Horman
Mark Jensen
Rev. Laura Johnson
Lauren McFerran
Mary Meyer
Karen Pence
Andy Raver
Ann Saudek
C.J. Thayer

Facilities Commission
Anisa Heming, chair
John Marsh
Carolyn Marsh
Moiria Jones
Tony Saudek
Byron Adams, staff

Audio and Lighting Volunteers
Raine Anderson
Scott Day
Anisa Heming
Melissa Ho
Graham Marsh
John Marsh
Nick McConnell

Finance Commission
Polly Gordon
Andy Raver, chair
Susan Anderson
Nora Marsh, Treasurer
David Greer
Lucille Dickinson (volunteer)

Budget Committee
Kim Darling
Scott Day
Lucille Dickinson
Nora Marsh
Meg Maguire
John Smeltzer

Investment Commission
Peter Tracey
Ann Bushmiller
Karen Pence (advisor/volunteer)
Nora Marsh

Outreach and Membership Commission
Ann Bushmiller
Marian Drake
Meg Maguire, co-chair
Priscilla Waters, co-chair
Patrick Darling-LaGamma
Matthew LaGamma
Alyx Cheng (volunteer, website)

Greeters
Alyx Cheng
Nan McConnell
Lynaya Morris
Dale Ostrander
Taylor Sweeney

Social Action and Awareness Commission
John Smeltzer
Lucille Dickinson, chair
Jamey Moore
Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss
Rev. Jason Carson Wilson
Susan Saudek (chair, Sanctuary Group)
Priscilla Waters (Youth Drop-in Center)
Gail Sonnemann (Rep. to WIN)
Meg Maguire (Housing Advocacy)
Olivia Hoynes (volunteer)
Lois Fischbeck (volunteer)
Kurt Fischbeck (volunteer)

Drop-In Center for Homeless Youth Volunteers

Jean Alexander
JD Okorie-Dunn
Nan McConnell
Priscilla Waters
Rev. Jason Carson-Wilson
Polly Gordon
Olivia Hoynes
Natasha Riveron
Garnell Yarbrough
Kim Darling
Andrew Hamilton
Gail Sonnemann
Alexandra Cheng
Alison Stanger
Carolyn Marsh
Marian Drake
Janneke Ratcliffe
Faith Brightbill
Diane Brenneman
Meg Maguire
Katherine Antos
Matthew LaGamma
Mary Meyer
Rev. Barbara Gerlach
Alisa Tanaka-Dodge
Tadashi Dodge
Samantha Warren
Tory Christensen

Anti-Racism Task Force

Diane Brenneman
Rev. Karen Byrne
Lucille Dickinson
Andrew Hamilton
Rev. Laura Johnson
Jessica Prentice
LaTayna Purnell
Janneke Ratcliffe
Gail Sonnemann
Priscilla Waters

Sanctuary Working Group

Susan Saudek
Peter Tracey
Priscilla Waters
Cynthia Hobbs
Jamey Moore

Shaw Community Ministry Volunteers

Meg Maguire
Dale Ostrander (board member)

Washington Interfaith Network Meeting

Attendees
Meg Maguire
Dale Ostrander
Fredda Sparks
Allison Stanger
Gail Sonnemann

Worship Commission

Peter Byrne, chair
Diane Brenneman
Rev. Laura Johnson
Abigail Cipparone
Rev. Sam McFerran, staff
John Horman, staff
Ushers
Moses Alabi
Jean Alexander
Ann Bushmiller
Chris Byrne
Peter Byrne
Tory Christensen
Scott Day
Marian Drake
Karl Gotting
David Greer
Andrew Hamilton
Anisa Heming
Melissa Ho
Mark Jensen
Moir Jones
Joan King

Matthew LaGamma
Meg Maguire
Anne Mascolino
Courtney McCaffrey
Tom McCaffrey
Nan McConnell
Nick McConnell
Andy Raver
Ann Saudek
Susan Saudek
Tony Saudek
Fredda Sparks
Liz Warren
Garnell Yarborough
Mike Zawada

Zoom Moderators
Graham Marsh
Tom Sowers

Choir
Jean Alexander
Justin Antos
Diane Brenneman
Marian Drake
Lucille Dickinson
Kristy Goodfellow Mills
Polly Gordon
Karen Gotting
Judith Gray
Moira Jones
Randy Jones
Sophie Jones
Carol Malone
Nora Marsh
Carolyn Marsh
John Marsh
Dale Ostrander
Gail Sonnemann
Priscilla Waters
Ronnie Yoder
Cynthia Hobbs
Bob Bish

Sharon Bish
Mary Hayes
John Horman, Staff

Occasional/Visiting Musicians
Bill Burns, horn
Stella Dilorio, piano
Cindy Dobbs, piano
Andrew Hamilton, guitar
Mary Hayes, violin
Alicia Herman, horn
Scott Herman, trumpet
Jason Labrador, violin
Hannah Long-Higgins, cello
John Marsh, guitar
Anna Rasch, piano
Dennis Turner, piano
Ken Wolff, trombone
John Horman, Staff

Hand Chime Ringers
Nora Marsh
John Marsh
Polly Gordon
Carol Malone
Moira Jones
Karen Byrne
Diane Brenneman
Cindy Dobbs

Guest Preachers
Jean Alexander
Noel Anderson
Karen Byrne
Peter Byrne
Mari Castellanos
Dwight Davis
Terry Flood
Andrew Hamilton
Amanda Hendler-Voss
Malcolm Himshoot
Ron Hopson
Pojen Lee

Sam McFerran
Lynaya Morris
Bryan Nurnberger
Freeman Palmer
Andy Raver
Sandy Sorensen
Karen Tramontano

Archivist
Judith Gray

Break Away Wednesday Meditation Group
Nora Marsh

Representatives
Central Atlantic Conference – Karen Byrne
Downtown Cluster – Fredda Sparks
Washington Interfaith Network (WIN) – Meg
Maguire/Gail Sonnemann
Shaw Community – Dale Ostrander

Potomac Association – Rev. Karen Byrne, J.D.
Okorie-Dunn, Rev. Pojen Lee
Potomac Association LGBT Task Force – Jamey
Moore

Child Care Staff
Timur Murillo
Ziyah Holman
Jordann Edwards
Patrick Darling-LaGamma

First Church Staff
Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss
Rev. Sam McFerran, Associate Minister
Rev. Karen Byrne, Minister
Byron Adams, Building Manager
John Horman, Director of Music
Cindy Dobbs, Administrative Assistant
Ines Marques, Sexton

PLEDGE STATISTICS

PLEDGE STATISTICS 2019 to 2021

Table I -- Pledging Summary

	2021	2020	2019
	As of Jan 12, 2021	As of Jan 17, 2020	As of Sep 1, 2019
Pledges	75	76	70
Persons Pledging	109	105	100
Total Amount	275,822	273,694	281,506
Average per pledge	3,678	3,601	4,022
Average per person	2,530	2,607	2,815

Table II -- Number of Pledges by Amount

	2021	2020	2019
1-599	10	12	7
600-999	6	9	10
1000-1999	16	15	15
2000-2999	8	7	8
3000-5999	24	22	19
6000 & over	11	11	11
TOTAL	75	76	70

Table III -- Changes in Amount Pledged

	2021	2020	2019
Pledges Continuing			
Increased	34	45	33
Unchanged	24	18	21
Decreased	4	3	8
New or returned	13	10	8
TOTAL	75	76	70

First Congregational Church
Balance Sheet
As of December 31, 2020

	Total Endowment Fund and Capital Reserve	Total General Fund and Special Purpose	TOTAL
1 ASSETS			
2 Current Assets			
3 Bank Accounts			
4 Capital One 380	122,444.31	127,332.53	249,776.84
5 City First Bank Money Mkt	0.00	248,459.05	248,459.05
6 Endowment Fund Bank Accts			
7 SunTrust Holding Account for Endowment	12,118.11	0.00	12,118.11
8 Total Endowment Fund Bank Accts	<u>\$ 12,118.11</u>	<u>\$ 0.00</u>	<u>\$ 12,118.11</u>
9 SunTrust Joint Account	0.00	215,268.10	215,268.10
10 Total Bank Accounts	<u>\$ 134,682.42</u>	<u>\$ 681,068.88</u>	<u>\$ 726,822.10</u>
11 Other Current Assets			
12 Account Receivable	0.00	174.13	174.13
17 Total Account Receivable	<u>\$ 0.00</u>	<u>\$ 174.13</u>	<u>\$ 174.13</u>
20 Reserve Held by Lincoln Properties	0.00	24,678.51	24,678.51
21 Total Other Current Assets	<u>\$ 0.00</u>	<u>\$ 24,862.84</u>	<u>\$ 24,862.84</u>
22 Total Current Assets	<u>\$ 134,682.42</u>	<u>\$ 816,812.32</u>	<u>\$ 760,474.74</u>
23 Other Assets			
28 Endowment Fund and Capital Reserve Fund Investments			
29 Vanguard FTSE Social Index Investment			
30 Vanguard FTSE Social Index Investment	133,956.52	0.00	133,956.52
31 Vanguard FTSE Social Index Investment unrealized gain or loss	138,450.36	0.00	138,450.36
32 Total Vanguard FTSE Social Index Investment	<u>\$ 272,408.88</u>	<u>\$ 0.00</u>	<u>\$ 272,408.88</u>
33 Vanguard Intermediate Term Investment Grade Total			
34 Vanguard Intermediate Term Investment Grade	259,085.67	0.00	259,085.67
35 Vanguard Intermediate Term Investment Grade Fund unrealized gain or loss	7,756.55	0.00	7,756.55
36 Total Vanguard Intermediate Term Investment Grade Total	<u>\$ 268,842.22</u>	<u>\$ 0.00</u>	<u>\$ 268,842.22</u>
37 Vanguard Short Term Inflation Protected Securities Fund Total			
38 Vanguard Short Term Inflation Protected Securities Fund	246,303.00	0.00	246,303.00
39 Vanguard Short Term Inflation Protected Securities Fund unrealized gain or loss	7,629.14	0.00	7,629.14
40 Total Vanguard Short Term Inflation Protected Securities Fund Total	<u>\$ 263,932.14</u>	<u>\$ 0.00</u>	<u>\$ 263,932.14</u>
41 Vanguard Total Bond Fund Total			
42 Vanguard Total Bond Fund	681,675.91	0.00	681,675.91
43 Vanguard Total Bond Fund unrealized gain or loss	581,334.47	0.00	581,334.47
44 Total Vanguard Total Bond Fund Total	<u>\$ 1,263,010.38</u>	<u>\$ 0.00</u>	<u>\$ 1,263,010.38</u>
45 Vanguard Total International Bond Index Total			
46 Vanguard International Bond Index	459,181.59	0.00	459,181.59
47 Vanguard Total International Bond Index unrealized gain or loss	45,868.22	0.00	45,868.22
48 Total Vanguard Total International Bond Index Total	<u>\$ 605,048.81</u>	<u>\$ 0.00</u>	<u>\$ 605,048.81</u>
49 Vanguard Total International Stock Index Fund Total			
50 Vanguard Total International Stock Index Fund	842,680.60	0.00	842,680.60
51 Vanguard Total International Stock Index Fund unrealized gain or loss	297,917.03	0.00	297,917.03
52 Total Vanguard Total International Stock Index Fund Total	<u>\$ 1,140,697.83</u>	<u>\$ 0.00</u>	<u>\$ 1,140,697.83</u>

First Congregational Church				
Balance Sheet				
As of December 31, 2019				
		Total A. Endowment Fund	Total C. General Fund and Special Purpose	TOTAL
49	Vanguard Total Stock Fund unrealized gain or loss	1,387,837.90	-	1,387,837.90
50	Total Vanguard Total Stock Fund Total	2,004,747.82	-	2,004,747.82
51	Total Endowment Fund and Capital Reserve Fund Investments	6,328,777.22	-	6,328,777.22
52	Total Other Assets	6,328,777.22	-	6,328,777.22
53	TOTAL ASSETS	6,985,143.83	179,808.17	8,144,862.00
54				
55	LIABILITIES AND NET ASSETS			
56	Liabilities			
57	Current Liabilities			
58	Other Current Liabilities			
59	Amounts deducted from Carmaak for rent (deleted)			
60	Income Received Before Apploable Period, owed to subsequent year budget			
61	Prepaid Occasional Use	-	1,600.00	1,600.00
62	Prepaid Pledges	-	10,000.00	10,000.00
63	Total Income Received Before Apploable Period, owed to subsequent year budget	-	11,800.00	11,800.00
64	Accounts Payable	-	12,899.26	12,899.26
68	Total Payables	-	12,899.26	12,899.26
78	Security Deposits received from renters, users			
79	Fresh Farm security deposit	-	12,494.17	12,494.17
80	Table Church security deposit	-	2,000.00	2,000.00
81	Total Security Deposits received from renters, users	-	14,494.17	14,494.17
82	Total Other Current Liabilities	-	38,993.43	38,993.43
83	Total Current Liabilities	-	38,993.43	38,993.43
84	Long-Term Liabilities			
85	Capital Reserve Fund	363,371.62	-	363,371.62
86	Total Long-Term Liabilities	363,371.62	-	363,371.62
87	Total Liabilities	363,371.62	38,993.43	402,365.05
88				
89	NET ASSETS			
90	Endowment Fund Net Assets			
91	Redevelopment proceeds	3,397,628.91	-	3,397,628.91
92	Restrictod by Donor			
93	Griffis Bequest	15,093.41	-	15,093.41
94	Ross Trust donation 2007; one half of annual income to Mission budget	141,742.73	-	141,742.73
95	Total Restrictod by Donor	166,838.14	-	166,838.14
96	Unrestrictod			
97	Other - Cumulative Unrestrictod Endowment	664,331.23	-	664,331.23
98	Total Unrestrictod	664,331.23	-	664,331.23
99	Total Endowment Fund Net Assets	4,218,798.28	-	4,218,798.28
100	Funds Restrictod by Church Action	510,000.00	-	510,000.00
102	Total Funds Restrictod by Church Action	510,000.00	-	510,000.00
103	General Fund Net Assets			
104	Dedicated General Fund Balances			
105	C. Memorials	-	100.00	100.00

UNAUDITED: For Management Review Purposes Only

First Congregational Church				
Balance Sheet				
As of December 31, 2019				
		Total A. Endowment Fund	Total C. General Fund and Special Purpose	TOTAL
106	Anne Griffls	-	1,125.05	1,125.05
107	Barbara Hayes	-	50.00	50.00
108	Bruce Hanson	-	385.00	385.00
109	Claricia Cummings	-	1,100.00	1,100.00
110	Dwight Marsh	-	130.00	130.00
111	Griffls, Richard	-	368.00	368.00
112	Total C. Memorials	-	3,258.05	3,258.05
115	Total Dedicated General Fund Balances	-	3,258.05	3,258.05
116	Unrestricted General Fund Assets	-	119,109.12	119,109.12
117	Total General Fund Net Assets	-	122,367.17	122,367.17
118	Total NET ASSETS	4,728,796.28	122,367.17	4,851,163.45
120	Net Income	872,975.93	18,447.57	891,423.50
121	Total Equity	5,601,772.21	140,814.74	5,742,586.95
122	TOTAL LIABILITIES AND EQUITY	\$ 5,965,143.83	\$ 179,808.17	\$ 6,144,952.00

January 13, 2021

Summary of 2020 - 2021					Notes
	2020 Original Budget	2020 Year End Final	2021 Proposed Budget		
Offerings	\$ 304,000	\$ 301,657	\$ 307,500		2021 proposed budget assumes 6 months all virtual and 6 months in the building, for ease of budgeting. Will revise as 2021 proceeds.
Continuing Lease, Shared Use Agreements	\$ 109,108	\$ 67,843	\$ 88,481		Current Year Pledges, Prior Year Pledges, Unpledged. Lines 1-4 on detailed exhibit.
Other Bldg Income	\$ 120,702	\$ 33,848	\$ 58,800		Pathways rent, other flex space at \$5,800/mo starting July 2021, C100 shared use, parking lease. Lines 9-12, 19.
Endowment transfers	\$ 179,665	\$ 179,665	\$ 157,950		Most affected by COVID-19: Most shared users, occasional users. Occasional users expected to return Fall 2021. Lines 13-18.
Draw from recent \$510,000 bequests			\$ 111,317		In 2020, 3% transfer, Ross/mission, plus \$24,000 for major repairs. In 2021, 3% transfer plus Ross/mission. Proposed budget is higher than original asking because of 13.2% final return on investments in 2020. Lines 21-24.
Other Income	\$ 29,214	\$ 25,995	\$ 13,350		Current rough estimates for 2022 income and expenses indicate that, absent other development and/or actions, the church might need to draw another \$65,000 from these recent bequests. Line 25.
Total Income	\$ 742,689	\$ 609,007	\$ 737,398		Investment income, Second Sunday offerings and, in 2020, grant funds from Sasha Bruce, other. Lines 5-8, 26-41.
Benevolences	\$ 50,720	\$ 56,356	\$ 52,148		Lines 43-63.
Capital	\$ 71,485	\$ 79,514	\$ 62,500		Lines 64-66.
Facilities	\$ 174,152	\$ 147,129	\$ 169,120		Lines 67-78.
Office Expenses	\$ 18,200	\$ 23,515	\$ 19,661		Lines 116-126.
Staff	\$ 373,132	\$ 340,342	\$ 398,432		All staff at same wage rate and number of hours as in 2020. Lines 79-85, 94-96, 98-104, 109-115, 127-148.
Parish Programs	\$ 60,704	\$ 36,390	\$ 35,538		Lines 92, 93, 97, 98, 106-108, 149-168.
Total Expenses	\$ 748,393	\$ 683,246	\$ 737,398		
Net Income/(Deficit)	\$ (5,705)	\$ (74,239)	\$ (0)		

Final year end 2020 deficit will be posted to, and reduce, general fund unrestricted assets, currently \$137,515 (up from \$45,000-50,000 several years ago due to recent annual surpluses).

January 13, 2021
 Detailed Exhibit
 Original 2020 Budget, Actual Expenses December 31, 2020, Proposed 2021

	2020 Original Budget			2020 year end final			2021 Proposed Budget			Comments
	Budget									
INCOME										
GENERAL INCOME										
1	Pledges--Current	275,000.00	264,016.27	280,000.00	Original asking budget was \$295,000. Current estimate of 2021 pledges is \$290,000, both in hand (\$275,000) and expected (\$14,000). Assume \$280,000 will be paid in 2021 and \$10,000 will be paid as prior year pledges in 2022.					
2	Pledges--Prior Year	12,000.00	11,440.00	20,000.00	Original asking budget was \$5,000. Current estimate is based on actual unpaid as of Dec 31, with some adjustments.					
3	Unpledged	17,000.00	26,200.53	7,500.00	Mary donors become pledges in 2021.					
4	Total A. Pledges	<u>\$ 304,000.00</u>	<u>\$ 301,656.80</u>	<u>\$ 307,500.00</u>						
5	B. Other Income - General Fund Investment	47.00	892.82	850.00	Includes earnings on 2019 bequests deposited in CapitalOne and City First					
6	Other Income - other	0.00	1,820.00	0.00	In 2020, excess amount set aside on balance sheet for 2019 retirement benefits.					
7	Sasha Bruce - funds for Drop In Center	16,866.67	5,001.00	0.00						
8	Total B. Other Income - General Fund	<u>\$ 16,866.67</u>	<u>\$ 7,513.82</u>	<u>\$ 850.00</u>						
C. Building use										
1. Lease agreements										
9	Flex space lease	67,750.20	13,792.00	35,000.00	Assumes flex space rented by July 2021					
10	Pathways to Housing lease	24,188.52	36,944.00	44,184.00	Assumes 2% increase in monthly rent. Current is \$3,610/mo.					
11	Total 1. Lease agreements	<u>\$ 91,938.72</u>	<u>\$ 50,736.00</u>	<u>\$ 79,184.00</u>						
2. Shared Use Agreements										
12	Committee of 100 shared use agreement	7,168.80	7,140.00	7,283.00	Assumes 2% increase.					
13	Encore Chorale Agreement	14,000.00	4,756.00	7,000.00	Fall 2021 only					
14	Table Church	32,902.32	11,572.00	20,800.00						
15	Washington Beach Consort	12,000.00	1,850.00	6,000.00	Fall 2021 only					
16	Washington Hebrew Congregation	5,800.00	2,400.00	0.00						
17	Total 2. Shared Use Agreements	<u>\$ 71,871.12</u>	<u>\$ 28,118.00</u>	<u>\$ 41,083.00</u>						
18	3. Occasional Use	56,000.00	12,969.50	25,000.00	Fall 2021 only					
19	4. Parking space lease with LAZ	10,000.00	9,986.97	2,014.00	Receipt in 2021 for only Jan, Feb, half of March 2020. Lease for use of 10 parking spaces is suspended during covid.					
20	Total C. Building use	<u>\$ 228,809.84</u>	<u>\$ 101,680.47</u>	<u>\$ 147,261.00</u>						

January 13, 2021
 Detailed Exhibit
 Original 2020 Budget, Actual Expenses December 31, 2020, Proposed 2021

	2020 Original Budget	2020 year end final	2021 Proposed Budget	Comments
D. Transfers from Endowment Funds				
21	142,200.00	142,200.00	148,000.00	Original asking was \$147,000. Transfer of 3% of the rolling average of the endowment, per Investment Policy guidelines.
22	13,465.00	13,465.00	9,350.00	Original asking was \$2,835. Based on 13.2% return on investments in 2020 (compared to 4% assumed previously). These are earnings on a bequest received in 2007 requesting that half the interest each year be used for mission.
23	24,000.00	24,000.00	0.00	In 2020, a one-time draw approved for building repairs.
24	179,665.00	179,665.00	167,960.00	
25	For display only, not in total income in line 42. Amount needed to balance in 2021. Matches amount in line 172. To balance, draw from recent bequests of \$610,000, which have not yet been added to endowment fund.			
26	0.00	85.00	0.00	
27	12,500.00		12,500.00	In 2020:
28	0.00	788.00	0.00	SUBJ and Seabury Age-In-Place
29	0.00	937.25	0.00	ThriveDC
30	0.00	1,714.00	0.00	UCC One Great Hour of Sharing
31	0.00	3,393.00	0.00	RP Medical Debt
32	0.00	1,221.00	0.00	Colombia
33	0.00	1,387.00	0.00	Shaw Community Center
34	0.00	1,085.00	0.00	BLM-DC
35	0.00	950.00	0.00	CAN
36	0.00	940.00	0.00	Faith UCC's Mobile Food Market
37	0.00	1,485.00	0.00	UCC's Neighbors in Need
38	0.00	545.00	0.00	UCC's Strengthen the Church
39	0.00	1,280.00	0.00	UCC's Christmas Fund
40	12,500.00	15,295.25	12,500.00	
41	0.00	3,101.00	0.00	Faith UCC turkey giveaway \$1,650, Wheatley school supplies \$500, Olay's Cradle Christmas Eve \$951
42	742,868.61	609,007.34	628,081.00	
A. BENEVOLENCE and SECOND SUNDAY				
43	1,000.00	1,000.00	500.00	SAAC recommends beginning process of phase out our participation, offset by increased participation in WIN.

January 13, 2021
 Detailed Exhibit
 Original 2020 Budget, Actual Expenses December 31, 2020, Proposed 2021

	2020 Original Budget			2020 year end final		2021 Proposed Budget		Comments
	Budget							
44	2. Our Church's Wider Mission	29,000.00		29,000.00		30,000.00		SMAAC recommends increase. CAC is particularly active in racial justice.
45	3. Penn Quarter	280.00				0.00		SMAAC recommends beginning process of phase out our participation.
46	4. Potomac Association	6,210.00		6,210.00		6,648.00		New assessment for 2021.
47	5. Wash. Interfaith Network	1,750.00		1,750.00		2,500.00		SMAAC recommend increase to full dues.
48	6. Second Sunday Offering	12,500.00				12,500.00		
49	a. JANUARY	0.00		788.00		0.00		
50	b. FEBRUARY	0.00		937.25		0.00		
51	c. MARCH	0.00		1,714.00		0.00		
52	d. APRIL	0.00		3,393.00		0.00		
53	e. MAY	0.00		1,221.00		0.00		
54	f. JUNE	0.00		1,387.00		0.00		
55	g. JULY	0.00		1,095.00		0.00		
56	h. AUGUST	0.00		660.00		0.00		
57	i. SEPTEMBER	0.00		940.00		0.00		
58	j. OCTOBER	0.00		1,485.00		0.00		
59	k. NOVEMBER	0.00		645.00		0.00		
60	l. DECEMBER	0.00		1,260.00		0.00		
61	Total 6. Second Sunday Offering	\$ 12,500.00		\$ 15,295.25		\$ 12,500.00		
62	7. Other special offerings	0.00		3,101.00		0.00		
63	Total A. BENEVOLENCE and SECOND SUNDAY	\$ 60,720.00		\$ 66,366.25		\$ 62,148.00		
B. CAPITAL								
64	1. Major Repair & Repl.	34,000.00		42,028.89		20,000.00		In 2020: \$11,700 for main entry canopy, \$6,300 for flex space update, \$1,400 for ice machine, \$3,915 for lighting, \$7,807 for painting, \$4,837 for front door repair, \$5,395 for boiler repairs. In 2021: Front doors - \$5,000; HVAC - \$5,000; interior door repairs - \$5,000; contingency - \$5,000.
65	2. Capital Improvement Reserve Funding	37,485.00		37,485.00		42,500.00		Regular annual savings designed to pay for planned replacement of major building systems over 50 year period. Bumped up in 2021. We are using reserve much earlier than expected. Need an adjusted 50 year capital replacement plan, which will probably require more each year.
66	Total B. CAPITAL	\$ 71,485.00		\$ 79,513.89		\$ 62,500.00		
C. FACILITIES								
67	1. FCC Share of Lincoln Properties Expense	130,000.00		109,224.79		120,000.00		

January 13, 2021
 Detailed Exhibit
 Original 2020 Budget, Actual Expenses December 31, 2020, Proposed 2021

	2020 Original Budget		2020 year end final		2021 Proposed Budget		Comments
	Budget				Budget		
117	Bank Charges	425.00	480.08	180.00			
118	Giving Fees	475.00	2,274.93	2,400.00			As we move to virtual, more people are using online options, many of which have fees. 2020 net fees: \$73 in Jan, \$46 in Feb, \$102 in Mar, \$205 in Apr, \$135 in May, \$201 in June, \$227 in July, \$200 in August, \$101 in Sept, \$155 in Oct, \$419 in Nov, \$410 in Dec.
119	Internet and Cable - monthly	2,500.00	2,101.50	2,580.00			
120	Office equipment maintenance	5,370.00	7,908.94	5,650.00			2020 spending was higher due to outstanding liability for old copier.
121	Postage	415.00	515.90	120.00			
122	Printing & Office Supplies	3,000.00	3,250.94	2,000.00			2020 reflects purchase of computer for ARV, so higher than 2021
123	Telephone - monthly	1,815.00	1,801.82	1,815.00			
124	NEW Licenses and Fees		788.00				0.00 DC fees that were overdue. Do not anticipate owing this in 2021.
125	Workers Compensation Insurance	1,500.00	2,095.00	2,500.00			
126	Total Office	<u>18,200.00</u>	<u>23,514.69</u>	<u>18,661.00</u>			
	Office and Building Staff						
	Building Manager						
127	A. Building Manager salary	61,784.02	58,789.71	61,784.02			
128	B. Building Manager payroll tax expense	4,724.95	(2,763.77)	4,724.95			Negative amount in 2020 due to credit received under federal covid leg.
129	C. Building Manager Insurance	8,647.56	8,735.88	9,180.00			Original asking was \$8,648. Higher premiums in 2021.
130	D. Building Manager Retirement benefit	2,027.00	2,026.90	2,027.00			
131	E. Building Manager disability insurance	889.00	796.29	889.00			
132	F. Professional Development	250.00		250.00			
133	Total Building Manager	<u>78,282.53</u>	<u>67,584.91</u>	<u>78,814.97</u>			
	Office Assistant						
134	A. Office Assistant salary	31,585.32	31,823.48	31,585.32			
135	B. Office Assistant payroll tax expense	2,416.28	(3,525.41)	2,416.28			
136	C. Office Assistant Health Spend	4,701.20	4,697.52	4,701.20			Negative amount in 2020 due to credit received under federal covid leg.
137	D. Office Assistant Retirement Expense	1,106.00	1,105.88	1,106.00			
138	E. Office Assistant disability insurance	474.00	384.90	474.00			
139	F. Professional Development	500.00	500.00	500.00			
140	G. Vacation Coverage	1,100.00		1,100.00			
141	Total Office Assistant	<u>41,882.80</u>	<u>34,786.17</u>	<u>41,882.80</u>			
	Section						

January 13, 2021

Detailed Exhibit

Original 2020 Budget, Actual Expenses December 31, 2020, Proposed 2021

	2020 Original Budget		2020 year end final		2021 Proposed Budget		Comments
	Budget				Budget		
142		A. Sexton salary	30,716.00	31,634.95	30,716.00		
143		B. Sexton payroll tax expense	2,398.73	(3,475.23)	2,398.73	Negative amount in 2020 due to credit received under federal covid leg.	
144		C. Sexton Health Slopand	3,875.90	3,870.22	3,875.90		
145		D. Sexton retirement expense	1,008.00	671.44	1,008.00		
146		E. Sexton disability insurance	432.00	287.76	432.00		
147		Total Sexton	<u>\$ 38,430.63</u>	<u>\$ 32,888.14</u>	<u>\$ 38,430.63</u>		
148		Total Office and Building Staff	<u>\$ 188,695.96</u>	<u>\$ 135,370.22</u>	<u>\$ 189,128.40</u>		
149		Outreach and Membership Commission					
		Outreach and Membership	1,000.00	947.39	594.00	Changes for membership database, Servant Keeper, posted here. \$30/month before upgrade, \$254 upgrade, \$65 service call before help desk contract, \$234 help desk contract.	
150		Total Outreach and Membership Commission	<u>\$ 1,000.00</u>	<u>\$ 947.39</u>	<u>\$ 594.00</u>		
151		Pathways Sunday Support	5,200.00	750.00	2,400.00		
		Publicity					
152		Public Visibility	750.00	32.30	0.00		
153		Website	1,000.00	198.00	900.00		
154		Total Publicity	<u>\$ 1,750.00</u>	<u>\$ 231.30</u>	<u>\$ 900.00</u>		
		Social Action Commission					
155		A. Social Action and Awareness	1,000.00	492.99	550.00		
156		B. Justice & Witness/Int'l Racism Group	700.00	1,000.00	2,250.00		
157		C. Sanctuary Task Force	1,500.00	700.00	1,550.00	Original asking was \$1,050. SAAAC proposes paying full membership fee (\$1,000) to Congregation Action Network.	
		D. Drop In Center					
158		1. Social Action Contractor	9,600.00	2,880.00	3,000.00	Assume DIC resumes mid year 2021 for Mon n light only	
159		2. Drop In Center Supplies	1,600.00	346.99	900.00		
160		Total D. Drop In Center	<u>\$ 11,200.00</u>	<u>\$ 3,226.99</u>	<u>\$ 3,900.00</u>		
161		Total Social Action Commission	<u>\$ 14,400.00</u>	<u>\$ 6,419.98</u>	<u>\$ 8,250.00</u>		
		Worship Commission					
162		A. Music - Contract Musicians	5,700.00	1,900.00	1,500.00		
163		B. Music - Vacation Organist	1,200.00	400.00	1,000.00		
164		C. Music Supplies	1,400.00	783.79	1,400.00		
165		D. Worship Supplies	1,700.00	786.25	1,000.00		

January 13, 2021
 Detailed Exhibit
 Original 2020 Budget, Actual Expenses December 31, 2020, Proposed 2021

	2020 Original Budget	2020 year end final	2021 Proposed Budget	Comments
166		2,350.00	2,750.00	Expenses related to mixing voices of the choir for Zoom services. An expense that as we move into in-person worship the need for this will decline.
167	1,500.00	750.00	1,000.00	
168	\$ 11,500.00	\$ 6,949.98	\$ 8,650.00	
169	\$ 348,156.44	\$ 294,584.57	\$ 328,572.44	
170	\$ 748,393.44	\$ 683,246.16	\$ 737,398.44	
171	(5,704.93)	(74,238.82)	(111,317.44)	Compares to \$91,000 estimated year-end deficit as of end of Oct.
172		74,238.82		
173			111,317.44	Compares to \$112,500 in original asking budget on Nov 1
174	(5,704.93)	0.00	0.00	



**FIRST CONGREGATIONAL
UNITED CHURCH OF CHRIST**

First Congregational United Church of Christ

A Just Peace, Open and Affirming, Multiracial and Multicultural Congregation

Ministers – Friends & Members of the Church
Designated Senior Minister – Rev. Amanda Hendler-Voss
Associate Minister – Rev. Sam McFerran
Director of Music – Mr. John Horman
Building Manager – Mr. Byron Adams
Administrative Assistant – Ms. Cindy Dobbs
Sexton – Ms. Ines Marquez
Members in Discernment – Lynaya Morris, Dwight Davis
Nursery Attendants – Timur Murillo, Ziyah Holman, Jordann Edwards, Patrick LaGamma

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